

NEWSLETTER #3

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From the Editors

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SkiLMeeT wins recognition from German NCP among key industrial technology projects

From the Editors:

The end of the year is a time for reflection, celebration, and looking ahead — and in that spirit, we're thrilled to present the third edition of the SkiLMeeT newsletter. This issue presents the latest developments in our project, offering fresh insights into the rapidly evolving world of skills.

The past few months have been full of events. We held our first SkiLMeeT Roundtable to discuss our research ideas and questions with representatives from industry and policymaking circles. The discussions revealed the pressing need for better data on skills mismatches, more targeted active labour market policies, and a more comprehensive approach to addressing demographic shifts and technological disruptions.

We also launched a series of research webinars, inviting scholars whose expertise broadens our perspective and enriches our work. In November, Hernan Winkler presented his research on how generative AI is transforming jobs in Latin America. In December, Eliza Forsythe shared her insights on the computerisation of white-collar jobs, focusing on its effects on task complexity, employment levels, and wage structures in the U.S. labor market. Mark your calendars for our next webinar on January 30, 2025, featuring Ceren Ozgen, who will discuss the green wage premium in Japan.

Our collaboration with the External Advisory Board remains vital, offering valuable guidance on data collection and the nuanced challenges of measuring technological impacts. Meanwhile, we are working hard at preparing research papers and datasets that will be available on our website next year.

To stay on top of all the news from our project, visit our website at www.skilmeet.eu, and follow us on LinkedIn and X.com. As always, we're grateful for your ongoing support and interest in our work.

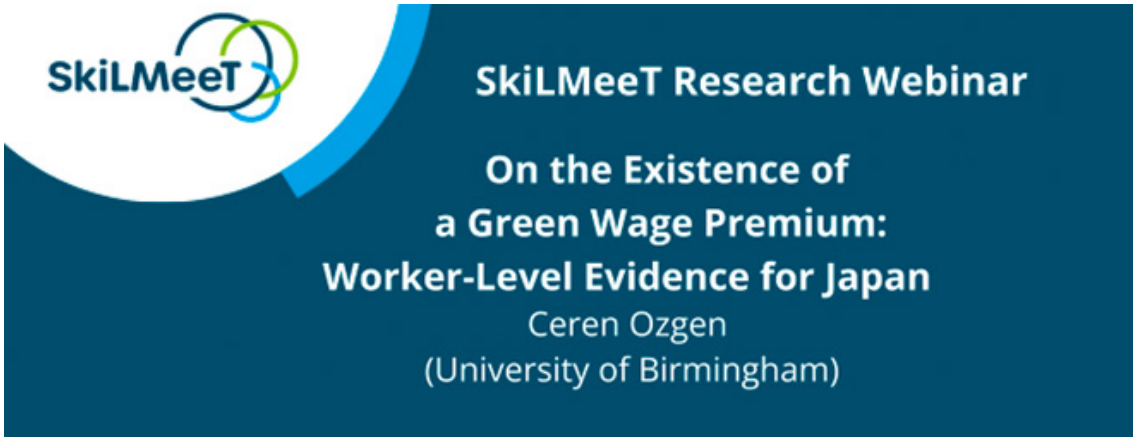
Wishing you a joyful holiday season and a fantastic 2025!
– The Editors



Upcoming event:

30 January - “On the Existence of a Green Wage Premium: Worker-Level Evidence for Japan” - SkiLMeeT research webinar with Ceren Ozgen

SkiLMeeT Events:



Invitation to SkiLMeeT webinar on green wage premium in Japan, 30 January 2025

We are happy to invite you to a SkiLMeeT research webinar with Ceren Ozgen, Associate Professor in the Department of Economics at the University of Birmingham.

Join us on Thursday, 30 January 2025, as Ceren Ozgen presents her latest research: “On the Existence of a Green Wage Premium: Worker-Level Evidence for Japan”, co-authored with Robert J. R. Elliott, Wenjing Kuai, and Toshihiro Okubo.

The webinar will run from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. CET.

Register here.

About our speaker:

Dr Ceren Ozgen is an applied economist who works at the intersection of labour and urban economics. She received the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship from the European Commission and is a research fellow at IZA. She has published extensively on the impact of international migration, firm innovation and economic growth. Her recent research focuses on technological change, skills mismatch, green innovation and green jobs.

She is currently the UoB director of the University of Birmingham – VU Amsterdam Big Data and Economics Research Network (BVRN). The BVRN is a network of academics at the University of Birmingham and Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam undertaking data-driven economic analyses of



Insights from the SkiLMeeT Roundtable

The first SkiLMeeT Roundtable, “Skills and Labour Shortages in Europe: Recent Research Evidence”, brought together 18 participants from academia, think tanks, and industry to discuss the key challenges surrounding labour and skills shortages in Europe.

