

A large, circular network diagram composed of numerous grey nodes connected by thin grey lines, with several nodes highlighted in red and orange. The diagram is centered on the page and serves as a background for the main text.

World Future Skills Index

India Spotlight

**Transforming higher education
for the skills economy**



Higher education's role in future workforce readiness

Welcome to the India Spotlight on the QS World Future Skills Index, where we explore higher education's critical role in shaping the workforce of tomorrow. This tailored resource empowers you to analyse India's future skills supply and demand, benchmark key industry jobs and skills gaps against over 80 countries, and align your higher education system with the skills training required for economic transformation.

By 2030, an estimated 375 million workers will need to switch occupational categories, requiring tailored reskilling initiatives and modular, lifelong learning opportunities.

Source: Jobs Lost, Jobs Gained report from McKinsey

The QS World Future Skills Index in numbers

190+
countries analysed

4
indicators, informed by
13 sub-indicators

280m+
job postings assessed

5m+
employer skill demands reviewed

5,000+
universities measured

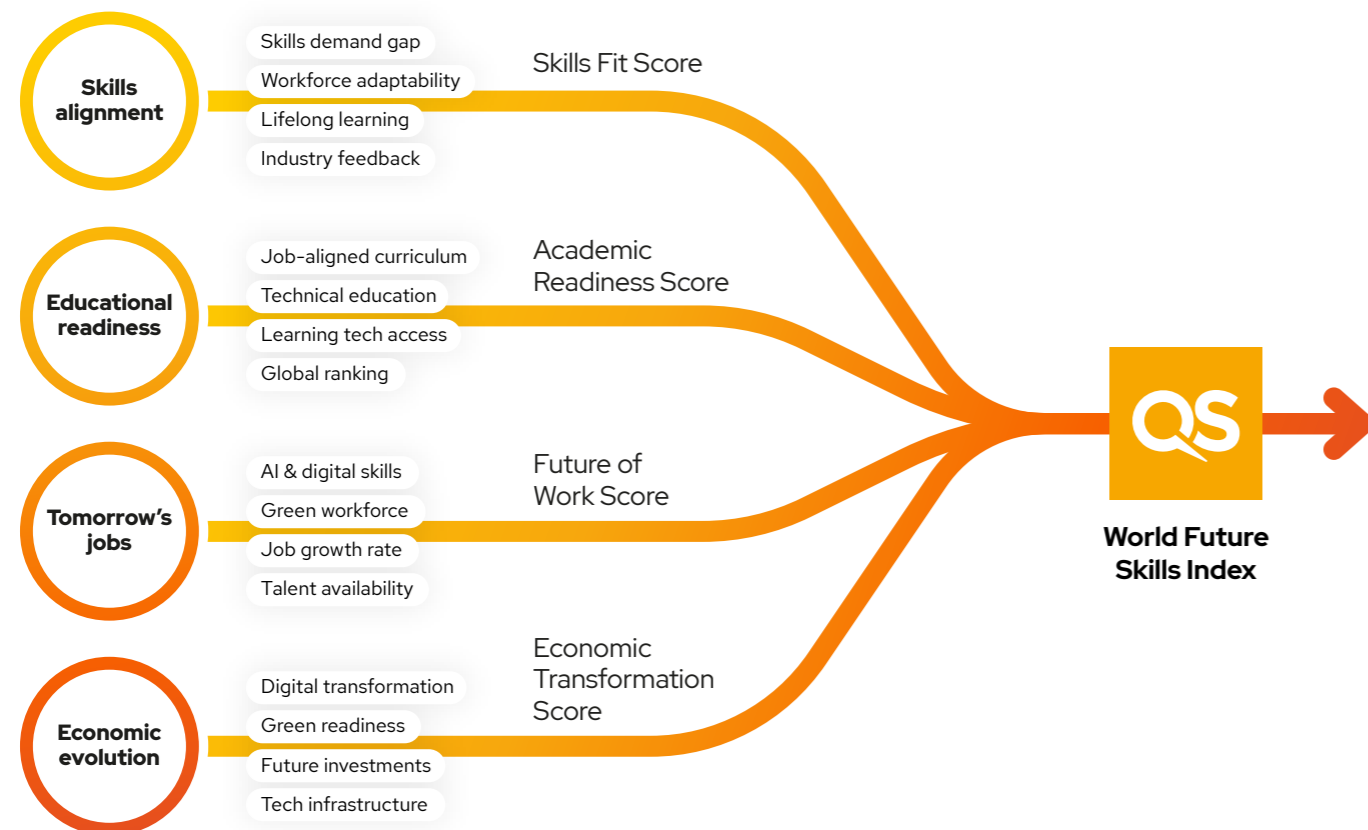
17.5m+
research papers examined

How to use the QS World Future Skills Index



The QS World Future Skills Index is designed to assess how prepared countries are to tackle the shifting demands of the global workforce, particularly in the context of digital transformation, AI, sustainability, and the broader economic changes impacting jobs.

Skills like AI proficiency, digital literacy, and environmental sustainability will form the bedrock of the industries of tomorrow. Countries that fail to adapt risk losing their competitive edge and missing opportunities for economic growth.



The QS World Future Skills Index uses data from over 280 million job postings via QS iMentor, the QS Global Employer Survey, and economic and demographic statistics from the World Bank Group. The Index assesses countries across four

