



PILLARS – Pathways to Inclusive Labour Markets:

Collection of good policy instruments that prevent and mitigate job displacement, following adoption of automation technologies

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Tatjana Guznajeva, Juanita Garcia Gutierrez, Ana Oliveira, Matthias Ploeg, Quentin van Nieuwenhuizen

Technopolis



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Introduction

The current document presents the collection of **good policy instruments on prevention and mitigation of job displacement**, following adoption of automation technologies. These instruments have been identified during the case studies that focused on good practices of inclusive labour market policies across regions in Europe. The case studies have been conducted in all parts of Europe (Northern, Western, Eastern, Southern Europe) and accounted for differences in the levels of innovativeness of regions.

The instruments illustrated below have a strong focus on **education/training and labour market policies**. However, other policy domains, such as innovation, industry, entrepreneurship, migration and labour mobility, are also captured. Each policy instrument is presented in a **box** that includes a short summary of implemented activities, success factors of an instrument and a weblink to access more information about it.

Each box has a **background colour**, which corresponds to the level of **innovativeness of a region**, based on the Regional Innovation Scoreboard (2021):



Innovation leader - red



Strong innovator - green



Moderate innovator - yellow



Emerging innovator - blue

This should facilitate identification of good policy instruments for regions with **similar innovation performance**. To learn about innovation performance in your country/region, please check the [Regional Innovation Scoreboard](#).



Outplacement Project: Support individuals at risk of unemployment and stimulate collaboration between employers, employees and public employment services (PES)

In 2020, the Czech Republic has launched the “Outplacement Project” to support individuals at risk of unemployment, particularly in cases where their companies undergo structural, technological transformations which are likely to lead to mass layoffs. The Project helps workers to find a new job during their notice period or in case their employment is threatened. Thus, laid-off employees have a chance to get re-training and to find a new job even before the end of the current employment relationship.¹

The Project provides the package of the measures:

- Employers receive counselling on how to arrange the process of contract termination and/or training;
- The PES encourage employees to get support through the Project;
- Employees are offered trainings in the field of labour law, financial literacy, and soft skills to enhance these essential skills. The training courses are provided immediately once an employee joins the Project, even during current employment;
- Training activities are offered, according to individual requirements and relevance for the labour market;
- Employment mediation will be offered to resolve disputes;
- Accompanying measures will be launched to stimulate retraining and employment. Such measures may include reimbursement of travel expenses, childcare services.

Employers also benefit from the Project, as workers can be retrained for another position at a low or no cost. In case companies decide to hire more employees following participation in the Project, the PES can contribute to their wages. More details on benefits for employers are provided below:²

- The team of the PES visits the employer's workplace to encourage employees to join the Project;
- Support with planning re-training and providing employee upskilling/reskilling;
- Up to 100% coverage of employee salary for the duration of training;
- Contribution to the training costs of employees, up to 85%;

¹ <https://www.uradprace.cz/web/cz/outplacement-out->

² <https://www.uradprace.cz/web/cz/-/outplacement>

- Contribution to the wages of new employees, a maximum of CZK 15,000 per month for up to 9 months.

The Project has been very successful, due to its comprehensive support to both employers and employees. It has encouraged training, offered support to employers and employees on how to organise upskilling/reskilling and reduced costs, and mediated all processes to reduce social tensions. In addition, the Project has encouraged social responsibility of the employers and collaboration between PES, employers, and employees.



Trade Testing System: Facilitate acquisition of formal qualifications

The Trade Testing System is aimed at assessing individuals who have acquired skills on the job or through general life experience but do not have formal qualifications. The System provides assessment of individuals' knowledge, skills and competences through interviews, portfolio analysis, theoretical and practical tests.¹

Candidates who have successfully passed the tests are awarded a Certificate of Competence in that particular occupation. For those occupations that do not have an MQF (Malta Qualifications Framework) level next to the occupation title, the applicant needs to have at least one year experience in a given occupation. For those occupations that have an MQF level next to the occupation title, the applicant needs to have at least three years' experience in a given occupation. In addition, Jobsplus cannot allow candidates to sit for more than two assessments for different occupations within a calendar year.

The System has had a positive impact on employability of individuals (both currently employed and unemployed). It was considered successful, due to efficient and effective assessment procedures and eligibility criteria, presented above.



