**Challenges**

All countries will have to step up efforts to make their adult learning systems ready for the future. Some countries are facing greater pressure to do so than others, due to factors such as low adult skill levels, demographic and structural change, and the resulting skill imbalances. In many countries, participation in adult learning activities remains limited, in particular by those groups most in need of up- and reskilling.

**Urgency**

New technologies, globalisation and population ageing are influencing the quantity and quality of jobs that are available and the skill-sets they require. Skill imbalances are emerging and many adults lack strong foundational skills to help them access new opportunities. All these factors increase the need for opportunities for up- and reskilling. The *urgency* dimension assesses how pressing the challenges are in different countries.

**Coverage**

In a changing world of work, increasing everyone’s engagement in adult learning is key to their sustained social and economic inclusion. It is also critical to ensure that firms have access to the skills they need to stay competitive. The *coverage* dimension assesses the comprehensiveness of individual and employer engagement in adult learning.

**Inclusiveness**

Providing inclusive learning opportunities for all and in particular for those groups most in need of up- and re-skilling is a key challenge for future-ready adult learning systems. In many cases, certain groups, like low-skilled or mature-age adults, have lower access to training opportunities. The *inclusiveness* dimension looks at how equitable participation in adult learning is across countries.

**Responses**

The future-readiness of adult learning systems can be improved by providing training opportunities that are flexible, of high quality, and correspond to the skill needs in the labour market. They must also be adequately funded.

**Alignment**

For individuals to take advantage of a changing world of work, it is of crucial importance that training opportunities are aligned with skill needs in the labour market. Individuals with a high risk of skills obsolescence in particular need access to these opportunities. The *alignment* dimension looks at how well adult learning systems take into account the changing skill needs of the labour market.

**Financing**

Adult learning systems need to be adequately financed in order to function well. Building a healthy mix of funding sources, including contributions from government, individuals and employers, is essential for their sustainability. The *financing* dimension assesses the extent to which adult learning systems are adequately financed by different actors.

**Flexibility and Guidance**

Providing inclusive and well-aligned learning opportunities for all requires that adults have easy access to information about training opportunities, but also that training opportunities are flexible to respond to the particular needs of adults. The *flexibility and guidance* dimension looks at how well countries do in providing information and guidance to adults on training opportunities and reducing barriers through flexible provision.

**Quality**

For adult education and training to have the desired outcomes for individuals, firms and societies, it is imperative that the provided training is of high quality. While quality is difficult to measure, certification, monitoring and evaluation are essential tools for quality assurance of adult learning providers and programmes. The *quality* dimension measures these aspects of quality.