key indicators: Skills Fit, Academic Readiness, Future of Work, and Economic Transformation. Each indicator plays a vital role in providing a comprehensive view of a country's preparedness to thrive in an increasingly skills-driven global economy.

QS World Future Skills Index indicators

Skills Fit

The Skills Fit indicator measures how well countries are equipping graduates with the skills that employers desire. This is assessed by determining the gap between what employers find important and their level of satisfaction with the skills provided by graduates.

This is done using data from the QS Global Employer Survey, the largest of its kind, and data from the World Bank Group. Since 2021, over 100,000 employers have rated the importance of certain skills and their satisfaction in their graduate hires.

Future of Work

The Future of Work indicator evaluates a country's readiness to recruit for the skills needed in the jobs of tomorrow. Specifically, it measures how well the job market is prepared to meet the growing

demand for digital, AI, and green skills, all of which are becoming critical as economies transition towards technology-driven and sustainable industries.

Academic Readiness

This dimension measures how well a country is prepared for the future of work. We look at the number of universities assessed for the QS World University Rankings by Subject, and how they perform.

We then measure this in tandem with population size – if a country has a large population but few well-ranked institutions, for example, the country will be penalised.

Economic Transformation

Economic Transformation uses a weighted formula to assess a country's readiness to support the growth and future of work and skills by examining various key indicators. The Index highlights whether a country has the infrastructure, investment power,

and talent available to transition to industries driven by AI, digital transformation, green technologies, and high-skilled work, using data from the World Bank Group, UNESCO Institute for Statistics and the Education Policy Institute.

