

Practical guidelines for the regulatory framework

21LV06 Supporting employers to promote skills development in Latvia

The OECD and the Directorate General for Structural Reform Support (DG Reform) are cooperating to provide technical support to the Latvian Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) as part of the project "Supporting employers in promoting skills development in Latvia". The project will enable the MoES to improve the regulatory framework that supports investment in skills development by employers.

As part of the project, the OECD has produced a report that describes a policy package of financial and non-financial measures, based on extensive consultations with governmental and non-governmental stakeholders in Latvia. This document provides practical guidelines to develop the regulatory framework for the policy package.

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Introduction

According to the Law on Education, Latvia must support adult learning financially, including by allocating state budget to employers to provide up/re-skilling to their employees (Article 59, Paragraph 6, [Education Law](#)). The Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Latvia (MoES) is responsible¹ for the design of the regulatory framework to deliver the support, including eligibility criteria, obligations for employers and implementation procedures, and will work with the Ministry of Economy (MoE) for its implementation. The OECD and the Directorate General for Structural Reform Support (DG Reform) are cooperating to provide technical support to the MoES in the development of the regulatory framework. The publication of the underlying cabinet regulation is a milestone in the RRP (Recovery and Resilience Plan) for Latvia (Milestone 55 in the [Annex on operational arrangements](#)) and, following additional negotiations with EC and Latvia, needs to be finalised by the end of 2023.

Following an analysis of barriers and enabling conditions to promote skills development in Latvia ([Output 2 report](#)) and a review of international good practices ([Output 3 report](#)), the OECD has put together a policy package of financial and non-financial measures, based on extensive consultations with stakeholders (Output 4 report). The policy package consists of four key measures:

- Measure 1: Revamped **subsidised training** provided through employer associations, which aims to lower the cost of training and incentivise enterprises in Latvia to increase their employees' uptake of training offers.
- Measure 2: An **online tool** for enterprises to assess their skills gaps and training needs, which aims to provide enterprises with a free and accessible tool that produces an easy-to-understand and actionable analysis of their skill gaps, and to reduce the informational and attitudinal barriers that they face to training.
- Measure 3: **External expert assessments** of skills gaps and training needs of MSMEs, which aim to provide a deeper and tailored analysis of enterprises' training needs after completing the online self-assessment tool.
- Measure 4: Operation of the **steering group**, which will coordinate the implementation of the measures in the policy package.

This document sets out practical guidelines to develop the regulatory framework. In agreement with the MoES, the OECD has focused on Measure 1, Measure 3, and Measure 4. The practical guidelines aim to support the Latvian authorities in identifying the most suitable structure for the regulatory framework, determining the eligibility criteria and obligations for employers, and describing the implementation procedures. In agreement with the MoES, the practical guidelines adopt a structure and language as close as possible to that of the final legal text to facilitate the drafting process. However, they will need to be reviewed, modified, and expanded, as considered appropriate by the Latvian authorities, during the preparation of the regulatory framework. Throughout the document, some boxes provide some further information on key aspects that the authorities should consider while transposing the practical guidelines into legislation, and in the implementation of the regulation.

The OECD has drawn on the expertise of legal counsellors from BDO Law to ensure that the guidelines were consistent with EU and Latvian legal best practice. Building on the advice from BDO, the main cabinet regulation linked to the RRP for Latvia (Milestone 55 in the [Annex on operational arrangements](#)) will describe i) the modalities and support measures for employers, in particular micro-, small and medium enterprises, to provide upskilling and reskilling opportunities to their employees; ii) the responsibilities and criteria for receiving support; and iii) the procedures for receiving support. Each support measure will then have its own implementation regulation, depending on the foreseen funding source (e.g., the European

¹ The Ministry of Economy has taken over the development of the regulatory framework in accordance with the division of tasks of the [Government's action plan](#), approved by the Cabinet of Ministers on 20 April 2023 (Prot. No. 17 § 48)

Social Fund+), which will provide further details on the financial allocations and the responsibilities of the actors, and will further refine the eligibility criteria and obligations as required. This approach is aligned with current practice in Latvia and should promote flexibility in the legislative process, by establishing a general framework and simplifying the adoption of derivative legal acts and subsequent amendments.

Following this approach, the first section in this document provides practical guidelines for the main cabinet regulation linked to the RRP for Latvia, whereas the second section offers guidelines for a separate regulation with detailed implementation procedures for the subsidised training programmes and expert assessments. The practical guidelines do not cover the implementation procedures for the support measure involving municipalities because, as described in the Output 4 report, they have not been covered extensively in the OECD-DG-Reform project.

Practical guidelines for main regulation

I. General Provision

1. These practical guidelines define the procedures and criteria for the State to support employers in the additional education of employees, as per Article 14, Paragraph 34 and Article 59, Paragraph 6 of the [Education Law](#). They comprise of the following parts:

- 1.1. Definition of legal terms
- 1.2. Purpose
- 1.3. Description of support measures
- 1.4. Eligibility criteria for employers
- 1.5. Obligations for beneficiaries and intermediaries
- 1.6. Funding
- 1.7. Procedure for receiving support

II. Definition of legal terms

2. In the context of these practical guidelines, the following legal terms are used:

- 2.1. Support measures: describe the measures implemented by the State to support employers in the additional education of employees.
- 2.2. Employers [*darba devējs*]: refers to natural or legal persons or a partnership with legal capacity that employs at least one employee based on an employment contract, as per Section 4 of the [Labour Law](#). Employers are considered to be micro-, small or medium in size to comply with the definition in Annex 1 of the [Commission Regulation No 651/2014](#) of 17 June 2014 “declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty.
- 2.3. Beneficiaries [*finansējuma saņēmēji*]: applies to the employers that receive state support from the support measures as the state aid recipients.
- 2.4. Supervisory authorities: refers to the administrative authorities that shall oversee the implementation of the support measures.
- 2.5. Intermediaries [*starpniekinstitūcijas*]: designates the organisations that are responsible to assist employers in the implementation of the support measures, including via the organisation of training programmes and other actions to foster skills development, using EU funding, State budget and co-financed by employers where appropriate.

2.6. Subsidies: refers to aid for commercial activity that may be granted in the form of direct payments from state or local government budget, as per Section 7 of Law on Control of Aid for Commercial Activity.

