PARTICIPANT & SPEAKER GUIDE

28 OCTOBER — EUROPEAN COMMISSION CO-ORGANIZED POLICY CONFERENCE

29–30 OCTOBER — THREE4GLOBALSKILLS JOINT FINAL CONFERENCE



WELCOME

Three projects. One shared conversation.

A welcome from the principal investigators of GS4S, Link4Skills and Skills4Justice

Dear colleagues, partners and friends,

Welcome to Brussels and to the **Three4GlobalSkills Joint Final Conference**. GS4S, Link4Skills and Skills4Justice are three independent Horizon Europe projects that have been running in parallel and exploring closely connected questions around skills shortages, labour markets, migration, skills formation and fair mobility. From the beginning, we have chosen to work not only alongside one another, but with one another.

Over the course of our projects, our consortia have exchanged ideas and evidence, participated in one another's Advisory Boards and annual consortium meetings, and created opportunities for joint discussion and learning — including workshops around the annual IMISCOE conferences. That collaboration has helped us identify where our findings reinforce one another, where they offer different perspectives, and where bringing them together can generate more useful insights for policy and practice.

This three-day programme brings together two connected parts of the Three4GlobalSkills journey. On 28 October, the programme opens with a policy conference co-organized with the European Commission, bringing together sister projects and related initiatives around migration policy, returns, global skills shortages and skills partnerships. On 29–30 October, GS4S, Link4Skills and Skills4Justice come together for their Joint Final Conference, presenting research findings, policy insights and a shared agenda for fair and sustainable skills mobility. It is not the merging of three projects, but a meeting point for three distinct research programmes that have collaborated throughout their project lifecycles.

Prof. Tesseltje de Lange and Dr. Pascal Beckers
GS4S
Radboud University



Prof. dr hab. Izabela Grabowska
Link4Skills
Kozminski University



Dr. Vidmantas Tūtlys
Skills4Justice
Vytautas Magnus University



ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

Mobilising Skills for a Just and Inclusive Europe

Tackling global skills gaps through migration, innovation and policy

From 28 to 30 October 2026, Brussels hosts a three-day programme bringing together GS4S, Link4Skills and Skills4Justice. The programme has two connected parts: a European Commission co-organized policy conference on 28 October, followed by the Three4GlobalSkills Joint Final Conference of the three sister projects on 29–30 October.

WHO	WHERE	AUDIENCE
Three Horizon Europe sister projects + European Commission and partner initiatives	28 Oct — National Centre for Research and Development 29–30 Oct — Atelier29, Brussels	Policy, research, business & civil society

Why a joint conference?

The three projects bring complementary evidence on labour migration, skills development and labour-market transformation. Joining forces allows the conference to move beyond individual project results and create a broader, more integrated conversation.

- Combine economic, social and policy perspectives into a wider evidence base.
- Bring together insights from EU and partner countries in a comparative international perspective.
- Connect research findings with the needs of policymakers, employers, civil society and international organisations.
- Strengthen the foundation for practical, fair and evidence-based approaches to skills mobility and labour-market governance.

What to expect

- New research on skills shortages, skill mismatches and labour mobility
- Business strategies and labour-market responses
- Perspectives from countries of origin and destination
- Lessons for skills mobility and EU Talent Partnerships
- Innovative tools, including the Link4Skills Navigator
- Dialogue on long-term directions for skilled migration and public policy

Conference page: link4skills.eu/final-conference

HORIZON EUROPE SISTER PROJECT

GS4S

Global Strategy for Skills, Migration and Development

GS4S is a 36-month Horizon Europe project that seeks to better understand global skills shortages and to co-create evidence-based responses in three critical sectors: Digital, Care and Construction.

Purpose

The project examines how migration, skills development and alternative policy responses can help address shortages while taking into account the needs of employers, workers, migrants and countries of origin and destination.

