



# Individual Learning Accounts

and recent EU initiatives for adult learning

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Roundtable on Individual Learning Accounts in Poland,  
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# Results of the European Year of Skills

## **SKILLS CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN THE EU**



### **Critical skills shortages for employers**

- 42 shortage occupations, with the the biggest shortages in construction, healthcare, ICT
- 74% of SMEs are facing skills shortages
- In the future, 90% of jobs will require digital skills



### **Pressing skills and training gaps**

- Only 39.5% of adults participate in training every year
- More than 1/3 of the EU's labour force lack the digital skills required in most jobs



### **Skills for new opportunities**

- Substantial job growth expected from the green and digital transitions
- By 2030, 3.5 million new jobs are expected to be created in renewable energy sectors
- There is untapped potential among underrepresented groups, such as women, low-skilled, young NEETs and older workers

**Objective of 60 % of adults participating in training every year by 2030 (EU headline target)**



# DELIVERING SKILLS

The **Pact for Skills** has over **2500 members**, and 20 Large-Scale Partnerships in all 14 Industrial Ecosystems. **3.5 million people have taken training courses** set up under the Pact. In the coming years, the aim is to upskill and reskill 25 million people.

15 Member States are using EU funding to develop **Individual Learning Accounts**.

The **European Alliance for Apprenticeships** has reached more than **430 pledges and 40 national commitments**.

There are **53 funded Centres of Vocational Excellence**.

**€65 billion EU funding** from the European Social Fund+ and the Recovery and Resilience Facility for investment in skills for 2021 - 2027.

## **WHAT'S NEXT**

*The future for skills - emerging themes from the year*

### ***Empowering everyone to train***

Implement Individual Learning Accounts

### ***Strategic dialogue on skills***

Give prominence to skills across policies  
Promote public-private partnerships

### ***Skills First***

Encourage skills-based recruitment, talent management, and skills validation

### ***Attracting International Talent***

### ***Promote skills as an investment, not a cost***

Explore ways to further incentivise financing of upskilling and reskilling

### ***Strengthening VET for Competitiveness***

Promote excellence  
More women in VET professions  
Integrate AI in training



A blue-tinted photograph of two women in an office setting. One woman is seated at a desk, looking at a laptop screen, while the other stands behind her, pointing at the screen. The background is softly blurred, showing office furniture and a window.

# Action plan to tackle labour and skills shortages

# Labour and skills shortages: the challenge

Decade-long rise in labour and skills shortages in all Member States

Follow-up to the commitment to take joint action in the Val Duchesse Declaration

Major risk for:

growth and competitiveness

social cohesion and democracies' health

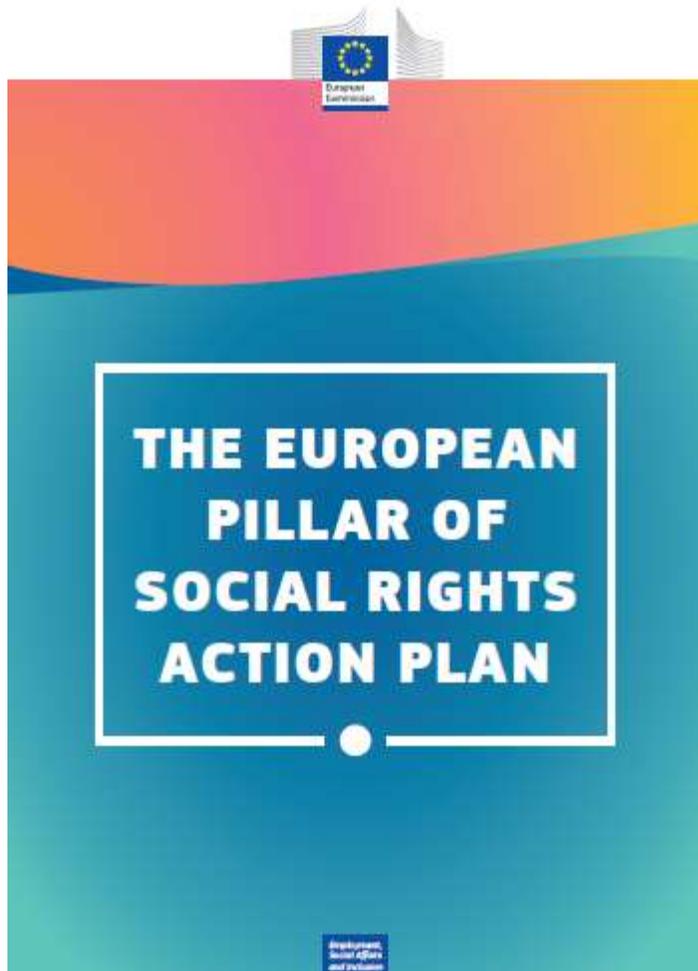
green and digital transition

EU security and open strategic autonomy



# Council Recommendations on Individual Learning Accounts

# Background of the initiative

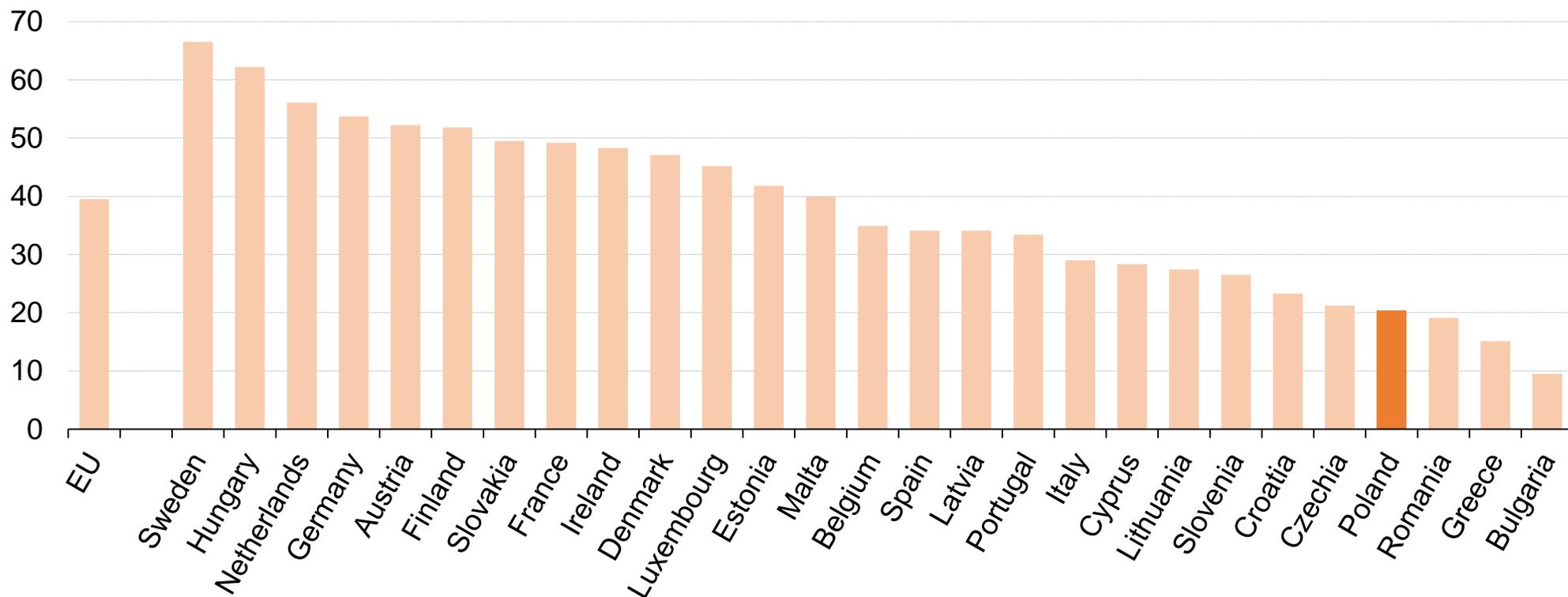


# Policy Challenge

## Low adult learning participation

Adult participation in learning in the last 12 months by source

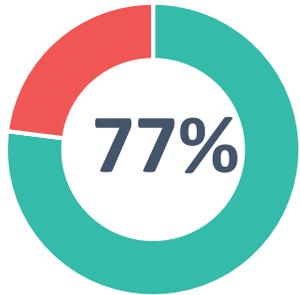
% of population aged 25-64



Source: Eurostat

# Main challenges for the economy

## Skills shortages for digital and green transitions



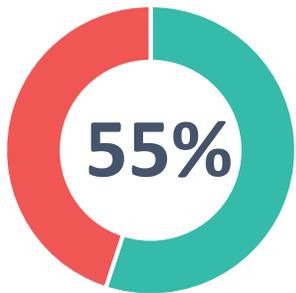
of companies report difficulties finding employees with right skills, the problem hits SMEs even stronger

## Skills mismatches



of workers in OECD countries has a different level of education typically required for their job, and many skills in the labour market are hard to find

## Adults lack digital skills



Only slightly more than half of adults in the EU had at least basic digital skills in 2023

## Adults with lower educational attainment participate less in training

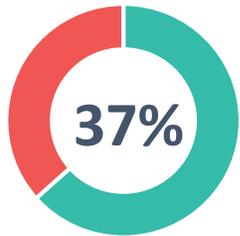
And participation rates are lower in sectors, occupations and types of employment with higher shares of lower qualified people.