2.7. Training activities [*atbalstāmie mācību pasākumi*]: refers to additional education for employees, which can come in the form of non-formal education, vocational education, higher education, and further education, as per Article 1 of the [Education Law](#).

2.8. Training provider: refers to a natural or legal person that is contracted by intermediaries to provide training as part of the support measures.

2.9. Expert assessment [*eksperta novērtējums*]: describes an act of consulting from an expert outside the beneficiary, that, for the purpose of these practical guidelines, helps the beneficiary to assess its skills gaps and training needs.

2.10. Workers with disability: for the purpose of these practical guidelines and in line with [Commission Regulation No 651/2014](#), worker with disabilities means any employee in a beneficiary who:

2.10.1.1. is recognised as a person with a disability under Article 1 of the [Disability Law](#); or

2.10.1.2. has long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairment(s) which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in a work environment on an equal basis with other workers.

2.11. Disadvantaged workers: for the purpose of these practical guidelines and in line with [Commission Regulation No 651/2014](#), disadvantaged worker means any employee in a beneficiary who:

2.11.1. is between 15 and 24 years of age; or

2.11.2. has not attained an upper secondary educational or vocational qualification; or

2.11.3. is over the age of 50 years; or

2.11.4. lives as a single adult with one or more dependents; or

2.11.5. works in a sector or profession where the gender imbalance is at least 25% higher than the average gender imbalance across all economic sectors, and belongs to that underrepresented gender group; or

2.11.6. is a member of an ethnic minority and requires development of his or her linguistic, vocational training or work experience profile to enhance labour market prospects.

III. Purpose

3. The support measures in these practical guidelines aim to create the general regulation framework to support employers to provide training to their employees. In turn, the provision of training can increase the levels of productivity, innovation, and competitiveness in the Latvian economy, and promote the career advancement and job satisfaction of employees.

IV. Description of the support measures

4. These practical guidelines set procedures and criteria for the following support measures:

4.1. Support for skills development via employer associations: these include subsidies for skills development delivered to the beneficiaries with the support of employer associations that have been selected to act as intermediaries, with procedures and responsibilities described in [Reference to implementation regulation]. The measure may subsidise training programmes for employees, expert

assessments and any other actions to foster skills development, as described in [Reference to implementation regulation], but coherent with Article 31 in the [Commission Regulation No 651/2014](#).

4.2. Support for skills development via municipalities: these include subsidies for skills development delivered to the beneficiaries with the support of municipalities as intermediaries, with procedures and responsibilities described in [Reference to implementation regulation]. The measure may subsidise training programmes for employees, expert assessments and any other actions to foster skills development, as described in the [Reference to implementation regulation], but coherent with Article 31 in the [Commission Regulation No 651/2014](#).

V. Eligibility criteria for employers

5. Employers from all economic sectors are eligible for the support measures in these practical guidelines, in line with the [Commission Regulation No 651/2014](#). The Human Capital Development Committee, established by [Cabinet Regulation No 290/2023](#) has the power to introduce further limitations to eligibility for each of the support measures, depending on policy priorities and available resources, and consistent with the [Commission Regulation No 651/2014](#).

Key aspects to consider in the drafting and implementation of the regulatory framework

The role of the Human Capital Development Committee (HCDC)

The formulation in Paragraph 5. above should be legally sound, given that the HCDC is established by a regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers [*Ministru kabineta noteikumi*] as a subordinate state institution, in line with the Law on the Structure of State Administration [*Valsts pārvaldes iekārtas likums*]. With [Cabinet regulation No 290 of June 6, 2023](#), the HCDC has been created. Its functions include the following:

- “in consultation with social partners and other non-governmental organisations, to determine the strategic objectives of human capital development and action directions for the achievement of the abovementioned objectives, to prepare proposals regarding support measures for the development of human capital, as well as to supervise the tasks performed in the achievement of the set objectives” (Art. 2.2)
- “to prepare proposals regarding adult education learning directions which are co-financed from the State budget and European Union funds” (Art. 2.4)
- “to ensure the introduction of priority solutions for the promotion of access to human resources in the short term” (Art 2.7) (own translation).

Under the functions outlined in Cabinet regulation No 290/2023, the HCDC can make decisions on the additional eligibility criteria for the support measures.

6. The following employers are not eligible for the support measures described in Paragraph 4. of these practical guidelines:

6.1. Employers which are subject from an outstanding recovery order following a previous decision by the European Commission declaring an aid illegal and incompatible with the internal market, as per Article 1, Paragraph 4 (a) of the [Commission Regulation No 651/2014](#); and

6.2. Employers which are deemed to be “undertakings in difficulty”, as per Article 1, Paragraph 4 (c) of the [Commission Regulation No 651/2014](#). The definition of “undertakings in difficulty” is to be found in

Article 2, Paragraph 18 of the [Commission Regulation No 651/2014](#) and its amendment through [Commission Regulation No 2023/1315](#).

Key aspects to consider in the drafting and implementation of the regulatory framework

Defining eligibility criteria for employers

The text of the practical guidelines for the main regulation is deliberately left open to enable the main regulation to remain relevant and effective in the longer-term. The output 4 report within the OECD-DG-Reform project provides two concrete scenarios for further consideration for the “Support for skills development via employer associations”:

- Scenario 1: All micro-, small, medium, and large enterprises from NACE sectors C, I-K, M-N
- Scenario 2: All micro-, small, medium, and large enterprises from NACE sectors B-N, R-S

Annex B in the report provides a financial impact assessment of these two scenarios. Consistent with the report, the HCDC is recommended to extend the eligibility across sectors as in Scenario 2. However, in case of budget constraints, it could consider limiting eligibility as in Scenario 1. The output 4 report does not focus on the “Support for skills development via municipalities”. In line with discussions with the MoES throughout the OECD-DG-Reform project, this measure should only target micro-enterprises from all sectors, as in Scenario 2, and could focus on general skills (e.g., basic accounting on Microsoft Excel).

VI. Obligations for beneficiaries and intermediaries

7. Beneficiaries and intermediaries need to submit data and information to the supervisory authorities to allow the monitoring of the support measures, as set out in the [Reference to the implementation regulations].