The Just Transition Fund for Lower Silesia: How to stimulate up/re-skilling and facilitate the twin transition?

The Just Transition Fund for Lower Silesia (Poland) is part of the EU's Just Transition Programme that aims to contribute to the development and modernisation of the energy market, circular economy and digital transition.

The activities of the programme include:

¹ <https://jobsplus.gov.mt/training-opportunities/trade-testing-system>

- Implementing projects focusing on raising and improving competences in the field of green transformation;
- Supporting services allowing for the development of enterprises and/or their employees, in particular the acquisition or recognition of qualifications;
- Engaging in actions aimed at the development of green skills or green jobs, whilst improving and changing the qualifications of employees.¹

The programme involved local mayors, universities, the private sector, syndicates, and also the mining companies². This has ensured productive collaboration and support achievement of better results of the programme.

✓ **EMPREGO + DIGITAL: Customized training to employees according to employers' needs**

The first pilot of the programme “EMPREGO + DIGITAL” was a public-private partnership between the PES (IEFP) and the industry’s association (CIP) in Portugal, and aimed to provide training to employed workers, adjusting the training to the needs identified by each employer (e.g., digital collaborative tools, e-commerce, cybersecurity).³ The pilot, which lasted until 2022, covered 28 thousand workers, and is now targeting to reach 200 thousand workers until 2025.

The main value-added of the architecture of this training relies on the absence of one-size-fits-all curriculum. Instead, firms are invited to identify their needs in digital skills (which can be basic or advanced ICT skills), and once there is a minimum number of firms requiring a particular training to their workers, IEFP offers it. This programme constitutes the main public response in the prevention of technological-driven job displacement and, simultaneously, job transformation and job creation, as it allows in-job upskilling while contributing to technological/digital transition in organisations.⁴ The customized trainings, adapted to groups of firms that report certain needs, have proved to be successful.

¹ <https://rpo.dolnyslask.pl/ogloszenie-o-naborze-przeprowadzanym-w-sposob-konkurencyjny-feds-09-01-ip-02-012-23-transformacja-spoleczna-obszarow-gornicznych-na-dolnym-slasku/>

² <https://www.espon.eu/sites/default/files/attachments/Post-event%20brief%20-%20ESPO%20roundtable%20on%20Regions%20and%20structural%20change%20in%20the%20light%20of%20just%20transition%20and%20decarbonisation%20strategies.pdf>

³ <https://cip.org.pt/empregomaisdigital/programa/>

⁴ IEFP will also launch two complementary programmes: „LÍDER + DIGITAL“, aiming to give training to managers and company founders in tailor-made digital solutions to their firms, and „FORMADOR + DIGITAL“, aiming to enlarge the pool of trainers in digital skills (both people with pedagogical skills but without expertise in digital tools and people with expertise in digital tools but without pedagogical skills).



Beratung zur Beruflichen Entwicklung: Provide career guidance for low-qualified workers!

The Beratung zur Beruflichen Entwicklung programme in North Rhine-Westphalia is focused on providing career guidance of low-qualified workers. The state-wide publicly funded career guidance network – consisting of private HR companies that contribute to career path guidance together with public councillors – is open to both employed and unemployed people.¹

Success factors of this good practice include:

- Individual attention to workers through councillors, that avoid a one size fits all approach which proven to be ineffective.
- Re-skilling programmes, tailored to individual needs of people, some of which include the “Social partners together for work-oriented basic education in NRW”, consisting of temporary literacy courses or “Next station skilled worker” that focus on selected small-scale project for low-qualified employees.^{2, 3}

Strong partnerships with companies that are actively engaged in the process. Companies are incentivised to train and upskill their workers through financial support. Career councillors are subsidised for employees, after which costs for the trainings are split between the state and the company. Further subsidies can also be applied for by small companies.



