



The Wind of Change: From Diplomas to Demonstrated Skills in ICT Hiring

How Europe's tech sector is
rebalancing the scales between
degrees and proven ability

“What can you build,
and can you prove it?”

“Skills-first,
not skills-only.”

“Europe needs
the talent it's
currently screening out.”

“A badge is only as good
as the standard behind it.”

THE GAP: EUROPE NEEDS MORE ICT TALENT

ICT specialists employed in the EU

10.3M
in 2024



20M
2030 TARGET



Projected to reach only ~12M on current trends.

THE DRIVERS



57.5%

of EU enterprises that
tried to recruit ICT
specialists in 2023
struggled to fill
the vacancies.



39%

of workers' core skills
expected to change by
2030.
(WEF)



66% → 59%

share of AI-exposed jobs
requiring a degree,
2019 to 2024.
(PwC)

KEY STATISTICS AT A GLANCE



~6x

how much a
skills-first approach
could expand the
average EU member
state's talent pool.
(LinkedIn Economic Graph)



<1 in 700

hires actually
affected by
dropped degree
requirements,
the "say-do gap"
(Harvard / Burning Glass)



19.5%

of EU ICT specialists
are women, a gap
skills-first hiring
could help close.
(Eurostat, 2024)

NEW CURRENCIES OF VALIDATION



CERTIFICATION



BOOTCAMP



PORTFOLIO



MICRO-
CREDENTIALS



HIRED

THE REALITY CHECK



Most companies
talk about skills-
driven recruitment.
But few have actually
modified their hiring
practices.

KEY TAKEAWAYS



The gatekeeper is
loosening, not
disappearing.
Skills-first, but not
skills-only recruitment.



The driver is
scarcity.
Not enough ICT
professionals emerge
from the European
degree pipeline.



Skills evolve faster
than curriculum
content.
As many skills will change
significantly by 2030,
skills take precedence
over qualifications.



Alternative currencies
of validation.
Certificates, boot camps,
personal portfolio and
micro-certifications are
legitimate evidence
of skill sets.



The inclusion
potential.
Recruiting by skill can
open doors to non-traditional
talent—so long as
evaluations are unbiased.



Talking vs walking.
Most companies talk
about skills-driven
recruitment.
But few have actually
modified their hiring
practices.

POLICY ANCHOR: BACKING EUROPE'S SKILLS TRANSFORMATION



DIGITAL DECADE
2030 targets for digital
skills and jobs.



**MICRO-CREDENTIALS
RECOMMENDATION 2022**
Building trust in learning
that is short, flexible and stackable.



**UNION OF SKILLS
2025**
A new pact to unlock talent,
upskill Europe and leave
no one behind.



THE SAY-DO GAP
<1 in 700 hires actually
affected by dropped
degree requirements.
(Harvard / Burning Glass)