8. Beneficiaries and intermediaries are required to take the necessary steps to ensure that workers with disabilities are given the same opportunities to take part in the actions under the support measures, consistent with Article 7 of the [Labour Law](#).

VII. Funding

9. The support measures described in Paragraph 4. of these practical guidelines can be financed from the State budget, local government budget and EU funds. More detail on the sources of funding is to be provided in the [Reference to the implementation regulations].

10. The aid intensity of the subsidies provided through the support measures described Paragraph 4. of these practical guidelines changes depending on the size of the employer and in line with the [Commission Regulation No 651/2014](#). The following baseline rates are applicable, unless indicated otherwise in the [Reference to the implementation regulations]:

- 10.1. 50% of eligible costs in large employers;
- 10.2. 60% of eligible costs in medium employers; and
- 10.3. 70% of eligible costs in small and micro-employers.

11. In addition, consistent with the [Commission Regulation No 651/2014](#), disadvantaged workers or workers with disabilities receiving training within the support measures may be eligible for an additional

10% aid intensity, up to a maximum aid intensity of 70% of the eligible costs, if prescribed in the [Reference to the implementation regulations].

VIII. Procedure for receiving support

12. Employers should adhere to the following procedure to receive the subsidies under the support measures:

12.1. Employers should submit a complete application to the supervisory authorities which provides all necessary documents to show that they fulfil the eligibility criteria at the time of the application, as per Section V of these practical guideline. The procedures for the application process are described in [Reference to the implementation regulations].

12.2. Employers should fulfil the obligations on data and information sharing after the action has taken place, as per Section VI of these practical guidelines, by submitting the relevant data and information to the oversight authorities. The data and monitoring requirements are described in [Reference to the implementation regulations].

Practical guidelines for the implementation procedures for subsidised training and expert assessment programmes

I. General Provisions

1. These practical guidelines describe the procedures for the support measure “Support for skills development via employer associations” described in Paragraph 4.1 of the practical guidelines for the main regulation, hereafter referred to as support measures and in accordance with the purpose, procedures, criteria, and legal definitions of said guidelines.

2. The objective of the support measure is to support employers to provide training to their employees. In turn, increased training provision can positively impact the levels of productivity, innovation, and competitiveness in the Latvian economy, and promote the career advancement and job satisfaction of employees.

3. The following actions are part of the support measure in the implementation regulation:

3.1. training programmes for employees; and

3.2. the provision of expert assessments.

4. These practical guidelines describe eligibility criteria for training and expert assessments, responsibilities of supervisory authorities, eligibility criteria for employer associations, selection of intermediaries, responsibilities of intermediaries, and the obligations of beneficiaries. For the purpose of these practical guidelines, the terms “intermediary” or “intermediaries” are only used to describe the responsibilities and obligations of employer associations that have been selected to act as intermediaries, under the support measure “Support for skills development via employer associations” described in Paragraph 4.1 of the practical guidelines for the main regulation, rather than the responsibilities and obligation of municipalities acting as intermediaries, under the support measure described in Paragraph 4.2 of the practical guidelines for the main regulation.

5. The Ministry of Economy, hereafter, the oversight authority [*atbildīgā iestāde*], is the administrative authority that shall oversee the implementation of the support measure, as per Section IV of these practical guidelines.

6. The Central Finance and Contracting Agency, hereafter, the funding authority [*sadarbības iestāde*], shall as an intermediate body implement part of the functions of the oversight authority as laid down in [Commission Regulation 2021/106](#), and per Section IV of these practical guidelines.

7. The steering group [*darba grupa*, mentioned as Measure 4 in the introduction of this document] shall be the body responsible to co-ordinate the implementation of the support measure, as described in Section IV of these practical guidelines.

7.1. The steering group [*darba grupa*] shall meet at least four times a year.

7.2. The steering group [*darba grupa*] shall include representatives of employer associations who act as intermediaries in the implementation support measure, the Ministry of Education and Sciences, the Ministry of Economy, the Ministry of Welfare, the Central Funding Agency, and municipalities.

Key aspects to consider in the drafting and implementation of the regulatory framework

Role of the Steering Group

The steering group (Measure 4 in the introduction to this document) could become the main policy instrument for coordinating the support measures. Drawing on the findings of the Output 4 report, it should take leadership on (i) coordination on outreach and awareness-raising activities to employers; (ii) coordination on the implementation of support measures; (iii) exchange of best practices; and (iv) data analysis and monitoring.

8. The support measure shall be monitored by the oversight authority according to the indicators in Annex B. The intermediaries, the oversight authority, and the funding authority are responsible for collecting the necessary data for the indicators, as set out in Section IV of these practical guidelines.

II. Eligibility criteria for employers and funding

9. In line with Paragraph 5. of the practical guidelines for the main regulation, the Human Capital Development Committee has the power to introduce further limitations to eligibility for the support measure, depending on policy priorities and available resources. Employers will be deemed eligible for the support measure if they fulfil the eligibility criteria at the time of the application.

10. Between 2024 and 2026, the support measure will be covered by the ESF+ funding [insert amount / legal act], in accordance with the [Law on Management of European Union Funds for the 2021-2027 Programming Period](#) and the practical guidelines to the main regulation, with the baseline rates presented in Paragraph 10. 11. of the practical guidelines to the main regulation.

11. Beneficiaries are eligible for a full reimbursement through a de minimis procedure, provided that the total amount of state aid granted in a certain fiscal year and the two previous fiscal years shall not exceed the maximum amount of de minimis aid laid down in Article 3(2) of [Commission Regulation No 1407/2013](#), with the following exceptions:

11.1. In the case of beneficiaries providing services of general economic interest, for instance, in the transport, energy, or communications sector, the subsidy granted shall not exceed the maximum amount of de minimis aid laid down in Article 2(2) of [Commission Regulation No 360/2012](#).

11.2. In the case of beneficiaries in the fishery and aquaculture sector, the subsidy granted shall not exceed the maximum amount of de minimis aid laid down in Article 3(2) of [Commission Regulation No 717/2014](#).

11.3. In the case of beneficiaries in the agriculture sector, the subsidy granted shall not exceed the maximum amount of de minimis aid laid down in Article 3(2) of [Commission Regulation No 1408/2014](#).