Uddannelseshjælp: Educational support for NEET

“Uddannelseshjælp” is the programme in Denmark that has been implemented by local jobcentres since 2014. The programme targets NEET by reducing social assistance to a level equivalent to education support and by a new obligation to join education programmes.⁴

¹ <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/bc4572cc-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/bc4572cc-en>)

² <https://www.fachkraefteinitiative-nrw.de/einzelregionen/ostwestfalen-lippe/projekte-nachstation-facharbeiter-al-2019-09-17.pdf>

³ <https://grundbildung-nrw.de>

⁴ https://vbn.aau.dk/ws/portalfiles/portal/281826363/WP35_Youth_employment_policies_in_Denmark.pdf

The young recipients of “education support” (uddannelsesyndelse) are classified into three groups, depending on their prior educational background and personal characteristics:

- (1) Obviously education-ready (begin education as soon as possible),
- (2) Education-ready (assistance to get ready for education, e.g., courses in basic reading, writing and math, mentor-assistance)
- (3) Activity-ready (participate in activation programs, i.e., “Nytteindsats”).

The programme has been successful, due the following factors:

- Youth are provided tailored education classes, depending on their readiness to undertake education and assessment of their skills;
- The education programmes are focused on providing most relevant skills for the future work, in light of technological transformation;

The programme obliges young people to undertake education/training, thereby increasing probability of their long-term employability.



“Gyere haza fiatal” (Come home young): job opportunities, housing assistance, and mobility grants for returning high-educated Hungarians

“Gyere haza fiatal” (Come home young) programme has been launched in 2015 by the Hungarian government to encourage the return of young Hungarians living in the UK. The programme offered Hungarians with a higher education degree job opportunities, housing assistance, and mobility grants to facilitate the travel of returning Hungarians for job interviews and mentoring.¹

The eligibility criteria included the following: the migrant should be young (below 30) and should have excellent English language skills and higher education degree in a profession/industry that experiences labour shortage.² In addition, preference has been given to migrants that were employed abroad for at least one year. The programme funded only 50 young people, due to limited budget. However, it has been effective in stimulating highly skilled individuals to return to their home country. Based on interviews with the returned migrants, the programme represents an attractive offer, as it provides comprehensive support.

¹ <https://hungary.iom.int/hungarian-emigration>

² <https://kdnf.hu/ezaz/elindult-gyere-haza-fiatal-elnevezesu-program>

The ultimate goal of the policymakers was to stimulate local entrepreneurship through the programme. The success with achieving this goal was questionable, however, the suggested eligibility criteria was considered the key success factor.



ProgeTiger programme: How to improve technological literacy and digital competence of teachers and students?

In 2012, Estonia launched the ProgeTiger programme to create interest in technology and improve technological literacy and digital competence of teachers and students. The programme targets all young children, from kindergarteners to high school and vocational school students. Participants receive training in three major areas: engineering sciences, information technology, and design & technology, learning about programming, robotics and 3D technology.¹

In parallel, Estonia started to train teachers, develop learning materials, and translate Codecademy.com programming courses. Some teachers have joined the network of ProTigers that offers exciting opportunities for children and inspires new colleagues to get involved.

The success factors of the programme are the following:

- Integration of technology in the education process from childhood, especially if it is done in a game-setting, raises interest in technology and is more likely to encourage children to pursue career in technology-related fields;
- The programme targets students of all ages, thereby improving digital skills of the entire generation;
- The programme is placed in a wider framework of educational reforms in the country, therefore it is supported by the stakeholders and can be scaled up;
- Training of teachers is essential for ensuing quality education and to promote technology-enabled education within the country;

The network of ProTigers represents ambassadors of the initiative that will ensure its sustainability and support, allowing it to scale up.

¹ <https://www.educationestonia.org/progetiger/>



Educational check (Bildungsscheck NRW): Covering training costs of specific demographic groups

The Educational check (Bildungsscheck NRW) in Köln promotes continuing education by covering training costs up to €500 per person. There is an income ceiling to be able to benefit from the programme, and some demographic groups are deliberately picked, such as immigrants, employees without professional qualifications, professional returners, older workers and atypically employed persons (e.g., temporary workers).¹

Some of the success factors of this EC good practice include:

- Personal consultation that allows for a good match between an individual's needs, the needs of the labour market and the provided training.
- Strong links with local educational providers and the counselling centres that are numerous throughout the region, increasing accessibility.²
- It improves employability of people with low qualifications and helps companies to strengthen their competitiveness through well-qualified employees.