What GS4S brings to the conversation

- Comparative evidence on skills shortages across six world regions: the EU, EEA, Western Balkans, Middle East and North Africa, West Africa, and South/South-East Asia.
- Employer perspectives on labour shortages, upskilling, reskilling and the combination of migration, training, automation and other responses.
- Migrant perspectives on skilling and pathways into the project's three focus sectors.
- The GS4S Policy Lab, working papers, policy briefs, roundtables and decision-making tools designed to support evidence-based policy choices.

A global strategy

GS4S connects academic research, the private sector and civil society to explore how skills policy, labour migration governance and development can be considered together rather than in isolation.

AT A GLANCE

FOCUS SECTORS

Digital • Care • Construction

SCOPE

Six regions across Europe, Africa & Asia

APPROACH

Research • Policy Lab • Decision tools

EXPLORE THE PROJECT

gs4s.eu

GS4S contributes a global, multi-level perspective on how skills shortages can be addressed through both mobility and alternatives to mobility.

HORIZON EUROPE SISTER PROJECT

Link4Skills

Global skill shortages, fair skill flows and data-informed policy

Link4Skills is an EU-funded research and innovation project seeking innovative, sustainable solutions to global skill shortages and mismatches. It asks how skills can be identified, developed and mobilised in ways that are both effective and fair.

Purpose

Working across Europe, Africa, Asia and America, Link4Skills examines re- and upskilling, automation and migration as policy responses to changing labour-market needs. The project brings a wide range of stakeholders into the research process, from governments and international institutions to employers, workers' organisations and civil society.

Three questions at the core

- How should the EU respond to skill shortages?
- How can businesses and policymakers identify changing skills needs more effectively?
- How can skills recruitment — domestically and from non-EU countries — be fair, balanced and effective?

The Link4Skills Navigator

A central project output is the AI-assisted Link4Skills Navigator: an open-access tool combining labour-market intelligence, predictive modelling and problem-solving support to help policymakers and stakeholders make data-informed decisions on fair skill flows.

AT A GLANCE

PROJECT NETWORK
14 partners in 10 countries

SECTOR LENS
STEM • Construction • Health

SIGNATURE OUTPUT
AI-assisted Skills Navigator

EXPLORE THE PROJECT
link4skills.eu

Link4Skills connects data, stakeholder knowledge and policy design to support fair and efficient skill flows between labour markets.

HORIZON EUROPE SISTER PROJECT

Skills4Justice

Skill Partnerships for Sustainable and Just Migration Patterns

SKILLS 4 JUSTICE

Skills4Justice is a Horizon Europe project focused on the relationship between skill matching, skill formation and migration. It explores how origin, transit and destination countries can build more sustainable and fair approaches to workforce mobility.

The challenge

The project responds to skills shortages and skill mismatches across five EU and six non-EU countries, as well as to the need for labour-migration pathways that are more regular, labour-market relevant and protective of migrant workers and societies in both origin and destination countries.

What Skills4Justice develops

- Research-based knowledge on skill shortages, mismatches and the role of education, training and qualification systems.
- Evidence on alternatives to migration for addressing skills shortages in destination countries.
- Insights into migrant workers' perspectives on skill formation, migration patterns and participation.
- A toolkit for policymakers and stakeholders to support sustainable and mutually beneficial skill partnerships.

From evidence to capacity

A key ambition is to strengthen the capacity of policymakers, education and training institutions, and social partners to design skill-matching and skill-formation practices that support sustainable migration and reintegration.

AT A GLANCE

COUNTRIES
5 EU + 6 non-EU countries

CORE THEMES
Skill matching • Formation • Migration

PRACTICAL OUTPUT
Toolkit for sustainable skill partnerships

EXPLORE THE PROJECT
skills4justice.eu

Skills4Justice places the fairness and sustainability of skill formation and migration partnerships at the centre of policy design.

OUR SHARED JOURNEY

Three sister projects, working together from the start

Distinct research programs — connected by a common challenge and a deliberate culture of collaboration

GS4S, Link4Skills and Skills4Justice have run in parallel and have been recognized as Horizon Europe sister projects because they address closely related questions from different disciplinary, geographical and policy perspectives. Their cooperation has therefore been part of the projects' journey from the beginning — not something added only for the final conference.