Key aspects to consider in the drafting and implementation of the regulatory framework

Adhering to European Commission rules on de minimis state aid

According to European Law on de minimis aid under a certain threshold does not need to be notified to the Commission for approval before it is implemented, because it is deemed to have limited impact on competition and trade in the internal market. Different sectors have different thresholds for the maximum amount of state aid that beneficiaries can receive without notification. In a period of three years, the following amounts are eligible in the respective sector:

- **General economic sectors:** EUR 200 000, according to Article 3(2) of [Commission Regulation No 1407/2013](#)
- **Services of general economic interest:** EUR 500 000, according to Article 2(2) of [Commission Regulation No 360/2012](#)
- **Fishery and aquaculture sector:** EUR 30 000, according to Article 3(2) of [Commission Regulation No 717/2014](#)
- **Agriculture sector:** EUR 20 000, according to Article 3(2) of [Commission Regulation No 1408/2014](#)

Source: European Commission (2023), ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_13_1293 (accessed June 06, 2023).

12. If it is established that the requirements on the maximum amount of de minimis aid specified in these practical guidelines have been violated and the beneficiary has received illegal aid, it has an obligation to reimburse to the funding authority all *de minimis* received within the scope of the support measure.

13. The values to be achieved for the monitoring indicators of the support measure will be specified by the Human Capital Development Committee, following the decision on eligibility criteria, as per Paragraph 9. of these practical guidelines.

III. Eligibility criteria for training and expert assessments

14. Training providers are natural or legal persons as defined in Section II of the practical guidelines for the main regulation, which fulfill the following eligibility criteria:

14.1. If resident in Latvia, they can either be accredited educational institutions, or natural or legal persons who are registered in the Register of Educational Institutions, as per Article 46 of the [Education Law](#).

14.2. If not resident in Latvia, they can either be accredited educational institutions, or they need to be natural or legal persons quality assured in line with the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET), a quality certification according to ISO, or a national-level accreditation or quality label in line with EQAVET.

15. Training providers can provide the following types of training programmes, including modules or sets of modules:

15.1. If resident in Latvia, they can provide vocational education programmes, as per Article 44 of the [Education Law](#), and non-formal education programmes, as per Article 46 of the [Education Law](#), excluding driver's courses for the acquisition of categories A1, A, B1, and M; and the training specified in Article 31, Paragraph 2, of the [Commission Regulation No 651/2014](#).

15.2. If not resident in Latvia, they can provide or vocational education programmes and non-formal education programmes, as defined in their national jurisdiction, excluding driver's courses for the acquisition of categories A1, A, B1, and M; and the training specified in Article 31, Paragraph 2, of the [Commission Regulation No 651/2014](#).

Key aspects to consider in the drafting and implementation of the regulatory framework

Defining eligibility criteria for training providers

In many countries, only accredited training providers are eligible to supply publicly funded or subsidised training. In Germany, for example, providers of continuing training are obliged to have an internal quality management system and must be assessed against a number of quality criteria by a recognised body to be accredited. In Sweden, the Agency for Advanced Vocational Education (*Myndigheten för Kvalificerad Yrkesutbildning*) is responsible for approving and accrediting continuing training courses according to quality standards. The agency, which is independent but steered by the Swedish government, operates nationwide and supports recognised training courses with its financial grants. Subject to these quality criteria, intermediaries are typically not given additional constraints. This is for two reasons. On the one hand, intermediaries are sufficiently incentivised by their role in selecting training programmes and providers that best suit the needs of the enterprises: if they do not do so, enterprises will not access the service. On the other hand, additional constraints increase administrative costs for intermediaries and may limit their flexibility to identify the best training options for enterprises.

Building on this evidence base, Paragraphs 14. and 15. restrict the eligibility criteria, compared to the subsidised training programmes in the previous funding round, because they imply that only providers officially licenced as “non-formal education providers” or formal education institutions offering “non-formal education programmes” can be involved in the support measure. This can contribute to the consolidation of the adult learning ecosystem, by encouraging all providers to fall under the remit of the quality assurance system. However, it might restrict the choice for employers and intermediaries, especially in the short-term, because some training providers might not be willing or able to complete the licencing process. If the HCDC considers this to be an obstacle to the implementation of the programme, it could consider using the eligibility criteria for training providers from the previous planning round (see Paragraph 20 in the relevant [cabinet regulation](#)). In brief, training providers were required to meet at least one of the following requirements:

- the trainer has work experience of at least three years in the sector in which employees will be trained, or at least three years of experience in the field of provision of training;
- the qualification of the trainer in the training sector is not lower than the qualification which will be acquired by employees upon completing the training programme; or
- the intermediary has ascertained that the training provider can provide training which ensures the achievement of the objective of the measure.

16. The provider delivering the expert assessments can be natural or legal persons. Intermediaries are able to choose providers that meet the following eligibility criteria:

- 16.1. the provider has proven economically stable over the past two years (upon self-declaration in the application);
- 16.2. the provider proves to have technical expertise and expert knowledge in the sector it applies for;
- 16.3. the provider shall demonstrate concrete experience in consulting micro-, small and medium enterprises on their training needs; and
- 16.4. the provider undertakes regular professional development.

Key aspects to consider in the drafting and implementation of the regulatory framework

Defining eligibility criteria for providers of expert assessments

As described in the Output 3 report, when financing or subsidising consulting services for enterprises, EU countries often define a selected or accredited group according to national parameters, as for training providers. Typically, such accreditation or selection relies on certain ex-ante requirements on the consulting companies, with the goal of guaranteeing a certain level of quality in the services provided.

The criteria and selection mechanism for providers of expert assessments suggested in Paragraph 16. rely on the experience in Germany with the [Go Digital programme](#). Go Digital is a voucher system based on consulting contracts that supports SMEs and craft businesses to optimise their business processes with digital solution. The consulting companies are pre-authorised by the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action of Germany following an application that can be filled out electronically and digitally signed. In order to be authorised the consulting companies need to be a legally independent, prove economic stability for the past three years, guarantee competition-neutral advice, give proof of technical expertise, provide references to small business advisory clients, co-operate with universities and research institutions, and fulfil the quality standards set by the programme. EuroNorm GmbH, a service company that works as management agency for the programme, then reviews the application. The decision normally takes force after 4 weeks from approval, when the company is included in the list of pre-approved consultancies that SMEs can contact.

