The Skill Strategy for the digital and green upskilling and reskilling of the health and care workforce (version 1.1) has been developed by the [BeWell project](#) and its multi-stakeholder consortium. The BeWell project wants to revolutionise health care by promoting a sustainable, equitable, and robust ecosystem, and by providing a proposal for effective sectoral collaboration.

The aim of the Skills Strategy is to advocate for life-long learning (LLL) and continuing professional development (CPD) as key elements for an informed and equipped health and care workforce. The Strategy wants to equip health and care workers with the digital and green skills that can contribute to better health outcomes for everyone. It calls for investments to deliver digital and green upskilling and reskilling, and it encourages policymakers to integrate the health and care workforce's needs into the design and implementation of policies at the local, regional, national, and European levels. As a result, it is expected that the health and care workforce will be better prepared to deliver high-quality care and improve their own wellbeing.

The Strategy is being developed through an iterative process. The first version ([available in full here](#)) was produced thanks to the expertise of the BeWell consortium and preliminary input from multiple stakeholders. The Strategy will then be put out for widespread consultation from June 2024 to December 2025. The outcomes of the consultation will inform the final version of the Strategy to be published in June 2026. **The Skill Strategy will become a strategy by and for all stakeholders in the health and care ecosystem** and define a set of activities, checkpoints, and outputs to accompany and support the strategy's implementation.

Almost 15 million people work in health occupations in the European Union; this represents over 7% of employed people, and 4% of the EU population. Just as a resilient health system is the foundation for health, economic, and societal resilience, **a resilient and effective health and care workforce is the foundation for effective health and care systems**. The workforce's ability and preparedness to deal with current and future challenges, such as the increasing prevalence of non-communicable diseases, climate change and demographic changes, are vital. This Strategy highlights the urgent need to upskill and reskill the health and care workforce with digital and green skills.

Opportunities for green and digital skilling can help health and care professionals to:
- Acquire a greater systemic understanding of how digital and green solutions can support better health outcomes.
- Perform tasks in a more time-efficient way and better organise work.
- Reduce administrative workload and improve record-keeping.
- Make better-informed and evidence-based decisions for patients.
- Increase quality across the prevention, promotion and care continuum, contribute to the reduction of health inequalities, and support the enhancement of cost efficiency though an increase in value-based care.

> **The implementation of this Skills Strategy can only be successful and sustainable when coupled with appropriate actions to address the fundamental problems of the health and care sector.** This includes increased investment in health and care workforce recruitment and retention; creating clear learning and career pathways; creating working conditions that promote a healthy work-life balance; offering rewarding salaries; providing a safe working environment to protect the physical and mental health and wellbeing of the workforce; and improving health and care information systems for better data collection and analysis.

OBJECTIVES

The Skills Strategy introduces six strategic objectives on how to achieve the digital and green upskilling and reskilling of the health and care workforce:

1. Assess the health and care workforce skill mismatches and advance the transfer of knowledge
How?
- Identifying the skills needs of the workforce.
- Ensuring dissemination of information, good practices, and knowledge.
- Collecting and analysing evidence of how skill mismatches may affect the performance.

2. Enhance and promote adequate levels of digital literacy and competences for the workforce
How?
- Aligning the identified digital skills with health and care workers' existing skills.
- Acknowledging the emergence of new digital roles.
- Involving the health and care workforce in developing educational and training practices, training material and on-the-job training that should incorporate aspects of digitalisation such as e-health, m-health, cybersecurity, and big data and AI.

3. Enhance and promote the health and care workforce green literacy and green competences
How?
- Aligning the identified green skills with health and care workers' existing skills.
- Acknowledging the emergence of new green roles.
- Involving the health and care workforce in developing educational and training practices that should incorporate aspects of climate change and sustainability such as green logistics, procurement or hospital building design.
- Promoting inclusive approaches to access in education and trainings about green health technologies and skills.

4. Strengthen the promotion of soft skills within the health and care sector
How?
- Encouraging problem solving, critical thinking and communication, as core competences for the digital and green transition.
- Facilitating multidisciplinary and multiprofessional collaboration to facilitate an integrated approach across the prevention and care continuum.

5. Promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing of the health and care workforce
How?
- Leveraging the benefits of digital technologies and green advancements to tackle mental and physical health discomfort and challenges.

6. Advance training and curricula opportunities targeting LLL and CPD
How?
- Researching and creating innovative teaching methods that will facilitate and enrich the professional life of health and care workers.
- Promoting CPD and LLL as part of health and care workers' daily work schedule.
- Ensuring equity in the access to learning and professional development opportunities in a socio-economic-, age-, culture- and gender-inclusive way.

RECOMMENDATIONS

At a local and/or regional level

Local and/or regional stakeholders should:

- Make digital and green upskilling and reskilling of the health and care workforce a priority by integrating the Skill Strategy into their operational plans.
- Mobilise the local/regional ecosystem with awareness raising and dissemination campaigns. Consultations with representatives from the healthcare, education, training and employment sectors should take place and outcomes should inform local/regional strategic plans.
- Make use of existing national and European funds and seek investment opportunities.
- Adapt, adopt, and implement the recommended actions that respond to the specificities of their communities. They should indicate areas in need of mitigation and take necessary action to inform decision and policymakers at the national level.

At a national level

Member States, in particular designated ministries, agencies, and other national authorities, should:

- Ensure that people-in-charge in the respective national authorities commit to the uptake of the Skill Strategy and make it a priority in their agendas.
- Coordinate efforts by aligning the Skills Strategy with other complementary national strategies and initiatives. All stakeholders should be involved in a process of consultation, integration, adjustment, implementation and evaluation of the Strategy.
- Prioritise investment in digital and green upskilling and reskilling of the health and care workforce and make use of the available European funds and financial mechanisms. They should prioritise existing funds for the uptake and sustainability of the Skill Strategy.
- Integrate the Skill Strategy into national strategies for health, education and employment and seek to align these two in accordance with existing resources and constraints.

