

Union of Skills

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Europe needs a **radical step change in ambition and action** – for all skill levels and for all types of training and education. This is as **important for people’s careers and prospects** as it is for our **competitiveness**.

To do so, **we will establish a Union of Skills** – focusing on investment, adult and lifelong learning, skill retention and the recognition of different types of training to enable people to work across our Union.

Political Guidelines for the next European Commission 2024 - 2029



The need for more and better skills

Skill shortages and gaps in Europe – Europe does not produce enough skilled workers in both quality and quantity.

Transformation speed gap – Education and training systems and providers struggle to keep pace with rapid technological transformations and the changing skills needed.

Fragmented governance and skills intelligence – Multitude of stakeholders with variety of perspectives and insufficient consolidation and coordination.





In a Union of Skills

Everyone in Europe is
empowered to develop skills

Competitive companies can
find people with the right
skills

Skills and qualifications are
transparent, trusted and
recognised



UNION OF SKILLS

FOUR STRANDS OF ACTION

BUILD SKILLS

for quality lives and
jobs

UP- AND RESKILL

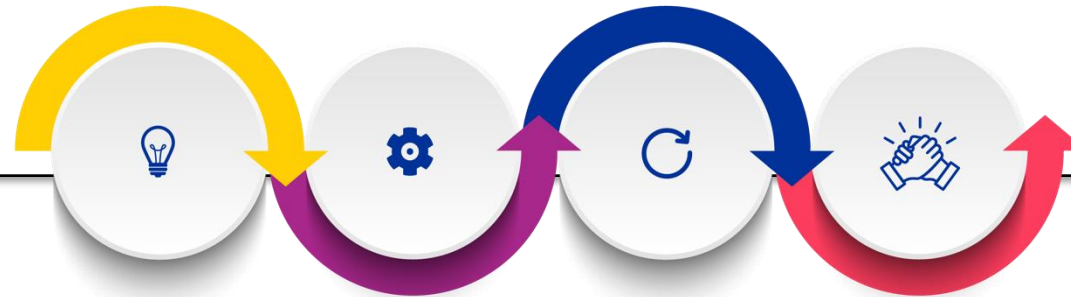
for the clean and
digital transitions

CIRCULATE SKILLS

across the EU to
unlock the single
market's full
potential.

ATTRACT, RETAIN, DEVELOP

talent for Europe's
future





Strand I: **Build skills for life** :

- **Solid foundations in education and training**
- **Attractive and innovative vocational education and training system**
 - **Inclusive and future-oriented higher education system**

2025

- Action Plan on Basic Skills
- STEM Education Strategic Plan
- 2030 Roadmap on the future of digital education and skills

2026

- Basic Skills Support Scheme (pilot)
- AI in education initiative
- EU Teachers & Trainers Agenda
- European competence framework for academic staff
- European Strategy for vocational education and training

2027

- Increasing accessibility of higher education



Action Plan on Basic Skills

- to improve basic reading, mathematics, science, digital and citizenship skills and
- to promote excellence, from early years through all stages of school education, and upskilling and reskilling among adults.