Organised and moderated by Vassil Kirov, a SkiLMeeT researcher and Professor at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, the event took place on 2 October 2024 at the European Trade Union Institute in Brussels.

The meeting began with a presentation from Annachiara Tanzarella and Simone Rosini of the European Commission’s DG Employment, Social Affairs, and Inclusion. They highlighted the growing labour and skills shortages across Europe over the past decade, driven by demographic changes, the green and digital transition, and poor working conditions in certain sectors. Population decline and ageing are expected to worsen shortages, particularly in healthcare and long-term care. Annachiara outlined recent EU initiatives aimed at tackling these issues, including: activation measures, such as the European Care Strategy and the Reinforcement Guarantee, to boost the participation of women and young people in the labour market; skill development initiatives focused on improving wages and working conditions; promoting labour mobility within the EU and complementary legal migration policies, such as the Skills and Talent Mobility Package and the EU Talent Pool.

Next, Piotr Lewandowski (IBS) discussed how emerging technologies, particularly AI, could help mitigate Europe’s labour shortages. He identified three core challenges: a declining workforce, a shortage of young and innovative workers, and the need for greater digital skills to fully benefit from AI across various sectors. He argued that while AI could reduce labour intensity in sectors facing shortages, Europe lags behind the US in AI adoption, highlighting the need for increased investment in digital skills.

In her talk, Christina Gathmann (LISER) focused on untapped pools of workers and the

likely to participate in training and benefit from active labour market programmes, while immigrant women tend to stay out of the labour market. Christina also stressed that to address labour market issues, we need better data on skill needs, which requires looking beyond job vacancies and instead focusing on skills mismatches. She highlighted the importance of analysing the gap between workers' existing skills and market needs at the sectoral, occupational, and regional level.

The presentations were followed by a discussion. Employer representatives flagged major challenges across their sectors, including difficulties in retaining workers and forecasting future skill demands. They stressed the need to overhaul training programmes to better align with industry needs and emphasised the difficulties in motivating employees to engage in training. Recognition of qualifications, alongside improving the mobility and transferability of skills, were also seen as critical issues that must be addressed to meet the needs of a rapidly changing labour market.

Léna Guyon, representing the European Construction Industry Federation (FIEC), highlighted that while migration can help address shortages of low-skilled labour, it's only a short-term solution. The real challenge for the construction sector is retaining workers over the long term. She emphasised the need for active labour market policies to ensure that trained workers remain in the construction sector rather than moving to other industries or countries.

Delphine Rudelli, Director General of Ceemet, a European employers organisation representing the interests of the metal, engineering and technology-based industries, stressed that addressing labour shortages requires a multifaceted approach. Migration is a part of the solution, but she also advocated for active labour market policies that can keep workers in their jobs (increasing the retirement age) and activate those who remain outside the market (women). She also highlighted the challenge of rapidly evolving skills needs, particularly in the context of the green transition. Delphine stressed the need for better data and long-term planning, along with motivating workers and SMEs to invest in training, which is often hindered by practical and motivational barriers.

Eleonora Isop, policy executive of the European Chemical Employers Group (ECEG), highlighted the difficulties in forecasting skills needs, particularly in the context of the green and digital transition. The sector is working on initiatives to map training needs and develop programmes that align with emerging demands.

The discussions at the SkiLMeeT roundtable highlighted the urgency of collaborative efforts among academia, industry, and policymakers to tackle the multifaceted challenges of skills and labour shortages in Europe. As participants shared their insights and experiences, it became evident that while immediate solutions like migration may offer temporary relief, to foster a sustainable workforce we need a comprehensive approach involving active labour market policies, investment in training, and better data analysis.



External Advisory Board meeting provides guidance on addressing research challenges

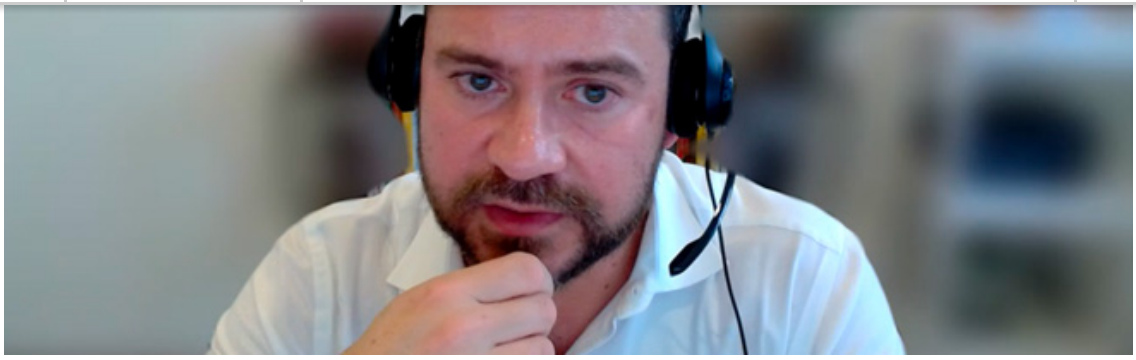
Representatives of the SkiLMeeT consortium met with the External Advisory Board (EAB) to present the progress of the project's research and discuss challenges in data collection and analysis.