# Main challenges for the individuals

## Lack of financial support

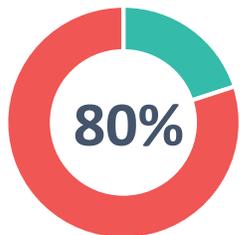
Existing support schemes have limited coverage. Many adults who would want to participate, have to pay the full cost of training.

## Lack of time for training



of adults who wanted to learn more mentioned their schedule as a barrier  
Access to paid training leave is uneven

## Lack of motivation



of non-learners in the past year “*did not want*” to learn- this is the main reason for adults for not participating in training

## Availability of training opportunities

Training is less available for individuals without stable employment contracts

## Availability of information about training opportunities and own skills needs

Learners are “lost in translation” – they don’t know where to find relevant and trustworthy training options and they don’t know what they should learn

## Lack of flexible training opportunities

9 in 10 adults say that a better adaptability of training to individual learning needs would encourage training participation

# Policy Objectives

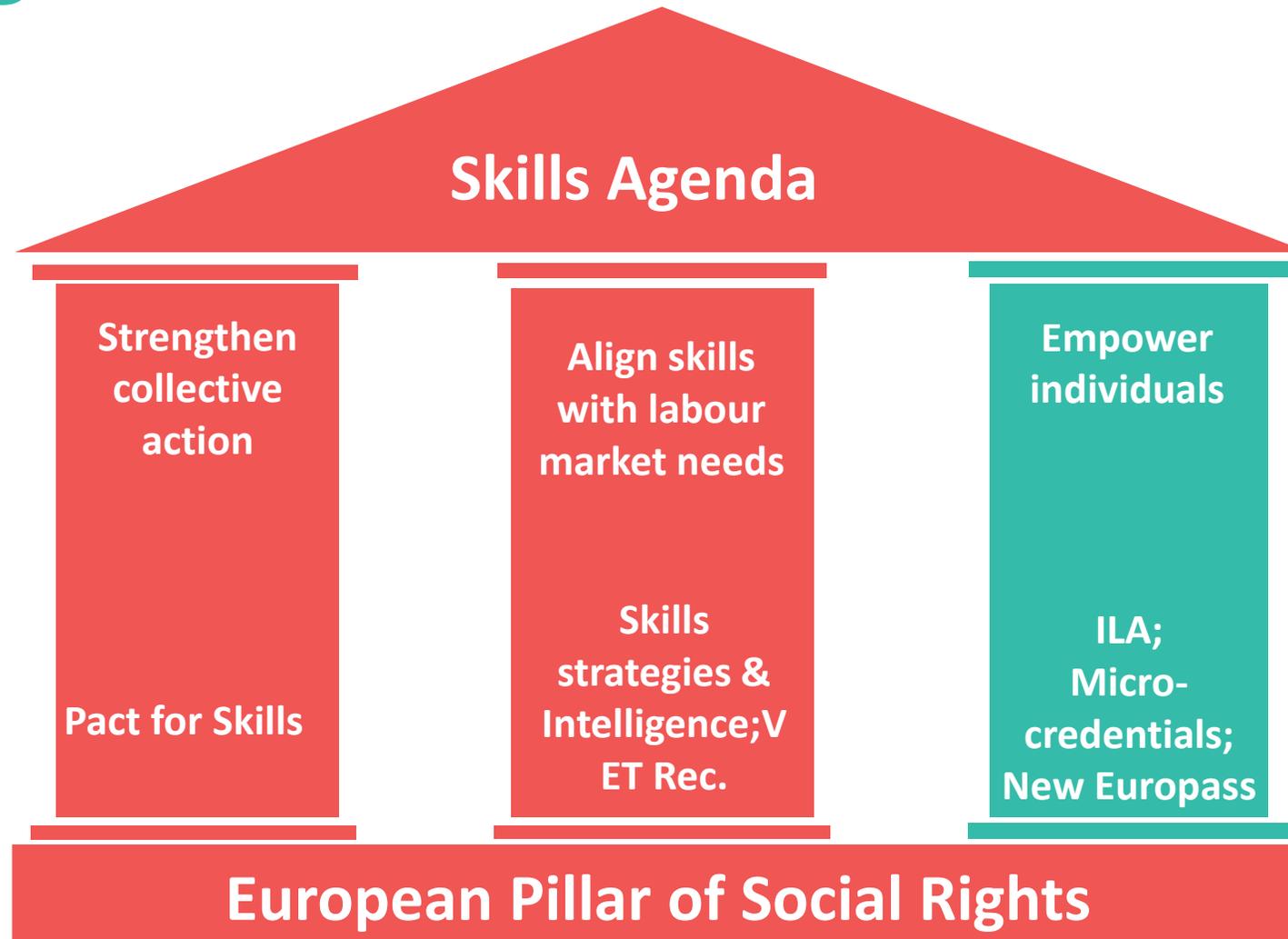
Support Member State reforms to:

- 1. Close gaps in existing support systems** so that all adults have access to support for training, including for professional transitions and irrespective of their labour force or professional status.
- 2. Increase the incentives and motivation** of individuals to seek training.



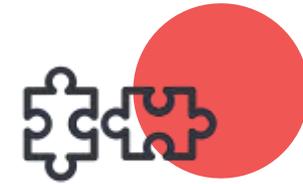
## What's innovative about the ILA?

# Skills Agenda: focus on individuals



# ILA - Key features

Personal budget pays:  
**training, guidance and  
validation**



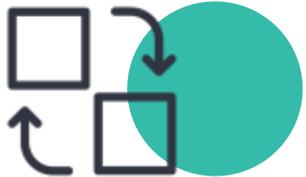
**Accumulation &  
transferability of  
entitlements**



Keep it **while temporarily  
abroad** and even use it from  
there



**Universal but differentiated  
support**



Use it **in transitions** from job to  
job or in times of **unemployment**

# ILA – in detail



# Single portal for an enabling framework

## **Personal budget**

*With information about the available budget (possibly combined from different funders), timeframe for use etc.*

## **Registry**

*Of quality assured and labour market relevant training options (including **micro-credentials**) that are available to use with the personal budget*

## **Guidance**

*Integrated into the portal, to support the ILA users in finding the training options most suitable to their needs*

## **Validation options**

*Information on access to validation options to allow the user to certify the skills and competences acquired through training*

## **Different interfaces**

*For the individual, the ILA operating organisation, employers, employment services etc, supporting the management of the personal budget, accessible also on mobile devices*

## **Paid training leave options**

*To provide information about the available training rights or availability of a paid training leave, depending on the situation of the individual*



# Considerations on implementation

# Implementation in Member States

Define modalities suited to national starting point

Ensure the continuous monitoring and improvement



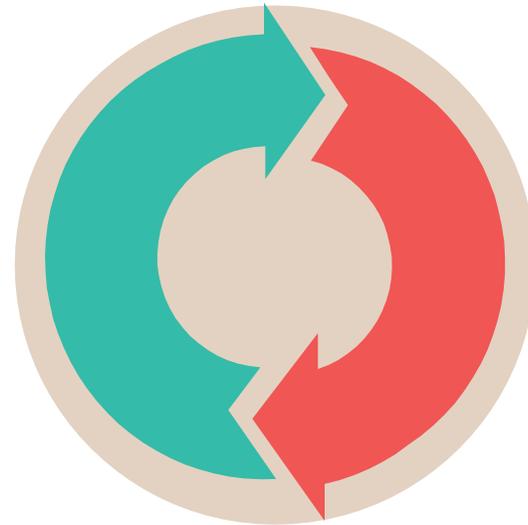
Plan a gradual implementation

Organise outreach and awareness raising activities to make the scheme known and support its uptake