Small companies can also access the programme through company training checks, in the so-called “company-access”, receiving financial support that enables them to implement vocational trainings for their employees. This works as an incentive for small companies to employ vulnerable groups whilst enabling them to simultaneously innovate.³



GINOP-5.1.1-15 Road to the labour market: Personalised career guidance and training, wage subsidies, and job board

The “GINOP-5.1.1-15 Road to the labour market” programme in Estonia has been launched in 2015 and was mostly funded under the ESF. The programme included two parts.⁴ The programme has been aimed to help long-term unemployed and people that reside in areas with limited job opportunities to re-enter the labour market.

The key activities of the programme focused on making the services provided by the PES more accessible, efficient, of higher quality, and strengthening the targeting of services and support through a profiling system. The profiling system was designed for the PES to facilitate the provision of personalised services to customers, such as career guidance and training opportunities.

¹ <https://www.weiterbildungsberatung.nrw/finanzierung/bildungsscheck>

² <https://www.mags.nrw/bildungsscheck>

³ <https://www.weiterbildungsberatung.nrw/finanzierung/bildungsscheck>

⁴ <https://kohesio.acceptance.ec.europa.eu/en/projects/Q3936213>

In addition, the programme incentivised inclusion into the labour market through wage subsidies to employers and set up a free job board where companies can share vacancies with potential employees. The programme funded general labour market services and professional activities for all jobseekers, including those who did not participate in this labour market programme.¹

It has been considered effective, due to the following:

- The profiling aspect of the programme follows previous European Commission recommendations to develop a PES customer categorisation system (profiling). This is essential for data analysis and the design of future ALMP measures;
- The programme provided a wide range of personalised mediation, counselling, mentoring/training services;

The free job board has been a much-needed tool and it proved an effective and efficient mechanism for reducing unemployment and improving labour market mismatches.



Regional mobility support: transportation and living costs for training periods

In Latvia, the regional mobility support is available to the unemployed to reach workplaces or trainings during all training period or first 4 months if a person starts labour relations. The location of work/training should be at least 15 km and not more than 110 km from a declared residence place. The support partially covers transportation and/or living costs (up to EUR 150 per month for rent and EUR 7 per day for transportation). An exact amount of support depends on real costs of transportation or living, based on submitted expenses.

Currently, 50% of the unemployed in Latvia that undergo training use the regional mobility support. Such measure is effective in the contexts of limited local training/employment opportunities. It partially covers costs to motivate participation in education/training and to ensure that support is valued, as personal resources also are invested. In addition, the measure helps to develop a habit of travelling to work or training, especially for the long-term unemployed.



UPSKILL: Training for young people in IT

UPSKILL is the training programme in Portugal that targets young people who want to follow an IT career. The PES gathers companies with specific skills needs and launches the

¹ <https://kohesio.acceptance.ec.europa.eu/en/projects/Q3936213>

training according to them. In exchange, these companies commit to employ 80% of the trainees, at a minimum net wage of €1,200.

UPSKILL has already certified 2,000 young people in advanced ICT. The adoption of this strategy has turned Portugal the best performer within the group of countries implementing the programme R4E – Reskilling 4 Employment (Portugal, Spain and Sweden), a European Round Table for Industry’s initiative to best address reskilling and upskilling need in the EU.¹

The success of programme is highlighted by its ability to address two challenges at once – support employers, thereby stimulating innovative job creation, and mitigate (long-term) unemployment, especially among young people.



Training card: Online tool for training based on career counselling

The Estonian government offers short-term (up to a year) training options to enable unemployed and employed to gain skills required for the labour market. A key element is the use of the training card. The card is an online tool that offers training options to an individual, based on career counselling from the PES (Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund).² While additional training options can be provided (specific courses can be ordered), the supply of training options is grounded in the forecasted skill demand by OSKA.

The training is available for employed persons if they provide evidence that they are at risk of unemployment.³ Specifically, the requirements for employed persons are:

- The employee cannot continue in their current employment position, due to health problems. This is the only criteria that bypasses the low annual income requirement;
- The employee has an annual income of less than EUR 18.636 and is over the age of 50. The criteria is meant to address the risk of unemployment, due to ageing;
- The employee has an annual income of less than EUR 18.636 and has not attained vocational or higher education. The criteria are meant to address the risk of unemployment due to dropping out of education;
- The employee has an annual income of less than EUR 18.636 and their Estonian language skills are insufficient to continue in their current employment. This criteria targets minority groups and migrants.