The online meeting, held on October 9, featured insights from board members Michael Handel (Northeastern University), Salih Tutun (Washington University), Uschi Backes-Gellner (University of Zurich), Glenda Quintini (OECD), and Wouter Zwysen (ETUI).

The discussion addressed several key challenges, such as the complexity of the Burning Glass and Lightcast skills categories. Board members provided guidance on simplifying skill classifications and recommended relevant literature.

Another major topic was the analysis of training curricula and skill measurement. The EAB members emphasised the importance of including non-formal training and highlighted the role of technology in training content.

The board members highlighted the limitations of using patent data to measure technological impact, noting that patents don't always translate into immediate changes in training or productivity and vary in nature (e.g. breakthrough vs. defensive patents). While patents effectively document STEM innovations, they often fall short in capturing advances in digital technology. To bridge this gap, the EAB recommended focusing on breakthrough research papers and major software conferences, where significant digital developments frequently emerge.



SkiLMeeT webinar on jobs' exposure to generative AI in Latin America draws 31 participants

Project SkiLMeeT's research webinar on 14 November, 2024 explored workers' exposure to generative AI in Latin America, a region often overlooked in discussions on technological change. The event featured a presentation by Hernan Winkler, Senior Economist at the World Bank, who shared the findings of his study "Buffer or Bottleneck? Jobs' Exposure to Generative AI and the Digital Divide in Latin America", conducted in collaboration with Pawel Gmyrek (ILO) and Santiago Garganta (CEDLAS-UNLP).

The study reveals that between 30% and 40% of jobs in Latin America are exposed to generative AI. While the findings highlight significant potential for productivity gains, they also expose risks associated with automation, particularly for vulnerable worker groups. Jobs in urban, high-income, and formal sectors, such as finance and public administration, are most exposed to AI technologies. However, this exposure is not uniformly beneficial. Women and young workers, for instance, face heightened automation risks, increasing their vulnerability to job displacement.

Another critical issue the study addresses is the persistent digital divide across the region. Around 17 million jobs that could benefit from AI-driven augmentation are hindered by inadequate digital infrastructure. Of these, 7 million are held by women. The study noted that countries such as Honduras, Nicaragua, and even Mexico face substantial challenges in leveraging generative AI due to weak digital ecosystems.

The presentation emphasised the uneven distribution of AI's augmentation potential. While the technology could significantly enhance productivity in certain roles, its benefits are currently limited to those with access to robust digital tools and infrastructure. Without targeted interventions, there is a risk that generative AI may deepen existing inequalities, favouring those with technological access while marginalising others.

The discussion underscored the urgency of addressing these systemic barriers to ensure that generative AI fosters inclusive growth in Latin America.

You can access the paper here and the presentation here.



SkiLMeeT webinar explores how technology reshapes white-collar jobs

The final SkiLMeeT research webinar of the year focused on how computerisation is transforming office and administrative support jobs, with a close look at its impact on employment, wages, and skill demands.

Held on 11 December 2024, the webinar featured a presentation by Eliza Forsythe, Associate Professor at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, who shared key findings from her study "Computerisation of White-Collar Jobs", co-authored with Marcus Dillender (Vanderbilt University).

The event gathered 25 participants, fostering discussions on the impact of different types of technologies on workers.

Forsythe and Dillender's research analyses the effects of computerisation on the U.S. office and administrative support sector, which accounts for over 12% of the workforce. Their findings reveal that this technology has significantly raised the skill requirements for these roles. Employers are now looking for more experienced candidates with higher levels of education. Tasks that were once strictly clerical are being expanded to include responsibilities in areas like finance, legal support, and management, resulting in a "widening task space."

While the overall number of office and administrative support jobs has declined in the U.S. due to computerisation, the study shows that many displaced workers successfully transition to other roles, contributing to local employment growth. This suggests that while technological change is disrupting specific job categories, it can generate opportunities for workers in new positions.