Boosting basic skills teaching and learning

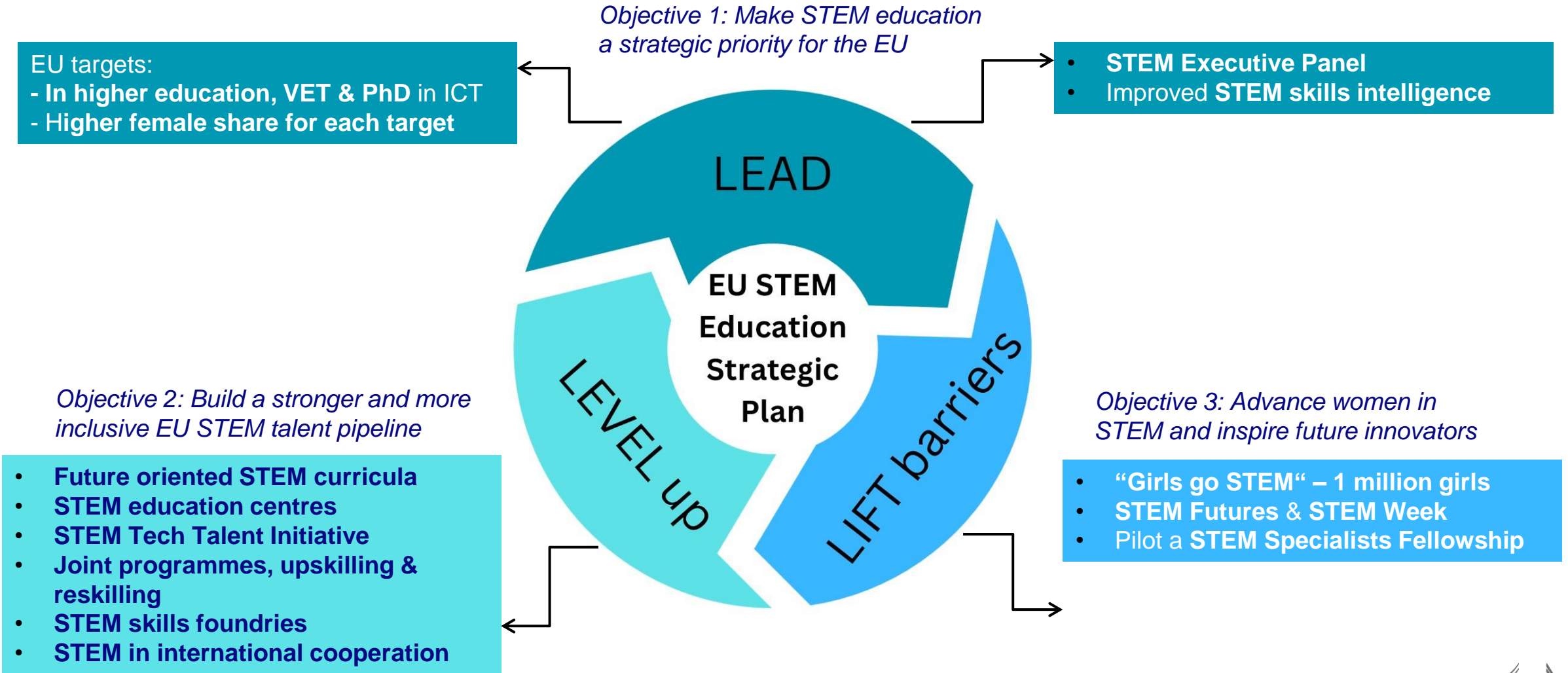
Supporting educators

Enabling supportive environments

- A **Basic Skills Support Scheme** to help underachieving children and young people reach an adequate level of basic skills through early intervention and individual, tailor-made support, from school to initial VET.
- Pilot the first **European School Alliances** through the Erasmus+ programme in 2026.
- Develop **personalised learning pathways in basic skills** through the use of artificial intelligence (AI) systems.
- Set out an **EU Teachers and Trainers Agenda** in 2026.
- Pilot a **mentoring system for early career teachers** to integrate basic skills teaching in the teaching practice in 2026.
- Engage **volunteers under the European Solidarity Corps in 2026 for mentoring and tutoring activities** for underachieving children and adults.
- Launch an **EU literacy coalition** in 2026, involving governments, businesses and libraries.



STEM Education Strategic Plan



Targets by 2030



the **share of underachievement** in literacy, mathematics, science and digital skills should be **less than 15%**, whereas the **share of top performance** in literacy, mathematics and science should be **at least 15%**



the share of students **enrolled in STEM** fields in initial **medium-level VET** should be at least **45%**, with at least **1 in 4 students female**



the share of students **enrolled in STEM fields at tertiary level** should be at least **32%**, with at least **2 in 5 students female**



the share of **students enrolled in ICT PhD** programmes should be at least **5%**, with at least **1 in 3 students female**





Strand II: **upskill and reskill** to ensure future-oriented skills through:

- **Upskilling and reskilling adults**
- **Leveraging public-private partnerships and promoting cooperation in strategic sectors**

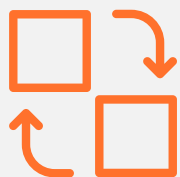
2025

2027

2030

- Pilot a Skills Guarantee for workers [2025]
- Roll out of targeted EU Skills Academies [2026]
- Pilot transnational university-business partnerships for sectors with severe skills gaps [2026]
- Expand the use of micro-credentials
- Reinforced Pact for Skills
- Expand the European Alliance for Apprenticeships
- Support the implementation of Individual Learning Accounts





Strand III: **Circulate and allocate skills** to unlock the full potential of the single market:

- **Portability of skills and qualifications**
- **Future-oriented European qualifications**
- **Deepened transnational cooperation for future-oriented skills and competences**
- **Boosted mobility of all learners**

2025

2027

2030

- Skills Portability Initiative [2026]
- Common European framework for the automatic recognition of study qualifications and learning periods abroad in school, VET and higher education [2027]
- Launch of innovative joint European study programmes with a European degree/label [2026]
- A legal status for European Universities alliances [2027]
- Pilot a European VET diploma [2025-2026]
- Pilot European School Alliances [2026]
- Investment Pathway for European Universities
- Strengthen Centres of Vocational Excellence





Strand IV: attract and retain skills from third countries to address skills shortages and develop top talent:

- **A Europe talent magnet framework**
- **European education and training systems attractive to brilliant students**
- **Facilitate the integration of skilled third-country nationals**
- **Retain workers and ensure no one is left behind**

2025

2026

2027

- Launch of the EU Talent Pool IT Platform
- Marie Skłodowska-Curie Action 'MSCA Choose Europe' Pilot [2025]
- A new Visa Strategy [2025]
- Launch of Multipurpose Legal Gateway Offices
- Erasmus Mundus scholarships to attract top students to study in the EU



- Use the possibilities under InvestEU and launch a new joint “EU Invest in Talent” Platform
- Encourage private-sector initiatives and boost private sector investment
- Encourage EU countries to prioritise reforms and investment in education, training, upskilling and reskilling within the European economic governance framework
- Reinforce social investment
- Explore best practice to further support quality jobs and promote the reskilling of the workforce through public procurement
- Evaluate the quality and relevance of investment in education and training

INVESTMENT

Significant and more effective funding for skills and education

Mobilising public and private investment



Governance

A European Skills Intelligence Observatory: providing the necessary data for well-informed policy

It will provide strategic data and foresight regarding skills needs in concrete sectors and regions, and the performance of education and training systems.

A European Skills High Level Board: driving the change

Bringing together key stakeholders to provide comprehensive, cross-sectoral insights and guidance on skills to EU policy makers.

Towards a dedicated EU 27 Recommendation on human capital: education and skills in the European Semester

In the first half of 2025, the Commission will publish an evaluation report on the European Education Area, which will inform a review by the Council with a view to streamlining and contributing to the Union of Skills governance.