01
Sister-project relationship
Shared challenge, complementary research agendas

02
Reciprocal exchange
Participation in one another's Advisory Boards

03
Research synergies
Annual consortium meetings and joint workshops around IMISCOE

04
Joint final conference
Three years of collaboration brought into one public conversation





Joint sister-project workshop and exchange — building synergies across the three research programmes.

"This conference is not where the collaboration begins. It is where three years of collaboration come together."

Three4GlobalSkills Joint Final Conference

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Plan your three days in Brussels

Everything you need for 28–30 October — venues, arrival and participation

VENUES
28 October — The National Centre for Research and Development
Rue Belliard 40
1040 Brussels

29–30 October — Atelier29
Rue Jacques de Lalaing 29
1000 Brussels, Belgium

ON THE DAYS
28 October: 09:40–16:30
29 October: 08:00–17:45
30 October: 09:00–14:00

Getting there

The 28 October programme takes place at the National Centre for Research and Development (Rue Belliard 40). The 29–30 October programme takes place at Atelier29 in the European Quarter.

METRO	**Maelbeek**	≈ 5 min walk
METRO	**Arts-Loi**	≈ 6 min walk
TRAIN	**Bruxelles-Schuman**	≈ 8 min walk
TRAIN	**Bruxelles-Luxembourg**	≈ 12 min walk

Walking times are approximate; please check live transport information on the day.

From Brussels Airport: take a direct train to Bruxelles-Schuman, then walk to the venue.
From Brussels-Midi: take metro line 2 or 6 to Arts-Loi, then walk to the venue.

Joining online

The conference will be live-streamed. Online participation is free, registration is required, and the livestream is viewing-only.

Register for online participation → **Official registration form**
Programme and conference information → **Three4GlobalSkills conference page**

THREE-DAY PROGRAMME

Wednesday, 28 October, Co-organized with the European Commission

The National Centre for Research and Development • Rue Belliard 40 • 1040 Brussels

Online connection: Microsoft Teams meeting
Join: https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/338187269050913?p=4Zushx2B5Wx5MipFhc
Meeting ID: 336 547 450 735 466
Passcode: 44jz2Lu3

09:40–09:50	**Welcome Remarks** Waldemar Dubaniowski, Director of the NCBR Office in Brussels **Introduction and aims** The European Commission • Henriette Van Eijl, Head of Unit - Health and Societal Transitions, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD) • Valentine Barelier, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD) • Angel Fuentes-Mateos, The European Research Executive Agency (REA)
09:50–10:00	**Welcome** Prof. Izabela Grabowska, on behalf of sister projects Link4Skills, GS4S and Skills4Justice
10:00–12:30	**1st Roundtable: Irregular migration and returns** Chairs: Prof. Anna Triandafyllidou (Link4Skills) and Valentine Barelier (DG RTD) GAPS (Zeynep Sahin-Mencutek) – Return hubs / consequences of return policies on third countries MORE (Michele LeVoy) – Operational vs. policy perspectives, tensions in enforcement FAiR (Arjen Leerkes) – Alternatives to return MIrreM (Maegan Hendow) – Scale of irregularity, policy options to address irregularity PRIME (Martin Ruhs, online) – Value conflicts/dilemmas on irregular migration policy in public opinion (if that's what he plans to present) DIGNITYFIRM (Tesseltje de Lange) – Intersections with other policy areas Summary by chairs
12:30–14:00	**Lunch break**
14:00–16:30	**2nd Roundtable: Decision making processes and global shortages and skills partnerships** Chairs: Dr. Pascal Beckers (GS4S) and Valentine Barelier (DG RTD) DYNAMIG (Tobias Heidland, online) – Global demographic change, migration dynamics and implications for policymaking PACEs (Jasmijn Slootjes) – Policymaking environment, political considerations and policy responses AspirE (Asunción Fresnoza-Flot) – Migrants' aspirations, agency and decision-making across borders Link4Skills (Izabela Grabowska) – Skills shortages and mismatches, evidence-informed policy choices, migration skill corridors and fair skills mobility GS4S (Tesseltje de Lange) – Governance, legal frameworks and practical conditions for skills partnerships Skills4Justice (Vidmantas Tūtlys) – Skills development, recognition, social justice and fair distribution of benefits Invited CSAs (participating in both roundtables): INNOVATE (Andrew Geddes, online); CAMINO (Rut Bermejo; Claire Hay, online) Summary by chairs
16:30	**Brief summary and end of the conference**

