EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

COST Action CA24167 – HUMAN-IT

Working Group 3: Social Transformations, Policy and the New Job Market
Task T3.1: Stakeholder Survey Deliverable D3.1

Purpose and strategic relevance

The HUMAN-IT COST Action, "Disruptive Innovation and Exponential HRM: Crafting Next-Gen Employee Experience, Workplace, Job Market", addresses the far-reaching implications of technological and organisational transformation for people, employment and human resource management. Within this broader agenda, Working Group 3 (WG3), "Social Transformations, Policy and the New Job Market", focuses on the social, institutional and policy dimensions of changing labour markets. Task T3.1 contributes to this objective by developing a stakeholder survey designed to capture how organisations and other relevant actors perceive, experience and respond to emerging changes in work, skills, employment relations and workforce development.

The principal contribution of Deliverable D3.1 is methodological and preparatory. It establishes a common basis for collecting structured, comparable stakeholder evidence across different organisational and national settings. Rather than presenting empirical conclusions before fieldwork, the deliverable documents the rationale, collaborative development, analytical scope and prospective implementation of the survey instrument. This distinction is essential for the transparency and credibility of subsequent WG3 outputs.

Collaborative development and methodological approach

The survey instrument was developed through a collaborative WG3 process, drawing on discussions held during online meetings and in-person exchanges, including the WG3 meeting in Budapest on 8–9 October 2026. These exchanges enabled members to review the questionnaire's conceptual orientation, consider the relevance and clarity of proposed questions, and incorporate perspectives reflecting different disciplinary, institutional and country contexts. The resulting instrument should therefore be understood as a collective research output and a foundation for coordinated implementation, rather than as the product of a single contributor.

The methodological approach is stakeholder-centred and comparative. It seeks to connect the organisational experience of technological disruption with the wider social consequences of labour-market restructuring. The questionnaire provides a structured basis for investigating perceived changes, organisational practices and policy needs. Its proposed analytical interpretation is informed by complementary perspectives: Dynamic Capabilities, particularly the capacity to sense change, seize opportunities and reconfigure resources; Human Capital Theory, which emphasises education, competencies and investment in workforce development; and the Technology–Organisation–Environment framework, which situates adoption and adaptation within organisational and external conditions. These frameworks guide the design and future analysis; they are not presented as hypotheses already tested or validated by survey findings.

Scope and expected analytical value

The questionnaire addresses interconnected dimensions relevant to the future of work, including the adoption of disruptive technologies, evolving job roles and competencies, skills gaps, reskilling and upskilling, organisational readiness, human resource management responses, employee experience, inclusion and inequalities, stakeholder cooperation, and future-oriented governance and policy measures. Together, these dimensions support an integrated understanding of transformation: technological change does not operate in isolation, but interacts with managerial capacity, institutional arrangements, access to learning and social conditions.

A central analytical priority is to identify where perceptions and preparedness may diverge across stakeholder categories, organisational environments and national contexts. The survey is intended to help distinguish perceived opportunities, such as productivity improvements, new forms of work and more adaptive employment practices, from potential risks, including skills mismatches, exclusion from training, job insecurity and unequal access to technological benefits. Such distinctions can support more targeted policy discussions without assuming that all stakeholders experience change in the same way.

Subject to the final sampling strategy and data quality, future analysis may combine descriptive profiles of stakeholder responses with comparative examination of relevant groups and contexts. Open-ended material, where included, can complement structured responses by capturing explanations, contextual factors and emerging issues not fully anticipated in fixed-response items. Cross-country comparisons will require attention to sample composition, measurement consistency and limits to representativeness.

Quality assurance, ethics and implementation

The development of the survey instrument also creates a framework for quality assurance before wider dissemination. The next methodological steps include piloting the questionnaire with the stakeholders, reviewing wording and response options, assessing its practical completion burden and refining items where ambiguity or overlap is identified. Where the final instrument uses multiple-item constructs, appropriate reliability and validity checks should be considered after data collection. Translation and cross-context equivalence will be particularly important if the survey is administered in several languages.

Ethical implementation requires clear participant information, voluntary and informed participation, proportionate data collection, secure handling of responses and compliance with applicable data-protection requirements, including the GDPR where relevant. Reporting should avoid identification of individual respondents and distinguish exploratory patterns from generalisable findings. These safeguards are part of the proposed implementation approach and should be documented in the final fieldwork protocol.

Outputs, next steps and contribution to HUMAN-IT

At this stage, the established output is a collaboratively developed stakeholder-survey framework and questionnaire prepared for the next stage of methodological validation and piloting. No verified survey response counts, sample characteristics, statistical results or stakeholder findings are claimed in this executive summary. Once the pilot has been reviewed and the fieldwork arrangements agreed, WG3 can proceed with coordinated stakeholder outreach, data collection, quality checks and analysis.

The subsequent evidence base is expected to inform three connected levels of contribution: first, an empirically grounded picture of perceived workforce and labour-market transformations; second, an assessment of organisational and human-capital capacities that may facilitate or constrain adaptation;

and third, policy-relevant insights on skills development, inclusive employment transitions, stakeholder cooperation and responsible technological change. Findings may also support dialogue across HUMAN-IT working groups and help translate interdisciplinary research into actionable recommendations for organisations, educational actors, social partners and policymakers.

In summary, Deliverable D3.1 marks an important transition from conceptual discussion to a shared empirical research architecture. Its immediate value lies in the structured survey design and the collaborative methodological alignment achieved within WG3. Its longer-term value will depend on rigorous piloting, transparent implementation and careful interpretation of the evidence subsequently collected. By linking technological transformation to human capabilities, organisational responses and social outcomes, Task T3.1 provides a practical basis for advancing HUMAN-IT's understanding of a more adaptive, inclusive and future-ready labour market.