India | Performance overview

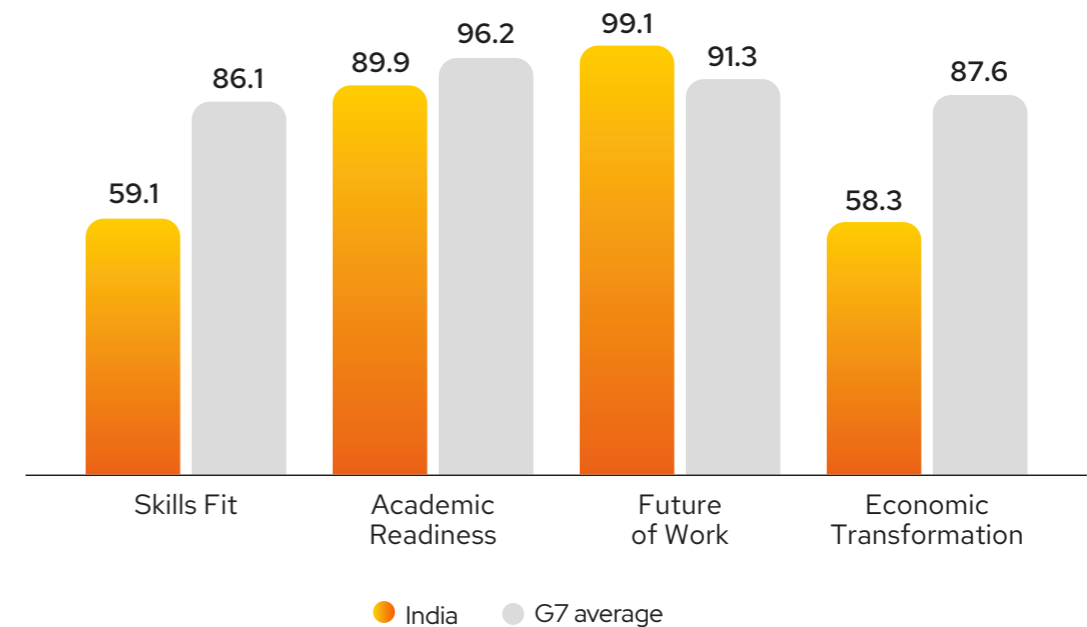
India's strong focus on future skills and emerging job trends positions it as a forward-thinking nation with significant potential, as evidenced by the country's performance in Future of Work and Academic Readiness. However, challenges in its current economic and academic systems could slow progress - while India has a strong economy, there is low investment in research and development and the country is not close to reaching its own environmental policy targets.

Greater collaboration between government, industry, and academic institutions will be critical to overcoming these barriers. By working together to strengthen education and create aligned opportunities, India can ensure its workforce is equipped to thrive in the global economy and fully realise the benefits of its future-oriented initiatives.



Overall score: **76.6/100**

QS World Future Skills Index
India performance vs G7 average



Skills Fit
59.1/100

Skills Fit measures the alignment between workforce skills and employer needs. It highlights how effectively education systems prepare graduates for key industries, especially in emerging fields like AI, green technology, and digital innovation. Addressing gaps here boosts employability, drives economic transformation, and ensures the workforce remains competitive internationally.

Academic Readiness
89.9/100

Academic Readiness reflects the capacity of a country's higher education system to equip students with relevant skills for future jobs. A robust system fosters innovation, aligns curricula with industry demands. This ensures graduates are not only employable but also capable of adapting to a rapidly changing global economy