In the case of the Latvian expert assessment, the evaluation could be undertaken by the intermediaries themselves, as opposed to a management agency. The HCDC can review and revisit the criteria proposed by the OECD in Paragraph 16. as to best reflect its assessment of Latvia's circumstances.

17. For both the training programmes and the expert assessments, the following expenditures are considered to be eligible for reimbursement, consistent with Article 31 of the [Commission Regulation No 651/2014](#):

- 17.1. The cost of the training programmes or expert assessments, including:
 - 17.1.1. the salary of trainers or experts;
 - 17.1.2. travel expenses of trainers and employees; and
 - 17.1.3. the accommodation costs for employees who are workers for disabilities. As per Article 31, Paragraph 3b of the [Commission Regulation No 651/2014](#), other accommodation costs shall be excluded.

17.2. Fees for materials and services directly related to training programmes or expert assessments, including:

17.2.1. the cost of training materials used for training programmes, that is printed or audio-visual materials that remain in the possession of the employees or the beneficiary. If the amount of these costs exceeds 50 euros per employee involved in training or 100 euros per beneficiary involved in the expert assessments, it must be coordinated with the financing authority, providing justification for their usefulness.

17.2.2. rental costs of premises and equipment used in the training programmes for the training period;

17.2.3. certification and examination costs;

17.2.4. costs of interpretation and translation, provided that the intermediary can prove that no trainer or expert with comparable experience was fluent in the Latvian language;

17.2.5. the cost of subscriptions to online platforms; and

17.2.6. the cost of sign language interpreters, real-time transcription and subtitling services.

Key aspects to consider in the drafting and implementation of the regulatory framework

Fees for materials and services

In Paragraph 17.2.1, the OECD recommends thresholds of 50 euros per employee involved in training or 100 euros per beneficiary involved in the expert assessments for the cost training materials. The first threshold comes from the [previous regulation](#) (Paragraph 23.2.1.1), whereas the second threshold assumes that materials would be produced for up to 4-5 participants for up to a full day of meetings. The HCDC can review and revisit the thresholds proposed by the OECD in Paragraph 17.2.1 as to best reflect its assessment of Latvia's circumstances.

IV. Responsibilities of supervisory authorities

18. The oversight authority shall establish a secretariat and a steering group dedicated to the implementation of the support measure and is responsible for centralising all monitoring data using its Management Information System. The secretariat shall have the following responsibilities:

18.1. coordinating the steering group [*darba grupa*], including organising and facilitating meetings at least on a quarterly basis, circulating an agenda in advance and preparing the minutes;

18.2. using the Management Information System of the oversight authority for storing relevant project data for the monitoring indicators set out in Paragraph 8. of these practical guidelines;

18.3. distributing surveys to beneficiaries at any point of programme implementation to collect data on outcomes and progression between measures, according to indicators 1.8 to 1.10 in Table B.1, and indicators 3.5 to 3.7 in Table B.2 of Annex B; and

18.4. coordinating the monitoring of the support measure against the indicators and values to be achieved according to Paragraph 13. in these practical guidelines, including by preparing at least half-yearly reports on monitoring indicators and progress on the support measure to be submitted to the steering group for discussion [*darba grupa*]; and

18.5. organising a monthly coordination meeting with representatives from each intermediary.

19. The steering group [*darba grupa*] reports to the Human Capital Development Committee and shall have the following responsibilities:

19.1. Explore synergies in the implementation of the support measure described in these practical guidelines with other initiatives and policies pursued by the participating institutions;

19.2. Coordinate the awareness-raising activities organised by the participating institutions to increase participation of employers in training and skills development;

19.3. Foster the exchange of best practices, for example in how to reach out to employers and increase access to training for employees; and

19.4. Discuss the monitoring reports prepared by the secretariat and identify any challenges in the implementation of the support measure and potential solutions to overcome them.

20. The monthly coordination meeting reports to the steering group [*darba grupa*] and represents a platform where the intermediaries and the secretariat can discuss challenges related to the implementation of the project, can better align the provision of training programmes and can maximise synergies in the implementation of the awareness-raising plans discussed in Section VI of these practical guidelines.

21. The funding authority shall have the following responsibilities:

21.1. Run a selection process for intermediaries based on an open selection of project applications, as described in Sections V and VI of these practical guidelines.

21.2. Provide the coordination budget and awareness-raising budget to intermediaries, as follows:

21.2.1. on average, the funding authority shall allocate EUR 3700 per month to each association or partnership for training programmes and EUR 2500 for the expert assessments as coordination budget. The funding authority may decide to modify these allocations, depending on the targets submitted in the project plan by the employer associations during the selection process described in Section VI of these practical guidelines, and the achievement of such targets. This coordination budget includes the following:

21.2.1.1. salary for staff (project manager, accountant, lawyer, procurement specialist);

21.2.1.2. indirect attributable costs – workplace equipment costs (only equipment rental or depreciation is allowed), transport costs (fuel charges, vehicle rental, purchase of transport services, use of public transport), premises rent and lease costs, premises management costs (heating, electricity, management services, water supply), costs of stationery, postage, internet and telecommunication costs, costs of business trips, as well as costs related to data accumulation and merchant data verification (database subscription fee for the time the project is being implemented); and

21.2.1.3. outsourcing costs (project management, accounting services, legal services).

21.2.2. on average, the funding authority shall allocate EUR 2000 per month to each association or partnership to conduct awareness-raising activities. The funding authority may decide to modify these allocations, depending on awareness-raising plan submitted by the employer associations during the selection process described in Section VI of these practical guidelines, and the successful implementation of these awareness-raising activities. This budget for awareness-raising activities includes the salary of staff, the indirect attributable costs, and the outsourcing costs necessary to perform the following activities:

21.2.2.1. Creation of a website outlining the training programmes offered;

21.2.2.2. Social media campaigns; and

Key aspects to consider in the drafting and implementation of the regulatory framework

Determining the coordination and awareness raising budget for intermediaries

The size of the coordination budget the funding authority should allocate to intermediaries (EUR 3700 per month to each association/partnership for training and EUR 2500 per month for the expert assessments) are based on the costing exercise conducted by the OECD as part of the Output 4 report. Information from employer associations has been combined with estimates about labour and other costs that intermediaries will have to implement the training programmes and expert assessments. The awareness raising budget (EUR 2000 per month to each association or partnership) is suggested on the same basis. The amount will allow intermediaries to effectively promote the training programmes and expert assessments beyond their own members. This is critical to address important attitudinal and information barriers to offering employee training, which are especially common among micro-, small and medium enterprises.