¹ <https://reskilling4employment.eu/en/>


² <https://www.tootukassa.ee/en/services/career-and-training/training-card>

³ <https://www.tootukassa.ee/en/services/career-and-training/training-employees-work-and-study>

The success of this instruments has been related to the following factors:

- The list of offered trainings is tailored for each individual, following career counselling and the forecasted skills demand, projected by OSKA. All services are offered using digital identification methods, thereby increasing efficiency of processes;

Employed persons get access to subsidized training if they indicate at least one factor of vulnerability - income, age, skills/education level, language skills. A variety of considered factors allows to support different population groups.

 **VASTE - Vocational Multi-Disciplinary Assessment Centre: Tailored training and employment/career plan for vulnerable groups**

The VASTE programme was a €13 million project, launched in Malta and funded by the ESF.¹ The programme aimed to tackle unemployment, especially among the vulnerable groups, such as persons with disability, former substance abusers and other socially challenged individuals etc. All the above are also typically characterised as low-education/low-skilled.

The main activity of the programme was the development of a Vocational Multi-Disciplinary Assessment Centre. The Centre offers a comprehensive assessment of an individuals' needs. Based on it, a tailored training and employment/career plan is developed. The individual, in consultation with the programme advisor, was offered several training courses, such as...

- Pre-Employment Training is offered to four distinct groups: persons with intellectual difficulties, persons with physical/sensorial difficulties, persons with mental health challenges and other vulnerable individuals. Courses range from 50 to 100 hours of training depending on the training referred to.
- Basic ICT Training aims to provide clients with practical knowledge, skills and competences required to use ICT, use the Internet, send, and receive email and use Microsoft Word to prepare a Curriculum Vitae and covering letter. Through this training programme, the client also learns to identify and apply the correct practices and habits to work with ICT equipment safely.
- Sheltered Employment Training gives the opportunity to clients with intellectual or other severe disabilities to receive hands-on training in different tasks such as back office, assembly of products, packaging etc. The duration of this training is of 52 weeks, during which, clients work within groups assisted by Job Coaches. Skills such as work ethics, independent living, communication, and social skills are

¹ <https://jobsplus.gov.mt/schemes-jobseekers/vaste>

embedded within this programme. The main objective of this initiative is to offer maximum opportunity to those with severe or multiple disabilities, possibly instigating achievement from sheltered to supported employment.

- Headstart is a six-month programme offered by the Lino Spiteri Foundation with the scope of increasing work prospects within the labour market. The aim of the programme is to assist individuals in enhancing their competences related to employment. It simulates a work setting and is structured in a manner that helps individuals to improve relationships and social skills, understand work-related skills and procedures and foster workplace ethics.
- The VASTE Programme is also working to increase the number of work placements and employment retention of other vulnerable individuals. This is being achieved through Mentoring services which are being provided to clients prior and during employment as necessary.
- Throughout Supported Employment, the client is given training and re-training on the specific job tasks according to the individual's needs. Job Coaches are assigned to facilitate the integration of the individual at the place of work by the identification of a 'work buddy' who will volunteer to handhold the vulnerable individual on an ongoing basis to retain employment.

As a result of participation in the programme, 44% participants got a job within the first six months following the programme completion. The strengths of the programme include its individualised approach to individuals, that focuses on a thorough assessment, a comprehensive package of services until an individual is employed, and a good design of training/employment programmes that fit the needs and preferences of different individuals. The training programmes include both basic skills, competences that are essential to empower an individual and skills that are in high demand on the labour market, especially in light of technological transformation.

In addition, the programme has been implemented in cooperation between the PES and the Lino Spiteri Foundation. The Foundation is a leading social purpose cooperative that employs persons with disability in collaboration with the private sector. This partnership drew on PES resources together with the experience and expertise of the corporate sector to create employment opportunities for persons with disability.



OSKA: Develop evidence-based policies for an inclusive labour market!

OSKA is the publicly funded agency of Estonia, established in 2015, that forecasts the needs for Estonian labour force and skills. The annual studies of OSKA analyse current labour and

skills demand and forecast what skills/qualifications will be essential for the economy in the next 10 years.¹ OSKA reports to the Employment Department of the Ministry of Social Affairs of Estonia to inform the development of employment, education, economic and social policies. The development of the ALMP measures is also strongly influenced by the findings of OSKA.² In addition, the studies of OSKA help people to make informed career choices, as data on labour market developments is publicly available and is utilized by the PES during consultations with employed and unemployed people.

