

# TRAILS

Enabling Data Analytics for Actions  
Tackling Skills Shortages & Mismatch



PRESS RELEASE  
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## TRAILS Project Achieves Major Milestones in Skills Intelligence, AI Innovation and Comparative Labour Market Research

The TRAILS Project has reached significant milestones as it enters the **final phase of implementation, demonstrating strong progress across its research, survey, Artificial Intelligence, and policy-oriented activities**. The latest project review, presented during the fifth plenary meeting in Amsterdam, highlighted the consortium's achievements in delivering data-driven insights on skills mismatches and labour market transitions across Europe.

With only seven months remaining until project completion, partners confirmed that **most deliverables and milestones remain on track, while several targets have already been exceeded**. Consortium members emphasised that the final stage of the project will focus on translating TRAILS research findings into concrete policy-relevant recommendations capable of supporting more resilient and future-oriented labour markets.

One of the project's key achievements is the establishment of a **large-scale survey infrastructure covering 31 countries**. Two major surveys have been developed within the project to analyse skills mismatches, literacy levels, labour market resilience, training participation, and workforce transitions across Europe.

The **second survey phase**, currently ongoing, introduces additional focus areas such as skills portfolios, training choices, and conjoint experiments designed to better understand behavioural factors influencing participation in training opportunities. Fieldwork is expected to continue throughout the coming months.

TRAILS has also made **important advances in its experimental research activities developed together with SkillLab and regional stakeholders**. The experimental design explores how better documentation of individual skills and clearer visibility of employability pathways may encourage greater uptake of training opportunities. By helping participants translate their experience into structured skills profiles using recognised taxonomies, SkillLab acts as a signalling mechanism connecting existing competences with future career and training pathways.

Another major milestone is the development of a **comprehensive secondary data infrastructure for comparative analysis**. The project has integrated 15 data sources across seven thematic categories, including European comparative surveys, labour demand data, employer-employee administrative datasets, firm-level data, platform-work information, and regional labour market indicators. This infrastructure supports advanced comparative research on skills demand,

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occupational change, training systems, productivity, and labour market resilience across Europe.

Significant progress has also been **achieved in the project's Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence activities**. TRAILS has developed an ML-based methodology for measuring skills mismatch and job allocation quality across four countries: Sweden, Portugal, Italy, and the Netherlands. The new approach combines matched employer-employee microdata with advanced analytical techniques to assess worker-job matching, wages, career progression, productivity, and labour market dynamics over time.

The project has additionally **produced a substantial body of cross-work-package research evidence addressing issues such as technological change, teleworkability, training effectiveness, digital and green transitions, platform work, and labour market resilience**. To date, TRAILS has delivered seven major research deliverables and 13 Research and Innovation Actions (RIAs), generating evidence intended to support both policymakers and labour market stakeholders.

Dissemination and stakeholder engagement activities have also expanded considerably throughout the project. **TRAILS has organised 21 events and developed a dedicated online platform supporting communication, outreach, and access to project outputs**. Additional dissemination activities include policy briefs, press releases, newsletters, and stakeholder engagement initiatives involving policymakers, researchers, and regional actors across Europe.

According to the project review, **TRAILS has already exceeded several initial objectives, particularly regarding survey scale, country coverage, respondent participation, policy outputs, and comparative research activities**. At the same time, partners identified several final priorities for the remaining project period, including strengthening scientific publication outputs, expanding conference participation, and finalising the translation of research findings into practical policy recommendations.

Preparations are also underway for the upcoming **Conference on Occupational Mismatch and Skill Shortage, which will take place in Naples on 10–11 September 2026**. The event will bring together researchers, policymakers, and stakeholders to discuss future labour market transformations and innovative approaches to skills intelligence and workforce resilience.

## ABOUT TRAILS

**TRAILS** is funded under the Horizon Europe Research and Innovation Programme, Thematic Priority “Innovative research on social and economic transformations” and will last three years (2024-2027).

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**TRAILS** seeks to build on current data in skills mismatches and create novel tools and databases, harnessing the power of Artificial Intelligence. It will empower Vocational and Adult Education training to match employers with educational opportunities to reallocate workers efficiently.

The consortium is led by the [Democritus University of Thrace](#) (D.U.Th, Greece), in partnership with the [Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II / Centre for Studies in Economics and Finance](#) (UNINA/ CSEF, Italy), [IPSOS NV](#) (Belgium), [the Economic and Social Research Institute LBG](#) (ESRI, Ireland), [SKILLAB BV](#) (Skillab, the Netherlands), [University of Tilburg](#) (TiU, the Netherlands), European Association of Regional & Local Authorities for Lifelong Learning ([EARLALL](#), Belgium), and the [Aristotle University of Thessaloniki](#) (AUTH, Greece).

For more information, please visit the TRAILS website (<https://www.trails-project.eu/>) and social media channels.