21.3. Assess eligibility of employers based on the documents they submit, and according to the eligibility criteria set out in Paragraph 9. of these practical guidelines. Employers will need to submit all necessary documents to prove their eligibility for their application to be considered.

21.4. Provide reimbursements to the employers after the training programme or expert assessment have ended, provided that employers have complied with the obligations set out in Section VIII of these practical guidelines.

21.5. Gather data regarding the uptake, inputs, and progression between the support measures through the Cohesion Policy Funds Management Information System, and share this information with the oversight authority so that it can be centralised in its Management Information System, as outlined in Paragraph 18. of these practical guidelines. The data should cover the following monitoring indicators:

21.5.1. information regarding the employers and employees that apply to, participate in, and complete subsidised training, according to indicators 1.1 to 1.3 in Table B.1 of Annex B;

21.5.2. information regarding the characteristics of the subsidised training programmes attended, according to indicator 1.4 in Table B.1 of Annex B;

21.5.3. information regarding the inputs to the subsidised training for employees, according to indicators 1.5 to 1.7 in Table B.1 of Annex B;

21.5.4. information regarding the progression between measures, according to indicators 1.12 to 1.14 in Table B.1 of Annex B;

21.5.5. information regarding the employers receiving expert assessments, according to indicator 3.1 in Table B.2 of Annex B;

21.5.6. information regarding the inputs to the expert assessments, according to indicators 3.2 to 3.4 in Table B.2 of Annex B; and

21.5.7. information regarding the progression between measures, according to indicator 3.8 in Table B.2 or Annex B.

V. Eligibility criteria for employer associations

22. Employer associations can apply alone or as a cooperation partner [*sadarbības partneris*] together with one or more other employer associations based on a cooperation agreement [*sadarbības līgums*] to become intermediaries in the support measure.

23. An employer association, or one or more employer associations that act as cooperation partners [*sadarbības partneri*] shall be eligible to submit one application per selection round to become an intermediary in one of the (sub-) sectors for the support measure described in these practical guidelines, according to the list provided Table A.1 of Annex A20.

24. An employer association needs to fulfil the following eligibility criteria to apply as an intermediary:

24.1. it needs to represent one of the sectors in which employers are eligible to the support measure according to Paragraph 9. of these practical guidelines, meaning that more than 20% of its members operate in the (sub-)sector for which it is applying to act as an intermediary.

24.2. The employer association, or at least one of the cooperation partners [*sadarbības partneri*] in the case of an implementation in partnership, has been registered in the Register of Associations and Foundations of the Enterprise Register of the Republic of Latvia [*Latvijas Republikas Uzņēmumu reģistra biedrību un nodibinājumu reģistrā*] for at least five years prior to the submission of the project application to the funding authority.

Key aspects to consider in the drafting and implementation of the regulatory framework

Defining eligibility for employer associations to become intermediaries

These practical guidelines rely on the criteria for employer associations to become intermediaries that have been set in [the regulation for the previous round](#) of the subsidised training programme, but introduce some adjustments. Previously, 50% of the association's members needed to be from an eligible sector, and each association needed to have been registered for five years. In order to encourage partnerships across employer association and leave room for the participation of smaller associations representing micro-, small and medium enterprises or enterprises in a specific region, these practical guidelines propose that:

- Only 20% of the association's members need to be from the sector for which the association will become an intermediary; and
- Only one of the partners in the case of an application in partnership need to have been active for at least five years.

25. Applications of employer associations can be rejected in the cases outlined in Article 22 of the [Law on the Management of European Union Funds for the 2021-2027 Programming Period](#).

VI. Selection of intermediaries

26. The funding authority shall be responsible to select intermediaries based on an open selection of project applications, in line with Article 20(1) of the [Law on the Management of European Union Funds for the 2021-2027 Programming Period](#).

27. The methodology for selecting intermediaries, and the requirements for applications, announcement of the open selection of project applications, and evaluation criteria shall be determined according to Article 20 (2-6) of the [Law on the Management of European Union Funds for the 2021-2027 Programming Period](#).

28. For the evaluation of applicants, the funding authority shall establish a Project Application Evaluation Committee, in accordance with Article 21 of the [Law on the Management of European Union Funds for the 2021-2027 Programming Period](#).

29. One intermediary, that is, either one employer association or several employer associations that act as cooperation partners [*sadarbības partneri*] shall be chosen in each sector or sub-sector in which employers are eligible for the training programmes, according to Paragraph 9. of these practical guidelines, and as outlined in Annex A, adhering to the threshold of state aid set out in Article 4(1)(n) of [Commission Regulation No 651/2014](#) and its amendment through [Commission Regulation No 2023/1315](#).

30. Employer associations or the cooperation partners [*sadarbības partneri*] that apply in partnership to become intermediaries that implement the support measure shall submit the following documents:

30.1. A training plan in the form of a short, forward-looking, and strategic document that outlines key training areas that employer associations intend to focus on for the implementation of the training programme. Employer associations shall include training areas from the preliminary list in Annex C, shall supplement those with additional areas, and provide a justification for their final list, based on an analysis of the training needs of the sector, for example via a survey of enterprises;

30.2. A project plan of the costs estimated for the employer association to implement the support measure, including some targets on the number of employees and beneficiaries that should be involved in the training programmes and the number of beneficiaries that should take part in the expert assessments;

30.3. An awareness-raising plan that details how information on the availability of the support measure will be disseminated to members and non-members of the employer association; and

30.4. A declaration of intent to sign a cooperation agreement [*sadarbības līgums*] in case the application is submitted by two or more cooperation partners [*sadarbības partneri*].

