

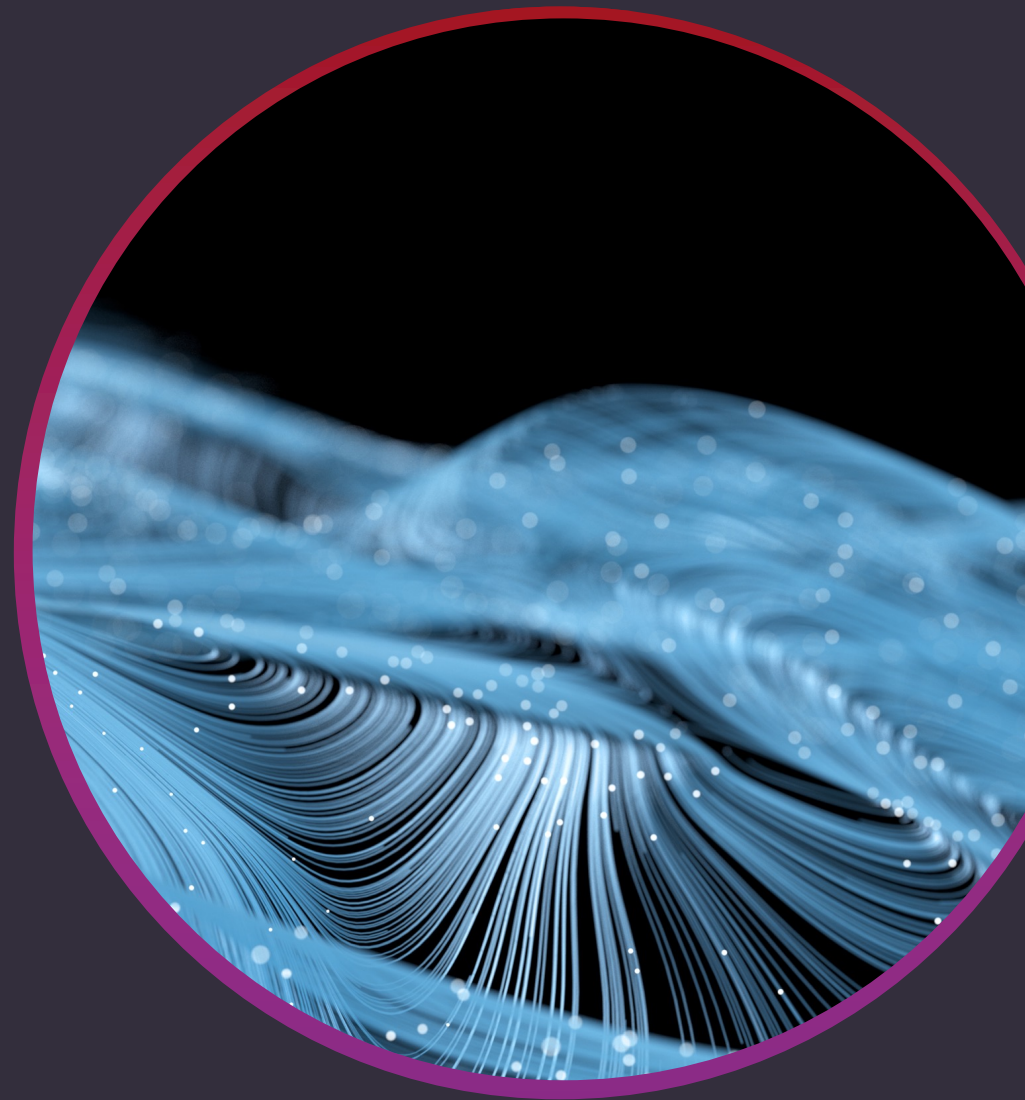
Lifelong Learning 2025

- the views of European learners & employers



Learners

- Data was collected in November 2024 with a total of **10210 respondents across more than 40 countries**.
- Respondents are drawn from 21 employment sectors with the largest being education, finance and insurance, information and communication, and manufacturing.
- 39% have an undergraduate degree while 19% have a Master's degree; 27% have high school or similar qualifications only.
- Respondents are drawn from four age groups – 21-35, 36-50, 51-65 and over 65.
- 12% are skilled manual workers, 17% are mid-level management, 19% administrative.
- 48% are male, 51% female.



