

Press release
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New EEI study: A general EU right to training has no Treaty basis

A new independent legal study commissioned by the European Employers' Institute (EEI) examines the legal limits of EU action on vocational training and **the possibility of establishing a general right to training at EU level.**

The study "The Right to Training in European Union Law: A legal study on the constitutional limits of EU action under Article 166(4) TFEU" authored by labour law professor and researcher, Duarte Abrunhosa e Sousa, assesses current calls for EU legislative action on training, including proposals for an EU right to training during working hours.

The study concludes that **the EU Treaties do not provide a legal basis for such a general binding right.** Article 166(4) TFEU expressly excludes harmonisation of national laws on vocational training. The study also finds that Article 153 TFEU, the Charter and Article 352 TFEU do not provide alternative routes for establishing such an entitlement.

Moreover, the EEI study highlights the **diversity of national training systems across the EU.** Member States rely on different combinations of employer obligations, collective bargaining, training leave, individual learning accounts (ILAs), sectoral arrangements and public co-financing, shaped by distinct national labour market and training frameworks.

The evidence also highlights the value of diverse national approaches to training. Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Estonia recorded training participation rates above 56% in 2024, reflecting different national systems for supporting skills development and participation.

"European employers support investment in skills and training. A uniform legal entitlement imposed on employers across 27 different labour markets risks creating additional costs and rigidities without improving training outcomes. EU policy should support investment, social dialogue and national solutions which meet the needs of workers and businesses, while strengthening Europe's competitiveness," commented Delphine Rudelli, **Chair of the Board of the EEI.**

About European Employers' Institute

The European Employers Institute (EEI) is a research institute, founded by European and national employer organisations in March 2024. The EEI focuses on emerging employment and social policy topics at the European level, producing research studies, analyses and publications. It aims to ensure balanced representation on employment issues and strengthen social dialogue at the European level.

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