

PUBLISHABLE SUMMARY



Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs

The role of information and communications technology (ICT) in raising productivity and living standards is critical. The largest obstacle to harnessing the power of ICT is the shortage of digital skills. While demand for ICT practitioners is growing by around 3% a year, the number of fresh ICT graduates and skilled ICT workers is not keeping up. As a consequence by 2020 Europe might face a shortage of almost 825,000 ICT professionals in Europe. Meanwhile about 25 million Europeans are currently unemployed. This is the digital skills gap.

To address this problem the Commission launched a [Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs](#) in March 2013. The Grand Coalition is a multi-stakeholder partnership that endeavours to help industry, education providers, and the public sector to collaborate to attract young people into ICT education and increase the supply of ICT practitioners in Europe by ensuring that more people get the training needed to work in the digital economy.

To support the roll-out of Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs, the Commission established the [Secretariat of the Grand Coalition](#) in February 2014. Coordinated by DIGITALEUROPE, the Secretariat brings together 14 stakeholders from the demand and supply side committed to reducing the shortage of ICT practitioners in Europe: BRAINPORT DEVELOPMENT, CIONET, DIGITALEUROPE, DI ITEK, ECDL, ECWT, EuroCIO, Empirica, The Tech Partnership, European Schoolnet, Malta Information Technology Agency, National University of Ireland Maynooth, PIN-SME and Telecentre Europe.

Over two years, the Secretariat partners will boost the Grand Coalition programme through a six-pronged strategy for bridging the skills gaps.

1. ICT Training

One of the the main goals of the Secretariat is to contribute to the dissemination of valuable industry and stakeholder-led initiatives to improve the level of e-skills in the labour force, specifically ICT practitioners, with a view to increasing ICT employment. To do so, the Secretariat has worked with existing ICT training providers to improve knowledge about their offering to young and unemployed people. The Secretariat has developed and launched the [EU ICT Learning catalogue](#). This catalogue aims to collect in one single online platform ICT training and learning offers currently available on the EU market. Thanks to the EU ICT Catalogue, students, young graduates and job seekers will be able to easily access a broad number of training and learning courses to acquire the skills needed start a career

in the ICT sector. This is in line with the Grand Coalition goal to address the growing demand of ICT practitioners in Europe.

To facilitate the matching between educational needs and industry requirements, the Secretariat has identified the most sought after ICT job profiles. The outcomes of this research will be disseminated in 2015. The Secretariat also started to collect best practices related to industry-government cooperation policies and programmes promoting the development of digital skills and ultimately aimed to enhance young people's employability. A report will be compiled by the end of this year.

The Secretariat has also worked with ICT employers to promote an EU-wide Student Placement Programme (SPP), using the model developed by the Malta Information Technology Agency. During 2015 the Secretariat will establish collaboration with public authorities to ensure a successful implementation of the SPP in at least two countries.

2. Mobility

Another part of the Secretariat's strategy for addressing the e-skills gap is to increase mobility of skilled EU workers across Member States to avoid shortages and surpluses in different geographical areas.

In this context research has been conducted to identify regions with an existing gap between demand and supply and where solutions based on mobility could be envisaged in the short term. This research also aimed to understand what kind of ICT skills are available on the supply side and identify ICT vacancies on demand side. As a result of this analysis, the Secretariat identified countries with high demand of ICT practitioners (Germany, UK/Scotland, Netherlands), and countries with high supply of ICT practitioners (Poland and Spain). A detailed [report](#) on the outcomes of this research has been provided. Based on these results, the Secretariat is currently working on the establishment of a pilot to match the people with right skills from the supply side with the available ICT jobs in the demand side, either directly or through (re-)training.

To receive support in the identification of mobility package solutions, the Secretariat set up a group of regional experts on labour mobility to help in the identification of features of possible mobility packages. Furthermore, to find out what EU Member States are already doing to increase cross border labour mobility, the Secretariat developed [a summary report of European best practises in connection with labour mobility](#). These eighteen best practises can be used to duplicate for other countries and regions.

3. Certification

The Secretariat aims to stimulate the adoption of a common language to describe and certificate digital skills across Europe. This has been done through the promotion of the take-up of the e-Competence Framework (e-CF) through proactive engagement with all relevant stakeholders, including Industry, educational and training bodies, ICT professional associations, and public authorities. A leaflet with key information about the e-CF, its

supporters, and the benefits for professionals, informatics associations and their members has been developed and circulated across Europe.

The Secretariat has undertaken a landmark research to produce and assess an up-to-date picture of the actual e-competences of ICT professionals across Europe. Over 2,200 ICT professionals across greater Europe participated in this research, which was carried out using the [CEPIS e-Competence Benchmark](#), an online assessment tool that is powered by the e-CF. The [results of this pan-European initiative](#) provide an insight into the level of professional competence and a snapshot of the profession in each country as well as an aggregated European perspective and recommendations for action to mature the profession and bridge the gaps facing Europe now and in the future.