At a European level

The European Commission, in collaboration with other EU institutions and agencies, should:

- Continue to promote the digital and green skills agenda through the support of initiatives, projects, networks and European-wide collaborations. Standards, policies and regulations are needed to ensure the implementation of the Skill Strategy. European guidance, coordination and implementation of tools are required for its adoption and integration into existing systems of Member States.
- Liaise with international organisations and coordinate actions among other EU projects, initiatives, recognised social partners, networks, and associations.
- Facilitate the provision of funds for the implementation and support of EU-wide projects, initiatives, networks, and associations which focus on the twin digital and green transitions of the health and care sector. They should ensure that available funds respond to the specific needs of Member States for the upskilling and reskilling of the health and care workforce.
- Support and complement the endeavours of Member States to implement the Skill Strategy by providing expertise, fostering collaboration among Member States, and monitoring emerging needs and tendencies at a global scale.

The Theory of Change framework reflects the vision and outcomes that BeWell aspires to achieve. Built through an extensive co-creative process, this framework seeks the evaluate the effectiveness of the Strategy in creating conditions for the digital and green upskilling and reskilling of the health and care workforce.

THEORY OF CHANGE FRAMEWORK - DIAGRAM

Elements which the project depends on, but go beyond its scope:
➔ Improved HWF capacities, planning & working conditions
➔ Political commitment

BeWell Activities with checkpoints

- Research methodology (MS.5) — Definitions of terminology/concepts
- Existing Open Education Resources (OER) (MS.6) — Conditional inclusion framework for country implementation strategies
- Policy briefs for policy makers and implementers (D2.1) — Policy recommendations
- Innovative care and digital skills-monitor (D2.2) — Repository of existing skills initiatives
- Multilingual qualification matrices (EQF levels 3-8) (MS.9, MS.10, D4.1) — Matrices available on OERs and for ESCO/other classification schemes
- Database service for assessment and tracking of skills and competences (MS.11, D4.2) — Operationalisation of Skillsbank database
- Development of evidence-based training programmes for urgent needs and emerging occupations (MS.13, MS.14, D5.1, D5.2) — Free access by HCWF to digital and green training programmes on OER
- Piloted training programmes, assessment of uptake and end-user performance (MS.15, MS.16, D6.1) — Pilot phase targeting 500 HCWF professionals
- Implementation guidelines for VET and higher education providers
- Piloted certification procedures (D6.2) — Certification given to professionals for the competences acquired

Short-term (1-3 years)

Outcome S1
Health and care ecosystem-relevant stakeholders have the knowledge and understanding of the HCWF's evolving digital/green/soft skills needs, to make better-informed decisions

Outcome S2
Health and care ecosystem-relevant stakeholders set out supportive measures for a healthy workforce

Outcome S3
Students and the HCWF recognise the value of life-long learning and continuous professional development in digital and green

Outcome S4
Health and care ecosystem-relevant stakeholders understand the importance of having the digital, green, and soft skills training in curricula

Medium term (4-10 years)

Outcome M1
Education, health, social, employment and care sectors and policymakers identify gaps/areas where green and digital skilling of the HCWF can be integrated into frameworks, which are flexible enough to adapt to emerging circumstances

Outcome M2
Education, health, social, employment and care sectors and policymakers put processes in place to engage HCWF and patients in the co-creation of skilling opportunities

Outcome M3
HCWF have the time and support to meaningfully engage in opportunities of life-long learning, continuous professional development, and continuous self-assessment in digital and green skilling

Outcome M4
Education, health, social and care sectors, and policymakers implement enabling policies, plans and frameworks which support the wellbeing and (soft, digital, and green) skill developments of the HCWF

Outcome M5
HCWF have increased access to soft skills training

Outcome M6
Training is flexible to the needs of the HCWF (through e.g. microcredential systems), and integrally included in their work stream

Long term (10 years onwards)

Outcome L1
Education providers, supported by accreditation institutes, offer current and future-focused accredited education opportunities and clear learning pathways for career progression at local, national, and regional level, recognised across borders

Outcome L2
Education providers integrate digital and green competences across all health and wellbeing curricula

Outcome L3
Structures are in place for effective social dialogue with HCWF, facilitating education and training initiatives tailored to their needs and accessible to all

Outcome L4
The health and wellbeing of the HCWF is protected through better working conditions, safe environments, improved career prospects

Outcome L5
HCWF have increased levels of soft skills to facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration

IMPACT
HCWF will be equipped with digital and green skills to protect and promote better societal health outcomes and be actively involved in the digital and green transformation of health and care systems

MACRO-CONTEXT: evolving geopolitical landscape, cost-of-living and energy crisis, climate change and environmental crisis, demographic changes, COVID-19 recovery, emerging health threats, rapid technological developments, varying legislative frameworks.

HEALTH SYSTEM CONTEXT: countries are, to varying extents, having to deal with: fragile health systems, unattractive employment and working conditions, skills mismatches, and varied competences to cope with new digital (&green) developments, insufficient investments, lacking HCWF governance and management mechanisms.

BARRIERS/ OBSTACLES
Varied political prioritization/ foresight/ investments; different organization of health/ education systems; challenges around working conditions, workforce shortages and attracting and retaining professionals; unequal access to skilling opportunities; medical deserts and risks of brain drain