The data is collected using applied research surveys on sectoral needs for labour and skills, combining both qualitative and quantitative research methods and analysing professional qualifications across all levels of education. Under the Development Strategy 2035, continued efforts and funding will be directed towards the development of OSKA's labour demand forecasts.

The effectiveness of OSKA has been dependent on several factors:

- Willingness of the policymakers to collaborate with the agency and to adjust policies, based on OSKA recommendations. Although the agency admits that such collaboration is still problematic, as policymakers did not use to design policies in multi-stakeholder consultations, a significant progress has been made;
- OSKA collects both qualitative and quantitative data. This represents a unique approach, as typically only quantitative data is collected. Due to interviews, OSKA gains deeper insights into needs, challenges, plans and ambitions of companies and workers. This improves the quality of advice that OSKA provides;

The data produced by OSKA is publicly available and presented in a user-friendly format, increasing its utilization by PES, companies/organisations and labour force in Estonia.



Arbejdsløshedskasse – Unemployment insurance funds: Economic support for unemployment and career and job search counselling

The unemployment insurance funds in Denmark, known as "arbejdsløshedskasse," or simply "a-kasse", is a form of voluntarily social protection to which an individual can contribute. The funds are additional to the basic state unemployment benefit "kontanthjælp." Basic state unemployment benefits are universal cash benefits to all those who lose their jobs and do not have savings or assets amounting to more than 10k DKK (1.3k

¹ <https://oska.kutsekoda.ee/en/contact/>

² <https://valitsus.ee/viime-inimeste-teadmised-oskused-ja-hoiakud-kooskolla-tooturu-vajaduste-ning-majanduse#kirde-ja-kagu-eeesti>

EUR). Any person with more savings or assets than this must completely rely on their chosen a-kasse to pay out their unemployment benefits.¹

The funds are managed by private associations of employees or of self-employed individuals who organise themselves with the aim of safeguarding economic support in case of unemployment.² A-kasses are also meant to provide career and job search counselling by acting as professional networks. For this reason, many, but not all, a-kasses are profession or sector-based.

Although the insurance funds are private, they are still largely financed by the Danish government.³ Most of the funds from a-kasses are transferred to the government, but when an individual becomes unemployed, the unemployment benefits are paid out from a-kasses, transferred to them as a refund from the government.⁴

Success factors of a-kasses:

- Private, optional unemployment insurance funds have helped ensure that people who are traditionally excluded from unemployment benefits, such as the self-employed, are also covered;
- A-kasses have been able to provide up to 90% of an unemployed person's original income while also providing job search support, acting as additional support to the PES and ensuring financial stability while unemployed;

Private unemployment insurance funds are an effective way of extending unemployment benefits to cover instances and individuals that might not be covered by governmental schemes.



PDL Redéploiement: Facilitating business access to credit

The PDL Redéploiement in Pays de La Loire, France, seeks to facilitate businesses access to credit. The financial programme aims to loan money to industrial firms that need liquidity or wish to expand their activity in times of less favourable economic periods (e.g. economic crises, inflation or sudden drop in revenue). It does so through flexible loans that are often not provided through conventional means because of not meeting relevant preconditions.

¹ <https://dm.dk/students/about-dm-and-ma/what-is-an-unemployment-insurance-fund>

² <https://www.a-kasser.dk/unemployment-insurance/>

³ <https://www.star.dk/en/about-the-danish-agency-for-labour-market-and-recruitment/unemployment-insurance-funds/>

⁴ <https://www.star.dk/en/about-the-danish-agency-for-labour-market-and-recruitment/unemployment-insurance-funds/>

Since 2016, the project has provided 190 loans, varying between €50k to €2million, and summing up to €39million. This is proof of its large range – as it assists SMEs and larger companies when needed.

Some of the advantages for companies applying for the loans through this program are:

- Rapid and integral deposit;
- Non-taxable;
- Relatively high amount of loanable amount;
- Can be used for more risky projects than conventional loans;
- The region is a patient financier.

This financial mechanism is turned loans' repaying into new loans, re-injecting these funds into the regional economy. This constant flow allows to limit the regional expenditure associated with the mechanism.

One of the key properties making this a good practice is the fact that the region puts the interests of local companies at the heart of the project, instead of direct financial gain through interests.