Thursday, 29 October — Morning

Atelier29 • Brussels, Livestream by registration: Registration form. Three4GlobalSkills. Mobilising Skills for a Just and Inclusive Europe

08:00–09:00	**Arrival & Registration** Welcome coffee and tea. Informal networking before the start of proceedings.
09:00–09:15	**Opening & Welcome** Welcome address setting out the aims of the day and the rationale for the joint Three4GlobalSkills conference. • Master of ceremony: Terry Martin — SPIA (Link4Skills)
09:15–10:15	**Session 1 — Introduction: Megatrends, Knowledge and Policy Responses** The opening substantive session establishes the intellectual and policy frame. Following an introduction of drivers of skills shortages, principal investigators introduce the three projects and present the Link4Skills Navigator. • Chair: Colleen Boland — Radboud University (GS4S) • Tesseltje de Lange & Pascal Beckers — Radboud University (GS4S) • Vidmantas Tūtlys — Vytautas Magnus University (Skills4Justice) • Izabela Grabowska — Kozminski University (Link4Skills) • Francesca Majorano Sarapo — project leader at the Demography and Migration unit of the JRC • Rapporteur: Ivanna Kyliushyk — Kozminski University (Link4Skills)
10:15–11:30	**Session 2 — Skills Shortages: Evidence and Recommendations** Examines drivers and manifestations of skills shortages — skill waste, overeducation, re- and upskilling needs, mismatches and automation. Researchers present comparative findings across partner countries. • Chair: Izabela Grabowska — Kozminski University (Link4Skills) • Sara Korbi — FIERI (GS4S) • Michaela Potančoková — IIASA (Link4Skills) • Jonathan Winterton — Leeds University Business School (Skills4Justice) • External discussant: Berk Erdem — Migration expert • Rapporteur: Ksenija Ivanović — Radboud University (GS4S)
11:30–11:45	**Coffee Break**
11:45–12:45	**Session 3 — Business Strategies for Tackling Skills Shortages** Focuses on how businesses respond to labour shortages. Findings from 2,000+ enterprises in Estonia, the Netherlands, Germany and Switzerland; analysis of automation strategies; lessons from sectoral skills partnerships. • Chair: Pascal Beckers — Radboud University (GS4S) • Ayse-Saka Helmhout — Radboud University (GS4S) • Friedrich Poeschel — EUI (GS4S) • Ida Kristina Kühn, ITB Bremen University (Skills4Justice) • Francesco Vittori — University of Verona (Skills4Justice) • Justyna Szałańska — Skills Alliance in Poland • Rapporteur: Ksenija Ivanović — Radboud University (GS4S)
12:45–13:45	**Lunch Break**