WHY ARE YOU/WOULD YOU BE MOST LIKELY TO UNDERTAKE FURTHER LEARNING?

| | |
|--|-----|
| To study further as part of my personal development | 35% |
| To learn a specific new skill | 34% |
| To improve my earning potential | 25% |
| Enjoyment of the subject | 23% |
| To quickly add some new knowledge to support my career | 22% |
| To improve my job security | 16% |
| To start/grow my own business | 12% |
| To help me change sector/industry/career | 11% |
| To gain a promotion more quickly | 10% |
| To help me change roles within my organisation | 10% |
| Because I am required to take regular refresher courses to maintain my professional status (Continuing Professional Development - CPD) | 8% |
| To engage with my local community | 6% |
| Because I was made redundant and am looking to explore new opportunities | 6% |
| Because of a recommendation from a friend/colleague/employer | 4% |
| Other (please specify) | 1% |

WHICH PROVIDERS WOULD YOU USE FOR YOUR FUTURE LEARNING?

| | |
|---|-----|
| University/College | 47% |
| Commercial online learning provider | 33% |
| Professional/industry/trade body | 33% |
| Private training company | 31% |
| Public training body | 26% |
| Voluntary organization | 19% |
| Community body | 14% |
| Chamber of commerce | 12% |
| No particular provider comes to mind / Don't know | 10% |
| Further Education College | 6% |
| College | 4% |
| WEA | 1% |

WHY WOULD YOU USE UNIVERSITIES (OR COLLEGE IF IT IS RELEVANT IN YOUR COUNTRY) TO PROVIDE YOUR FUTURE LEARNING?

| | |
|---|-----|
| Universities/colleges have a reputation for developing knowledge | 45% |
| University/college qualifications are recognised by employers | 42% |
| The quality of faculty delivering courses | 37% |
| A wide range of subjects offered | 35% |
| University/college research adds value to the learning provided | 34% |
| Good value for money | 31% |
| Flexibility of solutions offered | 25% |
| Proximity of universities/college to where I live/work | 23% |
| To build my personal network | 23% |
| Solutions that fit various levels | 19% |
| To return to study at a university/college where I studied previously | 17% |
| Commitment to social purpose | 13% |
| To attend a summer school | 9% |

WHY WOULD YOU NOT USE UNIVERSITIES (OR COLLEGE IF IT IS RELEVANT IN YOUR COUNTRY) TO PROVIDE YOUR FUTURE LEARNING?

| | |
|---|-----|
| Universities/colleges are too expensive | 29% |
| Universities/colleges only offer degrees and I want a short course | 19% |
| Other providers offer programs which better meet my needs | 19% |
| I wasn't aware that universities/colleges offered lifelong learning | 15% |
| Universities/colleges are too theoretical | 14% |
| Studying with a university/college is too bureaucratic | 11% |
| Universities/colleges lack an online offer | 11% |
| Universities/colleges don't have the specific expertise I am seeking | 11% |
| I've not seen any real impact in the workplace among colleagues who have taken a university/college program | 11% |
| There are no good quality universities/colleges near where I live/work | 11% |
| University/college courses don't run often enough, so I can't learn quickly | 10% |
| I've had a poor experience with a university/college | 8% |
| Other | 4% |

PLEASE INDICATE YOUR VIEWS ON THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS ABOUT THE FUTURE OF UNIVERSITIES.

UNIVERSITIES SHOULD ...

| | Definitely disagree | Mostly disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Mostly agree | Definitely agree |
|--|---------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|--------------|------------------|
| Offer greater flexibility for degree study | 4% | 7% | 19% | 42% | 27% |
| Provide clearer routes to enable and support lifelong learning | 3% | 7% | 20% | 42% | 29% |
| Develop more inexpensive programs to deliver relevant skills for those working/looking for work | 3% | 7% | 20% | 36% | 34% |
| Be clearer about how their work positively impacts wider society not just business and industry | 3% | 6% | 25% | 40% | 26% |
| Always recognise my prior learning when taking a new course | 2% | 6% | 23% | 40% | 28% |
| Provide greater lifelong learning opportunities for their alumni | 2% | 6% | 24% | 41% | 27% |
| Grow their stackable qualifications which allow learning to be accumulated over an extended period | 2% | 5% | 25% | 42% | 25% |
| Offer more courses at convenient times outside working hours | 3% | 6% | 19% | 36% | 35% |