Smíchovská SPŠ: Encouraging secondary school students to design projects and start-ups

Smíchovská SPŠ is a secondary school in the Czech Republic.¹ The school encourages students to design projects and start-ups right at the school premises. The education at school includes different areas of IT, such as cybersecurity, Internet of Things, virtual and augmented reality, computer game development, robotics. Modern laboratories such as the Physics Laboratory, the Cybernetic Polygon, the Virtual and Augmented Reality Laboratory, the IoT Laboratory and the classrooms of the Polytechnic Nest are built at the Smíchovské SPŠ.

The school is very popular in Prague and receives the highest number of applications among all secondary schools. Its success is related to the following factors:

- The school invests in training of teachers and in cooperation between students and graduates of other schools;
- The education programme and technologies/facilities at the school allow students to acquire relevant knowledge and skills, particularly in light of technological transformation;

¹ <https://www.ssps.cz/>

The school collaborates with start-up incubators and coworking centres to support entrepreneurship among students and to organise conferences and events.



Degree study allowance: Funding vocational, professional higher education and bachelor's degrees

The degree study allowance is available in Estonia to fund vocational, professional higher education or bachelor's degree courses. The allowance is aimed at both employed and unemployed persons who face challenges finding employment or are at risk of losing their job due to outdated skills. Generally, the requirements for applicants consider the level of education attainment and/or the time since they graduated. Applicants must meet one of these conditions:¹

- The applicant does not have a degree from professional or vocational education and it has been at least 5 years since they obtained education or dropped out of education;
- The applicant has gained their profession or higher education degree more than 15 years ago;
- The applicant cannot continue working in their current position, due to their health.

The degree study allowance has been considered an effective instrument to prevent or mitigate unemployment, due to the following reasons:

- The instrument supports adult learning among population groups that have poor employment prospects;
- The instrument proves long-term, comprehensive training that enables significant upskilling/reskilling;
- The measure supports specific study programmes that are selected based on forecasted skill demand by OSKA² (with the exception to people facing work challenges due to their health – they are allowed to choose programmes that allows them to remain employed);

As of 2022, beneficiaries receive a monthly allowance of EUR 292 for their studies to partially cover living/training expenses and ensure commitment to training.

¹ <https://www.tootukassa.ee/en/services/career-and-training/degree-study-allowance>

² <https://oska.kutsekoda.ee/en/>

SMARTLY: Reducing NEET and upskilling youth

SMARTLY is the initiative, launched in 2021, to strengthen the employability of youths while ensuring that Public Employment Services across Europe enhance the strengths of individuals that are not in education, employment or training (NEETs) to meet the needs of the labour market for the Green and Digital Sectors.¹

The initiative stimulates the development of digital and green skills of youth in eight European countries – Malta, Croatia, Cyprus, Poland, Italy, France, and Luxembourg. In Malta, the initiative has been considered very successful and attracted over 100 participants per year. The success factors of the initiative include:

- Dual focus – reducing NEET and stimulating innovative job creation that will support strategic policy objectives (i.e., Twin transition);
- Long-term vision – the initiative focuses on upskilling in sectors that will secure employment of youth in the long run;

Learning through collaboration – the initiative has been launched across several EU Member States, which allows to learn best practices, compare, and draw lessons on effective implementation of the initiative.



Youth Education Guide Aalborg (Ungdommens uddannelsesvejledning): Helping students to identify the most suitable education and professional path

Youth Education Guide Aalborg (Ungdommens uddannelsesvejledning) is the programme in North Jutland (Denmark) that focuses on encouraging further education and employment by helping students (between the ages of 12 and 24) to identify the most suitable education and professional path for them.²

The programme is delivered by the Job and Education Department of the Aalborg municipality. It includes promotion of education and employment across schools, assistance in finding an internship or a job, and it offers educational guidance and free training (preparatory basic education and specialized youth education).

The programme has been considered successful, due to its focus on increasing the motivation of young people to enter education/employment based in their personal strengths and professional ambitions. In addition, the success has been ensured due to strong cooperation with the school's teachers and parents throughout the training and

¹ <https://www.smartlyproject.eu/>

² <https://uu-aalborg.dk/>

guidance process. Lastly, each student received a supervisor that resulted in an individualized and long-term support.