# Cooperation with social partners and stakeholders

make it **relevant to the national context**

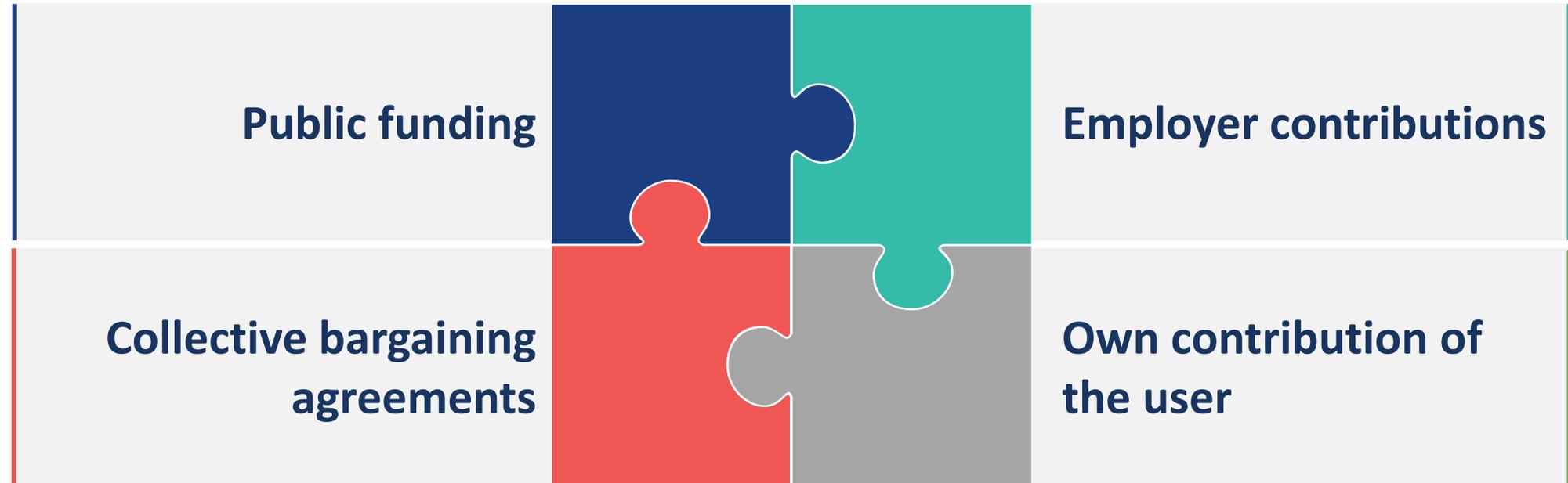
**complement, but not replace employer-organised training**



boost the role of skills in **social dialogue**

ensure that **skills are well aligned with labour market needs**

# Funding ILAs – diversify the funding sources



# EU support

## Funding

- Recovery and Resilience Facility
- European Social Fund Plus
- European Regional Development Fund
- Just Transition Fund
- Technical Support Instrument

## Supporting tools:

- Mutual learning programme
- Development of guidance material
- Further development of the Europass platform to support the recognition and validation of ILA-funded training

# Mutual learning programme

Each round is composed of **series of three capacity-building events to support Member States in the implementation of the ILA Recommendation** to build up national networks in each participating country/region, and jointly take the next steps towards ILA implementation.

Each country delegation is led by representatives of Education and/or Employment ministries and composed of other key stakeholders such as adult learning providers, public employment services, social partners



# Progress in Member States

## France

- *System since 2004.*
- *Since 2019 “Compte personnel de formation” (CPF),*
- *The CPF portal allow employers and other funders to channel top-ups to individual users*
- *Quality assurance of the training and automated checks to prevent fraud.*
- *Planned; Integration of a Competence Passport*

## Croatia

- *ILA planned for 2027*
- *Development of ILA integrating current voucher system*
- *Voucher scheme has many elements of the ILA enabling framework in place.*
- *Working group to develop roadmap for ILA*

# Progress in Member States

## *Lithuania*

- *Launch of national ILA in 2021*
- *Further developments in the future*
- *Online Platform :*  
<https://www.kursuok.lt/en>

## *Latvia*

- *General ILA concept established*
- *The governance system and portal under development*
- *Synergies with other up- and re-skilling initiatives*

## *Slovakia*

- *ILA under development*
- *Possible sectoral approach*
- *New law on adult learning is under preparation*

# Examples from outside the EU

## *Singapore: SkillsFuture Credit*

- *Tool of SkillsFuture Policy to support lifelong learning*
- *It comprises:*
  - *Learning credits for Singaporeans (25 years or older) for work-related course fees, 20,000 approved learning courses;*
  - *“MySkillsFuture”, a one-stop online portal offering courses and funding;*
  - *“MyCareerFuture”, online job search, career insights and guidance portal.*
- *Funded through the Ministry of Finance by an employer levy, the SkillsFuture Endowment Fund and the annual state budget.*
- *Run by SkillsFuture Singapore on behalf of the Ministry of Education.*

## *South Korea: National Learning Card (NLC)*

- *Since 2020*
- *Individuals can enrol in training with the NLC regardless of their employment status or Employment Insurance situation*
- *Low income persons: around EUR 3.700*
- *Other qualified persons: between EUR 2.200 and 3.700*
- *Prime sources: government budgets, employment insurance.*
- *Co-funding arrangements: contributions from learners, and occasionally, employers. Co-funding from employers is voluntary*
- *Not universal (yet)*
- *Yearly budget set in advance*