31. The funding authority shall evaluate applications that are complete and submitted in time by eligible employer associations using a point system according to the following criteria:

31.1. The quality of the training plan as measured by the presence of robust evidence on the training needs of employers, and concrete proposals on the types and areas of training as well as potential training provider that would fill these training needs;

31.2. the quality of the project plan, as measured by the presence of realistic targets and measurable criteria that correspond to the monitoring indicators in Annex B; and

31.3. the quality of the awareness-raising plan, as measured by a diversity of communication channels to reach employers beyond the own members of the employer association and in collaboration with other intermediaries and organisations in the Latvian training ecosystem.

32. Bonus points shall be given to applications by cooperation partners [*sadarbības partneri*], with the aim to consolidate the system of employer associations in Latvia, increase the participation of firms and avoid a fragmentation of intermediaries.

33. The employer association or partnership of associations that receives the highest number of points in the evaluation of applications for each sector or subsector shall be selected as an intermediary for the implementation of the support measure.

Key aspects to consider in the drafting and implementation of the regulatory framework

Designing the selection process for employer associations: the example of Skillnet Ireland

To make the selection process operational, the oversight authority could take inspiration from Skillnet Ireland, which was discussed in the [Output 3 report](#). Skillnet Ireland, a business support agency of the Government of Ireland, currently oversees 72 Skillnet Business Networks, which provide groups of enterprises in the same sector or region with financial and non-financial support for training. Similar to the system of support for training in Latvia, Skillnet Ireland selects and funds sectoral or regional associations to form and govern a Business Network, which develop and co-finance training programmes for enterprises. Skillnet Ireland issues public calls for new networks yearly. Industry federations, industry bodies or membership-based professional bodies based in the Republic of Ireland are eligible to apply. Applicants need to complete an application form, and present a business case, outlining details about their strategy, plans, and rationale as a Business Network. The requirements are the following:

- present strategic plans and solutions to the joint talent needs of the relevant sector or region, based on a robust talent needs analysis with relevant businesses and industry stakeholders;
- demonstrably address one or more of Skillnet Ireland’s strategic growth priorities;
- align with national workforce policy and relevant sectoral / regional policy;
- facilitate an enterprise-led approach to learning and utilise the “Network” potential and increase the participation of new firms with Skillnet Ireland;
- address both technical and behavioural competencies (including management development);
- promote the value and importance of talent development to national competitiveness.

Skillnet Ireland has a support team in place to assist interested bodies in preparing their application. Applications need to be submitted via email by a specified deadline and require a signature by the head of the body or organisation who applies. Applications are assessed against strategic and operational criteria by the Board of Skillnet Ireland (see Table 1).

Table 1. Assessment criteria of applications to form new Skillnet Business Networks

Key assessment criteria	Subcriteria	Weighting	Sum
Strategic Criteria	Enterprise Engagement	200	60%
	Impact on Competitiveness & Career Mobility of the Learner	150	
	Supplying Future Skills	150	
	Clarity of aims and objectives - goal alignment	100	
Operational Criteria	Capacity to deliver (Management expertise)	100	40%
	Quality & Relevance of Talent Development Plan	150	
	Financial Efficiencies/Match Funding/Value for Money	100	
	Accreditation/Innovation	50	

Once a new Business Network is selected in a due-diligence process, it defines a detailed budget and sign a funding agreement with Skillnet Ireland for the next three years. The funding agreement also defines regular reporting and monitoring requirements and compliance checks. The total funding granted differs across Business Networks depending on their application and value proposal.

VII. Responsibilities of intermediaries

34. Intermediaries shall implement the support measure according to the actions proposed in the training plan, project plan, and awareness-raising plan.

35. Intermediaries shall purchase the goods and services necessary for the implementation of the support measure in accordance with the laws and regulations on public procurement, through an open, transparent, non-discriminatory, and competitive procedure.

36. Intermediaries shall assist employers in preparing the complete documentation that is required for them to receive support through the support measure described in these practical guidelines.

37. Intermediaries shall provide quarterly reports on the training programmes and expert assessments that have taken place to the funding authority, to enable the reimbursement of employers' training costs, in accordance with Section VI of the practical guidelines to the main regulation and Paragraph 18. of these practical guidelines. The format and content of the submission shall be decided by the funding authority, consistent with the [Law on the Management of European Union Funds for the 2021-2027 Programming Period](#).

38. Intermediaries shall submit detailed information to the financing authority to facilitate the monitoring process in a format chosen by the oversight authority upon consultation of the steering group [*darba grupa*] that allows to obtain a level of disaggregation consistent with Annex B. The information should cover the following monitoring indicators:

38.1. information regarding the uptake of subsidised training for employees, according to indicators 1.1. to 1.4 in Table B.1 of Annex B;

38.2. information regarding the inputs to the subsidised training for employees, according to indicators 1.5 to 1.7 in Table B.1 of Annex B in these practical guidelines;

38.3. information regarding the uptake of expert assessments, according to indicator 3.1 in Table B. of Annex B in these practical guidelines;

38.4. information regarding the inputs to the expert assessments, according to indicators 3.2 and 3.3 in Table B. of Annex B in these practical guidelines;

38.5. information regarding the progression between measures, according to indicators 1.12 to 1.14 in Table B.1, and indicator 3.8 in Table B. of Annex B in these practical guidelines.

39. Intermediaries shall participate in regular meetings and activities of the steering group [*darba grupa*].

VIII. Obligations of beneficiaries

40. The beneficiaries are required to share with the intermediaries the data that are needed to complete the submission in Paragraph 38. of these practical guidelines. The data may include, but is not limited to, the following:

40.1. Basic name, registration number, sector, employer size, turnover, total balance sheet and number of employees;

40.2. Unique identifier of the employee involved in the subsidised training programme (personal identity number), which may be used by the oversight authority to retrieve administrative information on employees, including age, sex, citizenship or residency status, disability status, family status and salary data;

40.3. Data on the employee characteristics involved in the subsidised training programme (educational attainment, number of years employed by the employer); and

40.4. Data on the received training and/or external expert assessment (formality, field of education, price, targeted skills and provider type).

41. The beneficiaries must comply with the requirement of answering surveys distributed by the oversight authority at any given point of programme implementation that are necessary to gather data on outcomes and progression between measures, as per Paragraph 18.3 of these practical guidelines. The data should cover the following monitoring indicators:

41.1. information regarding the outcomes of the subsidised training for employees, according to indicators 1.8 to 1.10 in Table B.1 of Annex B;

41.2. information regarding the outcomes of the expert assessments, according to indicators 3.5 and 3.6 of Table B.2 of Annex B; and

41.3. information regarding progression between measures, according to indicator 3.7 of Table B.2 of Annex B.