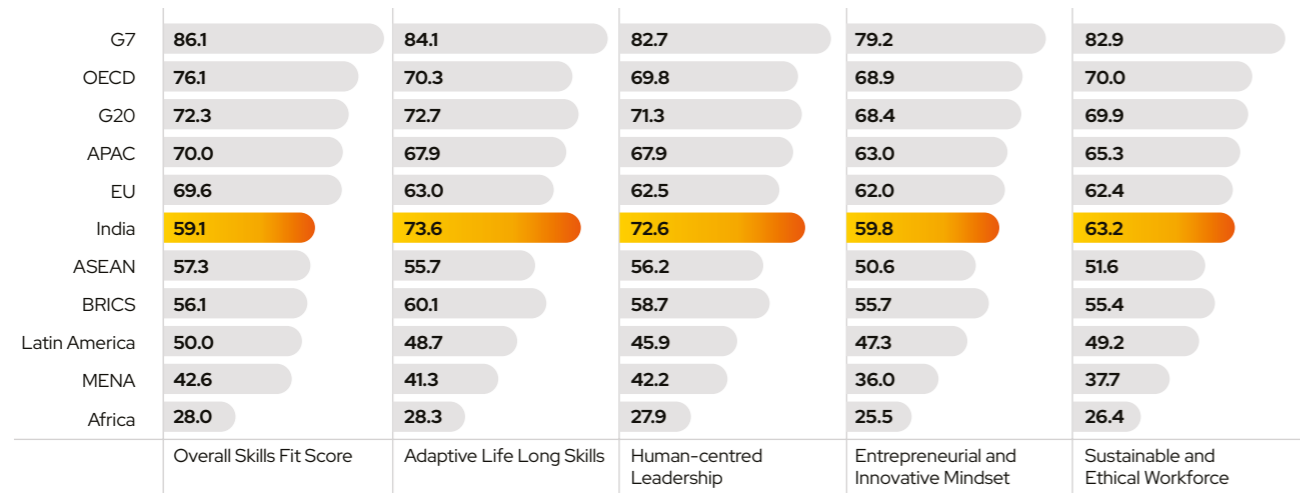
Future of Work
99.1/100

Future of Work assesses a country's preparedness for jobs of the future, focusing on adaptability to technological and industrial changes. It reflects innovation, R&D investments, and sustainable practices in education. Higher education plays a vital role in fostering a future-ready workforce equipped with the skills required for evolving global industries.

Economic Transformation
58.3/100

Economic Transformation examines the interplay between education, workforce skills, and industrial growth. Higher education underpins this by driving productivity, innovation, and sustainability. Universities that align their programmes with industry needs not only strengthen national competitiveness but also ensure a balance between economic momentum and workforce adaptability.

Skills Fit

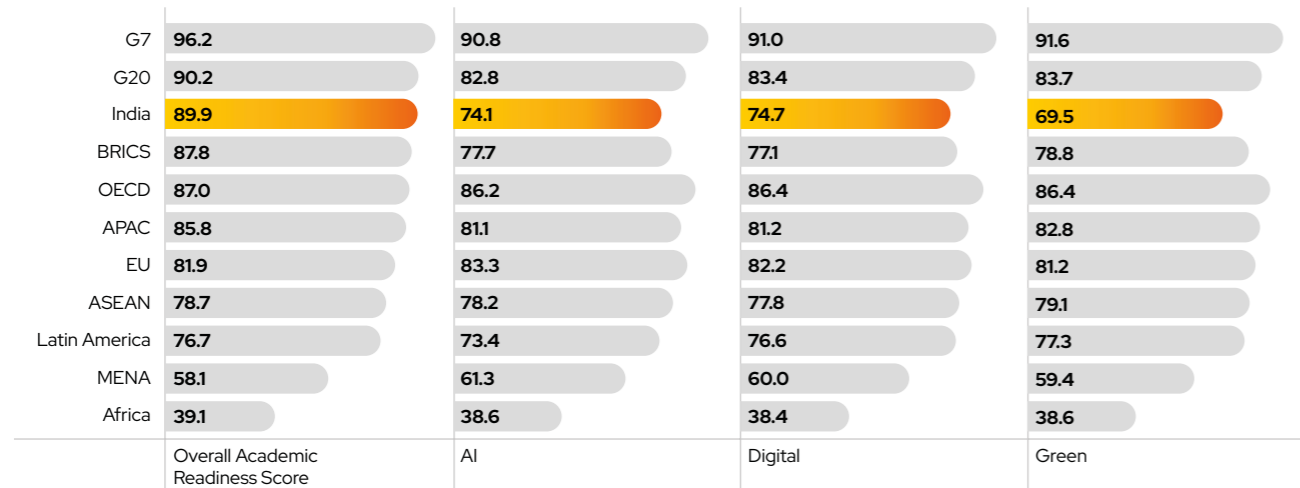


QS Analysis

Employers across India are highlighting a critical gap in the workforce's ability to meet the demands of a rapidly changing economic landscape. While Adaptive Life Long Skills and Human-Centred Leadership are generally seen as meeting expectations, there is a pronounced gap in Entrepreneurial & Innovative Mindset skills. This shortfall underscores a broader challenge for India's higher education system, which is struggling to keep pace with evolving employer needs. To address this, universities must prioritise embedding creativity, problem-solving, and entrepreneurial thinking into their curricula and foster stronger collaborations with industry to better align education with workforce demands.