The educational profile of office and administrative support staff is also evolving. The share of college-educated workers in this sector is rising, and wages have followed a similar upward trend. These developments indicate that, for some workers, technological change is creating opportunities for career advancement and higher compensation. However, not all groups benefit equally. Women with college degrees have emerged as the primary beneficiaries, capturing a

Unlike the task-replacing effects often associated with automation, the technological shift in office and administrative roles is better described as “factor-augmenting.” Instead of eliminating specific tasks, new digital tools are enhancing worker productivity, enabling employees to perform a broader and more complex range of activities.e

SkiLMeeT researchers at events:



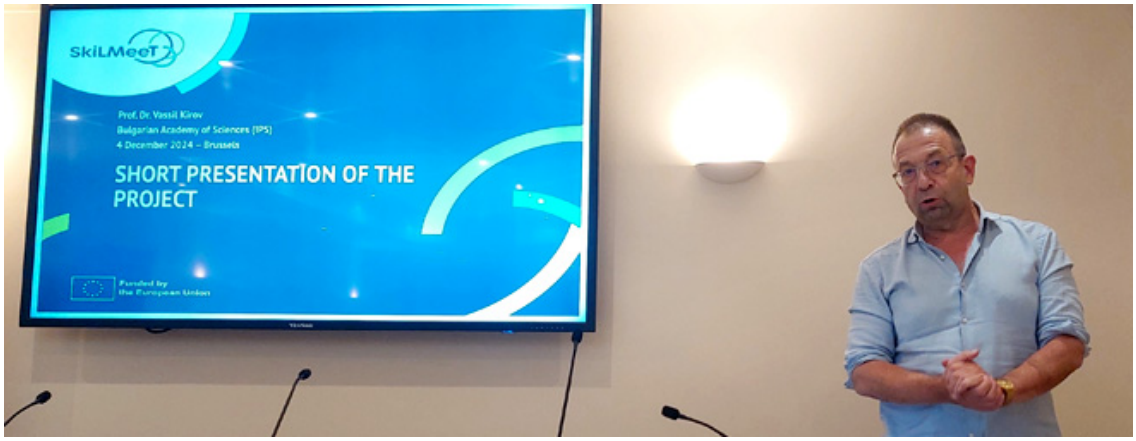
SkiLMeeT researcher Linda Koopmans presents her research on lifelong learning

Linda Koopmans, a SkiLMeeT researcher from TNO, presented her study “Lifelong learning: the key to maintaining a skilled labour force” at the PEROSH conference in Leiden, the Netherlands on 25 October.

Koopmans' research explored the long-term effects of informal, formal, and combined learning on both employees and employers. Her study also examined how factors such as age, education level, and gender influence these effects.

Using data from a large cohort, Koopmans showed that informal and combined learning offer significant benefits for both workers and organisations. Employees gain higher job satisfaction, better career progression, and increased income, while employers see improvements in employee engagement, skill alignment, and innovation.

Her findings revealed that informal and combined learning are more effective than relying solely on formal learning, emphasising the value of adopting varied learning strategies in the workplace.



SkiLMeeT at joint research seminar on skills gaps and evolving skills needs

On December 4, 2024, SkiLMeeT representatives Suhendan Adiguzel van Zoelen (TNO) and Vassil Kirov (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences) discussed skills gaps and evolving needs in the European labour market at the joint research seminar organised by project SkillsPULSE in Brussels.

The event brought together experts from four Horizon Europe projects - SkillsPULSE, TRAILS, SkiLMeeT, and SKILLAB – and served as a platform for sharing research findings, discussing innovative solutions, and fostering collaboration among projects.

The opening session tackled the complexities of defining skills shortages, featuring insights from each project:

- **TRAILS**: Ioannis Pragidis (Democritus University of Thrace) presented advanced technological solutions that use data analytics to address mismatches in the labour market.
- **SKILLAB**: Rosaria Rossini (Eclipse Foundation Europe GmbH) highlighted collaborative strategies for workforce upskilling and adaptability through collaboration.
- **SkillsPULSE**: Liga Baltina (Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini) and Seamus McGuinness (Economic and Social Research Institute) showcased methodologies for identifying and addressing emerging skill demands.
- **SkiLMeeT**: Vassil Kirov (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences) outlined approaches to aligning training systems with evolving labour market needs.

A lively Q&A session followed each presentation.

Recognitions:



SkiLMeeT wins recognition from German NCP among key industrial technology projects

We are proud to announce that Project SkiLMeeT has been featured in the *Erfolgsbroschüre 2024* (*Success Brochure 2024*) published by the German National Contact Point for Digital and Industrial Technologies (NCP DIT). The publication highlights 10 outstanding Horizon Europe and Horizon 2020 projects focusing on climate-neutral, sustainable, and clean industry.

SkiLMeeT was recognised for its contributions to equipping labour markets with the skills needed to navigate the green and digital transitions.

We are honoured to be included in this group of innovative projects. The brochure can be downloaded here.

SKILLS FOR LABOUR MARKETS IN THE DIGITAL AND GREEN TRANSITION

SkiLMeeT is a research project carried out by eight research institutions, exploring how the digital and green transformation of European economies are changing the demand for skills. We analyse the scope of skills shortages and mismatches, identify their drivers and propose innovative ways to reduce skills gaps.

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