PROGRAMME

Thursday, 29 October — Afternoon

Atelier29 • Brussels

13:45–15:15	**Session 4 — Labour Migration and Third Countries: a conversation on Skills Shortages and Development** Widens the lens beyond Europe to examine how migration to the EU affects skills formation and development in origin countries. Contributions from Egypt, Bangladesh, Ghana, Nigeria, the Philippines, Indonesia, Morocco, Ukraine, India, North Macedonia, Türkiye and Ethiopia. • Chair: Dina Abdel Fattah — American University in Cairo (GS4S) • Marla Asis — Scalabrini Research Center, Philippines (Link4Skills) • Mary Setrana — University of Ghana (Link4Skills) • Rajan Irudaya — International Institute of Migration and Development (Link4Skills) • Shakirul Islam — OKUP (GS4S) • Violeta Cvetkoska — Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje (Skills4Justice) • Godfried Engbersen — Erasmus University Rotterdam (Link4Skills) • Mariavittoria Garlappi — European Training Foundation (ETF) *(ETF work on migration is accessible here)* • Rapporteur: Lara Husar — MPI Europe (GS4S)
15:15–16:15	**Session 5 — EU Talent Partnerships 2.0: Conditions for Success** Reviews past and current mobility schemes and asks what conditions would make the next generation of EU Talent Partnerships viable, credible and fair. Focus on design, feasibility, mutual benefit, rights protection and institutional realism. • Chair: Maegan Hendow — ICMPD (Link4Skills) • Ivan Toscano — CNOS-FAP Federation of Salesian Vocational Training Centres (Skills4Justice) • Caitlin Katsiaficas — ICMPD (Link4Skills) • Sandra Lavenex — University of Geneva (GS4S) • Sara Bortoletti — The European Commission • Rapporteur: Pablo Bernardo López Basurco — MPI Europe (GS4S)
16:15–16:30	**Coffee Break**
16:30–17:30	**Session 6 — Long-Term Perspectives: A Conversation on Skilled Migration and Policy** An audience-led conversation on the long view: what lies ahead for skilled migration, what strategic lessons can be drawn, and what longer-term recommendations should inform European public policy. • Chair: Pascal Beckers — Radboud University (GS4S) • Anna Triandafyllidou — Link4Skills • Jasmijn Slootjes — Migration Policy Institute Europe (GS4S) • Vidmantas Tūtlys — Vytautas Magnus University (Skills4Justice) • Prof. Helen Schwenken — Osnabrück University (Link4Skills) • Rapporteur: Ivanna Kyliushyk — Kozminski University (Link4Skills)
17:30–17:45	**Closing Remarks** Closing remarks by Tesseltje de Lange.

Friday, 30 October — Day 3

Atelier29 • Brussels

Internal meeting of the consortia

09:00–09:30	**Arrival at the venue**
09:30–09:50	**Opening remarks** • Principal investigators of Link4Skills, Skills4Justice and GS4S • Angel Fuentes Mateos, project officer for the sister projects at the European Commission
09:50–10:20	**Critical Reflections on Skilled Labour Migration** Prof. Anna Triandafyllidou, Toronto Metropolitan University This lecture discusses the dynamics of skilled migration around the world today. The lecture will touch upon three main issues. First, the governance of labour migration in transatlantic perspectives comparing the case of Canada with the models prevailing in Europe, considering how migration is governed and what are the motivations of skilled migrants in choosing their prospective destinations. Second, the lecture will touch upon the notion of skills circulation and reverse remittances that countries of origin send to countries of destination. Third, I will consider what the future holds in terms of demographic and skills transitions around the world. The aim of the lecture is to invite us all to think critically about these issues on the basis of our work.
10:20–10:35	**Coffee break**
10:35–13:00	**Brussels Synergy Paper. Research Complementariness, Divergencies and Gaps for Fair Skilled Migration** Moderator: Izabela Grabowska (Link4Skills) with support of GS4S and Skills4Justice **Abstract** The Synergy Workshop with Sister Projects brings together Link4Skills, GS4S and Skills4Justice to assess how their research findings complement, reinforce and challenge one another in advancing knowledge on fair skilled mobility. Rather than treating synergy as simple similarity between projects, the workshop will identify areas where different findings, approaches, tools and policy recommendations create additional scientific and policy value when connected. The discussion will be organised around three dimensions: labour market shortages, skills mismatches and the role of migration; Skills and Talent Partnerships; and the unique findings and added value of each sister project. Across these dimensions, participants will distinguish between research consensus, complementarities and synergies, divergences, uncertainties, research gaps and project-specific contributions. The workshop will build on the sister-project dialogue initiated in Girona and further develop the concept of transnational skills ecosystems as a framework connecting labour market needs, migration, skills development, recognition and fair mobility. Its principal output will be the Brussels Synergy Paper: Research Complementarities, Divergencies and Gaps for Fair Skilled Mobility, providing joint key messages, policy recommendations and priorities for future European research. Preparatory material will be sent before the workshop.
13:00-14:00	**Lunch**