Note: The Skills Fit score is derived from over 5 million skills nominations, reflecting insights from more than 100,000 employer responses to the QS Global Employer Survey over the past four years. Employers identified key skills they value and their satisfaction levels. By analysing this data at the country level, and integrating it with the World Bank's Human Capital Index, the QS Insights and Consulting team developed the final scores. Skills nominated by employers have been grouped based on the findings.

Academic Readiness

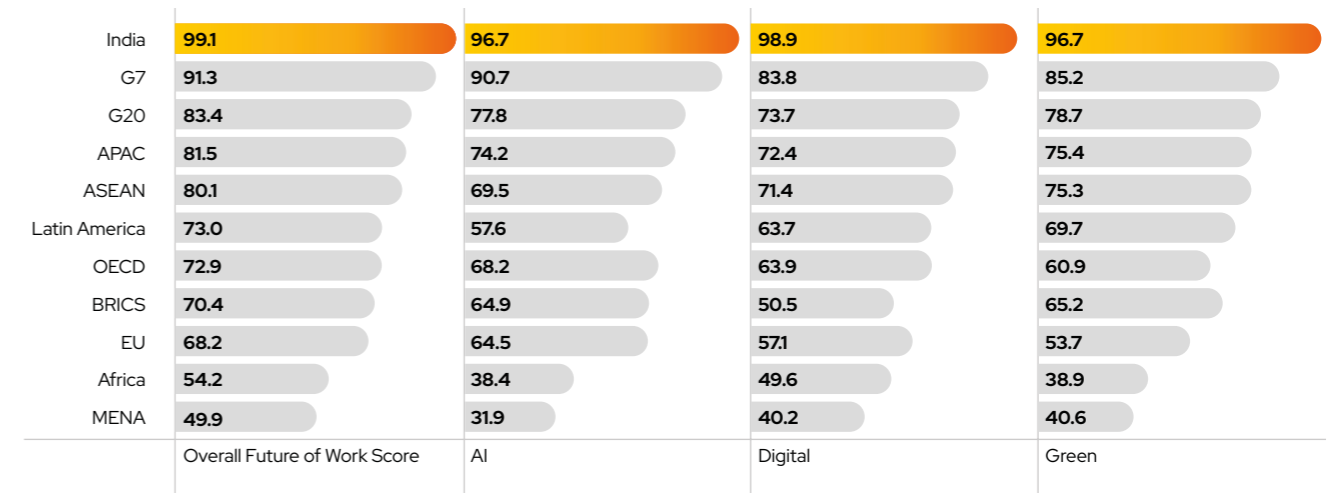


QS Analysis

India's Academic Readiness reflects a robust focus on AI and digital fields, showcasing its commitment to aligning education with future economic demands. However, a gap in green skills performance highlights the need to integrate sustainability into curricula, addressing global priorities. With 69 universities featured in QS World University Rankings by Subject 2024, India has a solid foundation, but significant scope to expand its impact. Bridging these gaps through targeted higher education reforms and fostering skills alignment will be pivotal for driving innovation, strengthening economic resilience, and securing global competitiveness.

Note: This chart draws on data from the QS World University Rankings by Subject 2024, analysing over 5,000 universities globally. The Academic Readiness score is calculated using the median subject rankings score for each country, adjusted for performance in key areas such as AI, digital, and green-related disciplines. Population size and the number of universities ranked are used as weighting factors to ensure a balanced assessment of scale and quality. This provides a comprehensive view of how effectively higher education systems are preparing for future workforce demands.

