

# TRAILS

Enabling Data Analytics for Actions  
Tackling Skills Shortages & Mismatch



PRESS RELEASE  
Brussels 25 June 2026

## **New TRAILS research published in top-ranked journal reveals how rapidly changing skills are reshaping Europe's labour market**

### **Open-access article in the *British Journal of Industrial Relations* (ABS 4) provides new evidence on skills change, skills mismatch, and the role of training across Europe**

A new peer-reviewed article based on findings from the **TRAILS project Deliverable 3.1** has been [published in the \*British Journal of Industrial Relations\*](#), one of the world's leading journals in the field (ABS 4 ranking). The article is open access and available to the public.

The study is authored by **Lorcan Kelly, Paul Redmond, and Luke Brosnan** from the **Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI), Dublin, Ireland**.

The publication provides one of the most comprehensive analyses to date of how rapidly changing skill requirements are affecting workers across Europe, and how training can help reduce the risk of skills mismatch.

### **Understanding how skills are changing across Europe**

The research uses data from approximately **70 million online job vacancies**, covering EU Member States as well as Norway and the United Kingdom. It maps how occupational skill requirements evolved between 2019 and 2023.

The findings show that:

- **STEM-related occupations experienced the fastest and most significant changes in skill requirements**
- **Lower-skilled manual occupations showed the least change**
- Workers in rapidly changing jobs are significantly more likely to experience **skills deficits**

By linking job vacancy data with labour force survey data, the study provides robust evidence of the relationship between changing job requirements and workers' ability to keep pace with new skill demands.

### **The role of training in reducing skills mismatch**

A key contribution of the study is its analysis of how different types of training can help mitigate skills gaps.

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The research finds that:

- **Training seminars and workshops are the most effective form of training**
- **Formal courses and on-the-job training alone are less effective**
- However, these approaches can still reduce skills deficits when **combined with other forms of training**

This suggests that the effectiveness of training depends not only on access, but also on its structure, intensity, and combination.

## **A new dataset for future research and policy**

As part of the publication, the authors also release a **new dataset on occupational skill change**, developed under TRAILS Deliverable 3.1. This dataset is published as an accompanying data appendix and is expected to support further research in:

- Labour economics
- Industrial relations
- Skills forecasting
- Education and training policy

The dataset provides a valuable resource for understanding how skills demands evolve in real time across European labour markets.

## **Strengthening the evidence base for skills policy in Europe**

The findings from this publication reinforce key messages from the TRAILS project: that labour markets are changing quickly, particularly in high-skill and STEM-intensive occupations, and that policy responses must focus not only on education, but also on **effective and targeted training systems**.

By identifying which types of training work best in practice, the study provides actionable insights for policymakers, social partners, and education providers working to reduce skills mismatches across Europe.

## **Access to the publication**

The full open-access article is available via the *British Journal of Industrial Relations*: [British Journal of Industrial Relations article \(open access\)](#)

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## 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).

**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.

