

# Skills as Data: Ratings, Scores, Performance Metrics — Insights from Albania

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ETF Skills Lab Network of Experts — Regional Webinar  
*Visibility and Value of Skills in Algorithmically Managed Work  
in the Western Balkans and Türkiye*  
12 May 2026



- 1 The Starting Point: Albania's Labour-Market Paradox
- 2 The Argument: Two Ways to Match a Worker
- 3 A Bifurcated Digital Labour Market
- 4 Three Sites Where Skills Become Data
- 5 Synthesis: Four Shifts in Visibility and Value
- 6 Implications and Conclusion



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# Albania's Labour-Market Paradox

*Selected indicators (Albania, 2024–2025):*

- **8.1%** unemployment (Q3 2025) — *lowest in WB6*
- **12 pp** gender participation gap — *smallest in region but persistent*
- **21.5%** youth unemployment — *EU average: 14.7%*
- **34.2%** informal employment — *highest in WB6*

**The paradox** (World Bank, Spring 2026 Regional Economic Report):

*“Labour shortages coexist with high unemployment and low participation, while sustained outmigration drains the human-capital base.”*

Educational attainment is rising — but **credentials don't translate into productive matches**. The traditional skills system is not clearing the market.

*Sources: World Bank WB Regular Economic Report Spring 2026 (ch. 1; ch. 2 spotlight); SEE Jobs Gateway.*



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# Two Ways to Match a Worker to a Job

## The credentialed system

*Diploma, qualification, occupational standard*

- Slow, episodic, costly to signal
- Credentials are noisy proxies for productivity (Spence, 1973)
- Search frictions; regional & gender mismatches
- **In Albania: not closing the gap**

## Algorithmic matching

*Ratings, scores, real-time data*

- Continuous, observable productivity data
- Algorithmic dispatch reduces search costs
- Closer to the “competitive market” ideal in theory
- **But pricing & weighting set unilaterally by the platform**

**The Albanian shift:** platforms and employers fill the matching gap that the credential system leaves open — *by reducing skills to data they own.*



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# Albania's Bifurcated Digital Labour Market

## Small digital segment

*Diaspora-connected, bilingual, internationally exposed*

- Public administration (e-Albania, Diella, MIRA)
- BPO & call-centres (Italian/Greek markets)
- Banking, e-commerce
- Freelance & platform work

**12% of firms use AI    187 freelancers / 100k**

→ *Skills become data. Algorithmic matching reaches here.*

**The paradox is concentrated on the right.** Algorithmic matching solves it only on the left — and on platform terms.

## Large low-digital majority

*Agriculture, informal economy, traditional services*

- Agriculture: 18.7% of GVA (highest in WB6)
- Informal employment: 34.2%
- Low basic-digital-skills scores
- Concentrated outmigration of low/medium-skilled

→ *Skills stay a credential problem. Matching gap persists.*



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## Skills become a reputation score the worker doesn't own.

- Customer star ratings, acceptance rate, completion rate, on-time rate
- Dispatch algorithms allocate the next task by past data
- Reputation = earnings, ranking, future access to work
- Score is *non-portable*: leaving the platform = starting again
- Female Albanian freelancers earn ~US\$4.20/hr less than men — unchanged since 2020 (Gigmeter via World Bank, 2025)

## Worker demand — KSSH, supporting Wolt couriers' protest (9 March 2026):

*“Full transparency on how the app functions and how payments are calculated.”*

*The classical labour grievance has shifted from wages to legibility.*



**Skills become continuous behavioural compliance.** *Case: Teleperformance Albania — webcams in workers' homes.*

- Remote agents monitored by webcam without prior consultation
- Sindikata Solidariteti filed a complaint
- Dec 2020: **Data Protection Commissioner ordered surveillance stopped** — via regulatory adjudication, *not* collective bargaining
- Workers contest the *data infrastructure* of skill measurement, not the skill itself

**And the data agree** (EWCS 2024):

- Albanian high-intensity computer users score **54** on work intensity — *lowest in WB6* (regional avg. 60; EU 64)
- Concentrated in BPO, call-centres, bilingual remote services for Italian-speaking markets



## Skills become deference to an automated decision.

- **Diella** — announced 11 Sept 2025 as Minister of State for AI in public procurement. Civil servants now operate alongside an algorithm that scores tenders. Human review, appeals, and accountability remain unspecified.
- **MIRA** — AI-based risk-scoring matrix used by SLISS to prioritise labour inspections. Determines which firms get visited, how risks are classified, where enforcement resources flow. No social-partner consultation, no negotiated criteria.

## What changes for the worker:

The inspector's professional judgement is no longer the *input* — it is the *residual* after the algorithm has run. “Skill” becomes the ability to operate the system, not to override it.



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# Four Ways the Visibility and Value of Skills Are Changing

## 1 **Dynamic, not stable.**

Skills are continuously re-evaluated. Yesterday's score does not bind tomorrow's.

## 2 **Reputational, not credentialed.**

A 4.9-star rating, an Upwork JSS, a QA score — these now signal employability where a diploma once did.

## 3 **Bound, not portable.**

Reputation belongs to the platform or the employer's system. Workers leave with no transferable record.

## 4 **Opaque, not negotiable.**

Workers cannot see the criteria — and existing collective-bargaining structures in Albania cannot reach them.



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# Three Pressures the Albanian VET System Isn't Built For

## 1 The credential bypass.

NESS 2023–2030 and Albania's qualification frameworks barely engage with platform-mediated and AM-mediated work. The fastest-growing skill-signalling channels sit *outside* the formal system.

## 2 The transparency gap.

Albanian social partners have largely deferred to forthcoming EU rules — a “leave it to the law” approach. Without negotiated transparency, workers cannot inspect, contest, or even understand the metrics that define them.

## 3 The portability problem.

Reputation built on a platform stays on it. Without portable, platform-agnostic micro-credentials and a public infrastructure for recognising data-based skills, every move is a fresh start.



# Conclusion

- **Albania's labour market is being matched one rating at a time.**  
Where the credential system fails to clear the market, the algorithm steps in.
- For many Albanians on the digital side of the bifurcation — particularly women, young graduates, the diaspora-connected — it is *the only viable matching infrastructure they have ever had*.
- But the policy challenge is double-edged:
  - *On the digital side*: regulate, demand transparency, build portable credentials.
  - *On the low-digital side*: rebuild matching capacity for the majority the algorithm leaves behind.
- **The question**: can public skills systems do both at once — or does matching keep migrating to spaces where workers have no voice?

*Faleminderit — Thank you.*