Future of Work

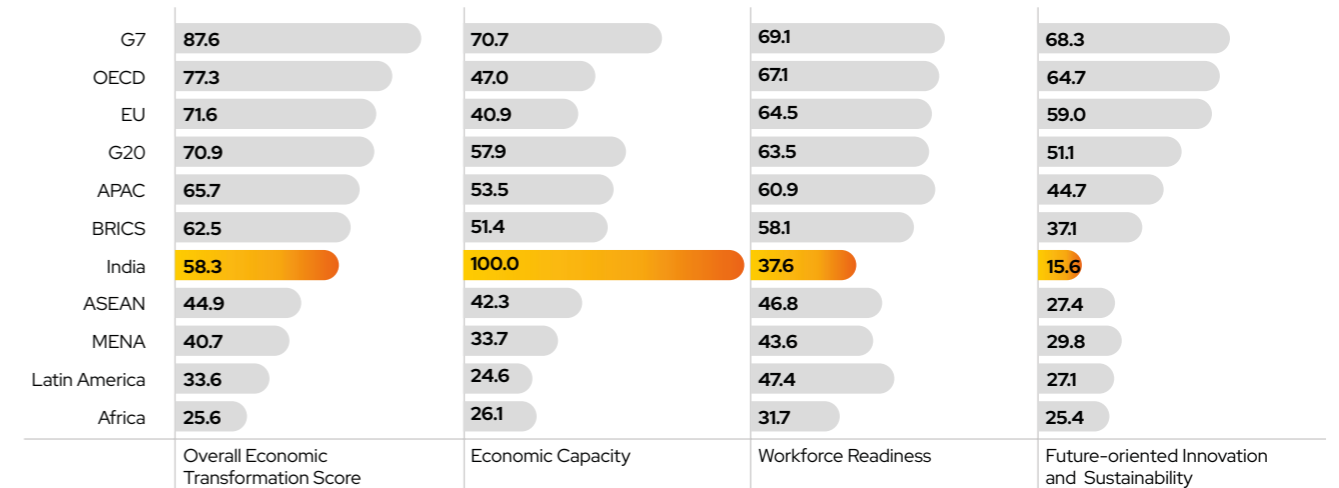


QS Analysis

Employers in India are seeking the skills essential for the future of work, with particularly strong demand for Green, AI, and Digital expertise compared to other countries. This reflects India's growing alignment with global trends and its ambition to remain competitive in a rapidly evolving job market. However, while demand is high, the challenge lies in ensuring the supply of talent keeps pace.

Note: The Future of Work Score measures the extent to which future-focused skills—such as digital, AI, and green competencies—have permeated global job advertisements compared to traditional skillsets. This score is derived from an analysis of over 280 million job postings worldwide, leveraging the QS proprietary skills taxonomy. Over 9,500 emerging skills were identified and benchmarked against conventional skills, providing a clear indicator of how deeply future-oriented capabilities are being prioritised by employers in the global labour market.

Economic Transformation



QS Analysis

India's economic transformation has been driven by the interplay of growth, workforce efficiency, and the evolving role of higher education. While GDP expansion and improving productivity have driven progress, higher education institutions have emerged as critical enablers in equipping the workforce with future-ready skills. However, gaps in investment and innovation capacity pose challenges that could slow long-term growth. To fully realise its potential, India must align economic momentum with robust higher education reforms and skills development, ensuring a dynamic and competitive position in the global economy.

Note: The Economic Transformation indicator is built on three core dimensions: Economic Capacity, Workforce Readiness, and Future-Oriented Innovation and Sustainability. It combines data on GDP growth, labour productivity, employment rates, R&D investment, and infrastructure development. These indicators are weighted and benchmarked globally to assess a country's ability to adapt to skills-driven industrial change, with a focus on AI, digital, and green industries. The methodology ensures a comprehensive view of how effectively economic fundamentals and future-focused investments align with evolving workforce demands.