Employers

- Data was collected in November 2024. A total of **1255 employers completed the survey from 32 countries.**
- 35% of the response are drawn from manufacturing, finance and insurance, and information and communication.
- The largest group, 16%, employ between 501 and 1,000 staff, while 51% employ fewer respondents.



Work and learn with private providers, professional bodies and universities

- The most used providers are **private training providers (40%) professional/industry/trade bodies (37%) and universities (32%)**.
- When universities are used it's likely to be because:
 - Universities/colleges have a **reputation for developing knowledge**
 - The **qualifications are widely recognised** by employers
 - University/college **research adds value** to the learning provided
 - **Quality of faculty** delivering courses
- Reasons given for not using universities tend to focus on:
 - Universities/colleges are **too theoretical and not sufficiently abreast of the real-world business challenges** we face
 - **Other providers** offer programs which better meet our development needs
 - Universities/colleges **don't have the specific expertise** we are seeking



REASON FOR USING UNIVERSITIES TO PROVIDE LEARNING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

| | |
|---|-----|
| Universities/colleges have a reputation for developing knowledge | 43% |
| The qualifications are widely recognised by employers | 41% |
| University/college research adds value to the learning provided | 40% |
| Quality of faculty delivering courses | 39% |
| A wide range of relevant subjects offered | 32% |
| Flexibility of learning provision, offering different delivery modes | 32% |
| Existing relationships with universities/colleges | 30% |
| Good value for money | 30% |
| Solutions that fit various leadership levels in our talent pool | 28% |
| Flexibility of solutions offered | 27% |
| The self-accrediting status of universities allows them to award qualifications | 27% |
| Content backed by research and expertise | 27% |
| Long standing relationships with key universities/colleges | 25% |
| Proximity of universities/colleges to our business locations | 24% |
| Their involvement in the local community | 17% |

REASON FOR NOT USING UNIVERSITIES TO PROVIDE LEARNING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

| | |
|--|-----|
| Universities/colleges are too theoretical and not sufficiently abreast of the real-world business challenges we face | 22% |
| Other providers offer programs which better meet our development needs | 21% |
| Universities/colleges don't have the specific expertise we are seeking | 19% |
| Universities/colleges are too expensive | 16% |
| I wasn't aware that universities/colleges offered staff and management development programs | 15% |
| We have not seen any real impact back in the workplace after investing in a university/college program | 15% |
| Working with a university/college is too bureaucratic | 14% |
| Our organisation only uses in-house provision | 13% |
| University/college training is not appropriate to our level of staff | 13% |
| There are no good-quality universities/colleges near our facilities | 13% |
| Universities/colleges lack an online offer and are too far for our staff to travel | 13% |
| Universities/colleges are too slow to respond to our enquiries | 12% |
| Our organisation stopped using universities/colleges after a previous poor experience | 11% |
| Other (please specify) | 1% |

VIEWS ON THE FUTURE OF UNIVERSITIES

UNIVERSITIES SHOULD ...

| | Definitely disagree | Mostly disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Mostly agree | Definitely agree |
|--|---------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|--------------|------------------|
| Continue to develop more flexible approaches to learning | 2% | 6% | 17% | 42% | 34% |
| Provide clearer routes to enable and support lifelong learners | 2% | 5% | 18% | 43% | 31% |
| Develop more inexpensive programs to deliver relevant skills for those working | 3% | 4% | 18% | 40% | 34% |
| Develop a wider range of short courses | 2% | 5% | 19% | 42% | 31% |
| Be clearer about how their offer positively impacts wider society not just business and industry | 2% | 6% | 19% | 42% | 30% |
| Be more responsive to employer needs | 2% | 6% | 18% | 41% | 33% |
| Be more innovative in their development of lifelong learning | 2% | 5% | 18% | 41% | 34% |