Annex A. List of sectors and (sub-)sectors for potential intermediaries

The following list of 18 (sub-)sectors shall be represented by intermediaries for the implementation of the support measure described in these practical guidelines:

Table A.1. Annex A. List of sectors and (sub-)sectors for intermediaries

	List of (sub-)sectors for potential intermediaries	Note
1	C – Manufacturing 1 (Woodworking)	Clustered with employers in B – Mining and quarrying
2	C – Manufacturing 2 (Mechanical engineering and metalworking)	
3	C – Manufacturing 3 (Manufacture of electrical and optical equipment)	
4	C – Manufacturing 4 (Chemical industry)	
5	C – Manufacturing 5 (Food and beverage production)	
6	C – Manufacturing 6 (Production of non-metallic minerals)	
7	C – Manufacturing 7 (Light industry)	
8	C – Manufacturing 8 (Paper production and printing)	
9	D – Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	
10	E – Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	
11	F – Construction	
12	G – Wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	
13	H – Transportation and storage	
14	I – Accommodation and food services	
15	J – Information and Communication	
16	K – Financial and insurance activities	Clustered with employers in L – Real estate activities
17	M – Professional, Scientific and Technical activities	
18	N – Administrative and Support Service Activities	Clustered with employers in S – Other service activities (can also be clustered by one of the other service sectors)
19	R – Arts, entertainment and recreation	

Annex B. Monitoring framework of the support measure

The following indicators shall be monitored in the context of the implementation of the support measure described in these practical guidelines:

Table B.1. Summary of monitoring indicators for training programmes

Name of indicator		Unit of measurement	Disaggregation
Uptake (applications, participation and completion)			
1.1.a	Application to subsidised training programmes	Number and share of employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By employer size By sector
1.1.b		Number and share of employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By employee characteristics By training characteristics
1.2.a	Participation in subsidised training programmes	Number and share of employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as above
1.2.b		Number and share of employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as above
1.3.a	Completion of subsidised training programmes	Number and share of employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as above
1.3.b		Number and share of employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as above
1.4	Intensity of subsidised training programmes attended	Number of hours spent in the training in the last 6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By employer size By employee characteristics By training characteristics
Inputs			
1.5	Number and share of employer associations involved	Number and share of employer associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By size By sectors covered
1.6	Total expenditure on the measure by employer associations	Euros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By funding source By cost type By awareness-raising channel
1.7	Total expenditure on subsidies per employer and worker	Euros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By funding source By employer size By sector By training characteristics
Outcomes			
1.8	Reported satisfaction with the subsidised training programme	Number and share of employees reporting high satisfaction (using a Likert score)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By employer size By sector By employee characteristics By training characteristics
1.9	Reported employer benefits arising from the subsidised training programme in the 6 months after participation	Number and share of employers reporting benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By employer size By type of benefit received
1.10	Reported employee benefits arising from the training 6 months after participation	Number and share of employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By employee characteristics By sector By training characteristics By self-reported outcome
1.11	Increase in employee wages after participation in the subsidised training programme (e.g. after 6 or 12 months)	EUR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By employee characteristics
Progression between measures			
1.12	Completion of online self-assessment tool (Measure 2) within the previous 6 months before participation in the subsidised training programme	Number and share of employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By employer size By sector
1.13	Completion of expert assessment (Measure 3) within the previous 6 months before participation in the subsidised training programme	Number and share of employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By employer size By sector
1.14	Effectiveness of awareness-raising activities by employer associations to promote the subsidised training programmes	Number and share of employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By awareness-raising channel

Table B.2. Summary of monitoring indicators for expert assessments

	Name of indicator	Unit of measurement	Disaggregation
Uptake (applications, participation and completion)			
3.1	Application to and reception of an external expert assessment of skills/training gaps	Number and share of employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By employer size • By sector
Inputs			
3.2	Experts conducting an assessment	Number of experts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By sector
3.3	Associations that provided support to employers to recruit an expert	Number of associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By size • By sector
3.4	Expenditure on implementation of measure 3	Euros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By funding source • By cost type • By employer size • By sector
Outcomes (qualitative)			
3.5	Reported satisfaction with the external assessment	Number and share of employers reporting high satisfaction (using a Likert score)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By employer size • By sector
3.6	Reported benefits arising within 6 months after receiving an external expert assessment	Number and share of employers reporting benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By employer size • By sector • By type of benefit received
Progression between measures			
3.7	Participation in subsidised training programmes (Measure 1) within 6 months of receiving an external expert assessment	Number and share of employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By employer size • By sector
3.8	Effectiveness of awareness-raising activities by employer associations to promote external expert assessments	Number and share of employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By awareness-raising channel

Annex C. Preliminary list of training areas for training plans

The following list of training areas shall be considered as a starting point for employer associations in the preparation of the training plan, and shall be supplemented by additional areas as needed, depending on the training needs in their sector:

- Architecture and Urban Planning
- Business Management
- Catering and hotel commercial activities
- Computer systems, databases, and computer networks
- Construction and Civil Engineering
- Design
- Electronic commerce
- Engineering and technology
- Environmental protection
- Financial Management
- Forestry
- Health care services
- Hotel and restaurant services
- Hotel management
- Industrial Engineering and Management
- Languages
- Marketing
- Mathematics and Statistics
- Organisation of International Transport
- Physical Sciences
- Production and processing
- Programming
- Project management
- Quality assurance and management
- Telematics and logistics

- Telemechanics and logistics
- Tourism and Recreation Organization
- Tourism management
- Use of computers

Key aspects to consider in the drafting and implementation of the regulatory framework

List of training areas

The suggested list of training areas comes from the Output 4 report and is inspired by the previous regulation on the subsidised training programmes financed through EU structural funds. Intermediaries can propose additional training areas when submitting a training plan as part of their application. Additional training areas should be justified by an analysis of the training needs of the sector, for example via a survey of enterprises (see Paragraph 30.1).