India | Full results summary



Country/Location	Skills Fit	Academic Readiness	Future Of Work	Economic Transformation	Final Score
United States	94.4	98.2	100.0	97.9	97.6
United Kingdom	100.0	100.0	95.6	92.7	97.1
Germany	89.2	99.6	94.7	94.7	94.6
Australia	87.2	98.9	96.5	90.6	93.3
Canada	90.9	97.8	97.4	78.1	91.0
Netherlands	88.6	99.3	90.4	81.2	89.9
Switzerland	80.7	97.1	82.6	96.8	89.3
France	84.8	92.6	91.3	84.3	88.2
Singapore	83.2	91.7	92.2	85.4	88.1
South Korea	84.4	88.4	76.5	100.0	87.3
China	78.5	93.9	87.8	88.5	87.2
Spain	76.4	96.3	93.0	70.8	84.1
Israel	70.6	93.0	73.0	98.9	83.9
Sweden	80.4	95.1	72.2	86.4	83.5
Japan	73.4	87.9	74.7	95.8	83.0
Belgium	72.4	95.9	71.3	91.6	82.8
Ireland	81.8	95.5	86.1	67.7	82.8
Denmark	73.0	96.7	66.1	93.7	82.4
Hong Kong SAR	77.0	98.6	69.5	80.2	81.3
Italy	70.3	97.4	85.2	69.7	80.7
Finland	76.1	93.4	62.6	87.5	79.9
New Zealand	75.6	94.7	80.0	63.5	78.5
Norway		94.3	56.5	83.3	78.0
Poland	68.5	85.3	86.9	68.7	77.3
India	59.1	89.9	99.1	58.3	76.6
Portugal	71.0	92.1	66.9	76.0	76.5
Czech Republic	72.4	77.5	82.6	71.8	76.1
Austria	66.5	90.8	64.3	82.2	75.9
United Arab Emirates	71.6	90.3	77.4	60.4	74.9

Note: The scores reflect the final results of the QS World Future Skills Index. Categories are organised alphabetically by economy for clarity and ease of comparison.

India | Full results summary

Country/Location	Skills Fit	Academic Readiness	Future Of Work	Economic Transformation	Final Score
Greece	62.3	85.9	65.2	72.9	71.6
Brazil	44.1	83.1	78.2	77.0	70.6
Malaysia	64.0	91.2	88.6	35.4	69.8
Thailand	58.1	81.4	80.8	52.0	68.1
Mexico	54.8	80.8	98.2	37.5	67.8
Lithuania	61.4	87.4	52.2	66.6	66.9
Hungary	59.3	84.2	68.6	54.1	66.6
Russia	73.4	84.8	33.8	73.9	66.5
Saudi Arabia	56.9	82.5	73.8	51.0	66.1
Türkiye	62.1	73.3	60.0	64.5	65.0
Colombia	58.3	82.0	89.5	27.0	64.2
Costa Rica		67.5	79.1	45.8	64.1
Argentina	57.8	83.7	84.3	23.9	62.4
Philippines	47.6	66.6	93.8	40.6	62.2
Estonia		70.1	53.0	61.4	61.5
Kazakhstan	67.8	75.5	40.8	59.3	60.9
Egypt	45.4	76.9	75.6	44.7	60.6
Indonesia	60.0	74.0	67.8	39.5	60.3
Lebanon	45.9	86.4	46.9		59.7
Chile	63.1	88.9	70.4	13.5	59.0
Qatar	45.5	79.5	59.1	47.9	58.0
Romania	43.0	72.5	58.2	48.9	55.7
Vietnam	58.1	74.7	57.4	31.2	55.4
Jordan	49.2	78.2	49.5	41.6	54.6
Slovenia		49.1	35.6	79.1	54.6
Bulgaria	37.6	56.0	61.7	57.2	53.1
Peru	51.0	80.1	54.7	26.0	53.0
Latvia	56.4	60.7	46.1	46.8	52.5
South Africa	28.3	89.4	81.7	10.4	52.4

