

Lifelong learning for the future of work

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This E-discussion aims to bring together representatives of government, education and training institutions, the private sector, worker organizations, academia, and international organizations among others to discuss concrete policy options in developed and developing countries for promoting lifelong learning (LLL). It has been organized in the framework of the [ILO Centenary Initiative on the Future of Work \(FOW\)](#). The FOW Initiative aims at understanding as well as responding effectively to new challenges posed by a number of drivers of change in order to advance the Organisation's mandate for social justice. Many of the global trends and forces impacting the world of work – technological, climate, new forms of work organization, globalisation, demographical – will have a profound and diverse impact on the demand for skills. Skills development can help workers and economies take advantage of opportunities in the future, act as an important enabler of transition, and address some of the associated costs. However, the capacity of education and training systems to anticipate and adjust to constantly changing skills demands will require:

- *good quality basic education that provides the foundational skills that allow people to embrace change, take advantage of emerging job opportunities, and engage in further learning;*
- *the facilitation of dynamic learning over the life cycle to ensure that people keep pace with digital and technology-related skills and other factors of change to remain productively engaged in employment.*

Lifelong Learning (LLL) is central to managing the different transitions that workers will face over the course of the life cycle. It can ensure that they successfully enter the labour market, continually upskill while in employment, and reskill to take advantage of emerging jobs throughout their careers. This life-cycle approach raises fundamental questions about the respective responsibilities of governments, workers and enterprises in making choices about when and how to reskill and retrain. It requires strategies to ensure the financing and delivery of skills development, whether through the enhancement of public investment, the provision of financial and other incentives to boost engagement in learning activities, and/or approaches that seek to combine a mix of public and private investment in all phases of delivery. We encourage you to read the [Issue Brief 'Skills Policies and Systems for a Future Workforce'](#) prepared for the 2nd Meeting of the Global Commission on the Future of Work which took place on February 15-17 as additional background information on this discussion, see below. **This discussion feature works best when accessed from the following browsers: Chrome or Firefox.** To begin the global conversation on LLL we invite you to reflect on the following questions: 1. How can the model of LLL be adapted to cater to a future world of work? What are the building blocks of a well-functioning LLL system? 2. What governance mechanisms will be suitable for the efficient provision of and engagement in relevant LLL for all? What are the respective roles of governments, the private sector and the social partners? 3. What financial mechanisms might be used to encourage the provision of and participation in training; who should bear the cost and how? What are investment priorities for LLL to harness economic growth and minimise social risks? 4. What strategies, policies and incentives will be needed to increase the uptake of LLL? 5. What are the appropriate delivery mechanisms of LLL that will make learning accessible and relevant for youth, adults and older workers, embrace new technologies and forms of learning and balance needs for wide access, flexibility and quality in the learning offer?

[Lifelong learning for the future of work](#)

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