Country/Location	Skills Fit	Academic Readiness	Future Of Work	Economic Transformation	Final Score
Bahrain	47.2	62.7	33.0	55.2	49.6
Ukraine	57.9	71.8	51.3	15.6	49.1
Bangladesh	39.1	65.7	42.6		49.1
Luxembourg		54.8	47.8	43.7	48.7
Kuwait	36.3	69.3	40.0		48.5
Belarus	57.6	40.4	29.5	65.6	48.3
Iceland		31.6	20.0	89.5	47.0
Pakistan	35.7	78.9	63.4	4.1	45.5
Croatia		36.4	35.6	62.5	44.8
Uruguay	40.6	59.5	60.8	17.7	44.7
Brunei Darussalam	29.8	70.9		30.2	43.6
Ecuador	30.6	64.8	41.7	34.3	42.8
Armenia	25.3		45.2	50.0	40.2
Uzbekistan	48.1	57.2	29.5	16.6	37.9
Cyprus	45.2	44.2	37.4	18.7	36.4
Azerbaijan	31.8	50.6	27.8	29.1	34.8
Oman	32.5	42.5	29.5	33.3	34.4
Panama	24.2		50.4	28.1	34.2
Sri Lanka	43.5		42.6	6.2	30.8
Morocco	17.0		53.8	20.8	30.5
Tunisia		29.0	37.4	19.7	28.7
Algeria	21.3		22.6	32.2	25.4
Tajikistan	16.7		26.9	21.8	21.8

*Where a country lacks an indicator score, this reflects insufficient data available to evaluate overall performance

The Indian economy is the fifth largest in the world and was the fastest growing G20 economy in 2024. Industries driving this growth include FMCG, Infrastructure, Healthcare, IT and Renewables.

The economic innovation being driven globally through AI, Digital and Green is very evident in India wherein it scores second in the world for Future of Work, signalling that Indian employers today are demanding the innovative skills of tomorrow.

However, there are clear areas of improvement required.

Our analysis and recommendations:

Integrate lifelong learning and workforce re-skilling programmes for at-risk occupational categories

- Given the rapid evolution and innovation in the Indian economy, it is clear that graduates are struggling to keep up with the pace of change in relevant skills required.
- India’s overall Skills Fit score is lower than counterparts in APAC, with a particularly large skills gap in Entrepreneurial and Innovative Mindset.
- However, the strength of the Indian higher education sector to adapt is clear. Outperforming the average performance of other BRICS nations, India’s Academic Readiness score shows that the country’s universities already gaining a reputation for their AI, digital and green related subjects.
- Government policy and higher education will require a focused strategy to re-engage workers in continuous and lifelong reskilling programmes to ensure skilled workers remain relevant and productivity contributors.

Invest in sustainability research and green skills development

- Green readiness is an area of relative underperformance for the Indian economy versus G20 peers. Whilst rising demand for green occupations and green skilled workers is clear through the India’s strong Future of Work score, India places 176 in the Environmental Performance Index.
- Higher education must play a vital role in driving the Sustainability agenda for India going forward, and, again, the sector is positioning itself well. 57% of the Indian institutions ranked in the QS World University Rankings: Sustainability 2025 improved their Environmental Impact score.
- Policy makers must realise the potential of India’s higher education sector by investing in sustainable R&D and address green skill gaps by aligning curricula and learning modes to nurture the green skills necessary.



Your future workforce and skills partner

Connecting higher education, government policy, employer demands and student needs

Speak to your QS partnership director to gain access to more insight and advice.

Assess economic risk

We can help you analyse skills supply and demand by industry or region to identify skills shortages

Access data on the industries, occupations and skills driving growth to set your labour market strategy

Address skills gaps

Benchmark your skills shortages against peer nations to assess your relative risk

Identify the countries providing the most skills-aligned talent for your high-growth industries to set a talent attraction strategy

Align higher education with future skills

Assess the top performing universities within your country or region to deliver future skills ready graduates

Establish a future skills strategy for higher education institutions within your country or region, and enhance curricula and learning modes to deliver the skills of tomorrow

Evaluate performance at the subject level to develop an internal benchmark and skills performance improvement strategy

1

Assess economic risks:
Analyse supply and demand imbalances to identify skill shortages and develop strategies to safeguard your economy against workforce misalignment.

2

Address skills gaps:
Benchmark job and skill requirements globally to ensure graduates are equipped to meet industry needs and strengthen economic resilience.

3

Align higher education with future skills:
Transform higher education to embed future skills, ensuring graduates contribute to innovation, economic growth, and reduced workforce displacement.



Read the full [QS World Future Skills Index briefing paper](#)



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