A report summarising best practice processes to stimulate the take up of e-CF mapped certifications has been developed. The report identifies the key target communities such as professional associations, training providers, networks, and recruitment consultants and the communication channels through which they can be reached. It proposes the business case and marketing collateral most appropriate for targeting these respective audiences. It details guidelines for the introduction and use of the identified certifications, highlighting the arguments for encouraging and supporting the take up of the e-CF based on the published case studies and other available assets.

The promotion of the e-CF includes also the development, implementation and operation of an e-skills Quality Label for ICT industry training and certification. The course of 2014 the Secretariat has already started the piloting of the e-skills Quality Label process and procedures and operation platform in cooperation with large ICT vendors.

4. Awareness raising

In order to ensure a successful roll-out of the Grand Coalition at both national and local level, the Secretariat has launched a series of awareness raising activities aimed at enlarging participation to as many stakeholders as possible. These activities complement those of another major initiative of Commission, the eSkills for Jobs campaign whose main focus is to raise awareness about the many job opportunities that are available for those who have the right e-skills.

During 2014, all Secretariat partners were engaged in intense dissemination activities reaching out to different audiences namely: industry stakeholders from ICT and ICT-using sector, schools and teachers, Ministries of Education and policy makers, telecentres, ICT practitioners and SMEs. These actions included the exploitation of the partners' main communication channels - including websites, blogs, social media, newsletter, publications – face to face events, stakeholders' networks and communities.

The purpose of these activities was to ensure that more stakeholders engaged in the Grand Coalition at both EU level through [pledges to the Grand Coalition](#), and at a national and

local level through the setting up of National and Local Coalitions for Digital Jobs. For this purpose, the Secretariat has launched a [Toolkit for National and Local Coalitions](#).

To support the dissemination of the main messages and activities of the Grand Coalition, the Secretariat developed a value proposition articulating the benefits of participation in the Grand Coalition. The value proposition is both available in [digital](#) and booklet format.

Since the beginning of the activities of the Secretariat, five additional pledges have been made to the Grand Coalition (Adobe, BBC, CA Technologies, Certiadria and CSR Europe) and eight additional National and Local Coalitions have been launched (Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Northern Ireland and Spain).

The Secretariat has also supported the work of the pledgers of the Grand Coalition not only by helping them to assess their impact towards the Commission, but also by coordinating with many of them a [letter to new-elected President Juncker](#) to ask a continued commitment to the Grand Coalition from the new Commission College.

5. New forms of digital education

Aiming to increase the supply of ICT professionals in Europe, the Secretariat promotes collaboration between industry and education providers to offer more aligned degrees and curricula at vocational and university level education.

To stimulate structural changes in the educational system, the Secretariat promotes computer science education in primary and secondary schools via innovative teaching and learning practices. Part of this strategy includes the development and implementation of training courses for teachers to better equip them with the skills needed to teach computer science in an engaging and inspiring way. Thanks to the increased collaboration between industry and education providers, the Secretariat developed two MOOCs on computer science education, one for teachers from [primary school](#) and one for teachers for [secondary school](#).

The Secretariat is also promoting best practices in coding and programming education to encourage policy makers and stakeholders to join forces on the promotion of this subject and ultimately stimulate structural change in educational systems. Resources for teaching and learning how to code have been promoted via the [European Schoolnet](#) communication channels dedicated to teachers ([European Coding Initiative](#), inGenious portal, the [eSkills for Jobs campaign website](#) which features a section dedicated to educators. A face to face teacher training session on how to teach coding has been also organised at the Future Classroom Lab in Brussels, during the EU Code Week in October 2014.

6. National and Local implementation of the Grand Coalition

Since its establishment the Secretariat has worked to promote the setting up of National and Local Coalitions for Digital Jobs to facilitate action towards enhanced digital skills at national, regional or local level.

In order to support the implementation of National and Local Coalitions, the Secretariat has launched [Toolkit for National and Local Coalitions](#). The Toolkit defines the role of National and Local Coalitions and clarifies the support available from the Secretariat. Information about available funding opportunities to develop the activities of National and Local Coalitions are also provided in the Toolkit. Stakeholders involved with the Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs now benefit from a clear set of guidelines and recommendations on how to implement successfully the Grand Coalition in their country of interest. As a result, National Coalitions have already been launched in eight Member States, including Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, Malta, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Romania.

A further ten National Coalitions are under formation, these are expected to be launched within the next months. National Coalitions act as a model for Local Coalitions that are aiming to reach a national coverage with their action plans. There are currently seven Local Coalitions across Europe; Croatia, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Spain.

By developing the Toolkit as a guide, the Secretariat aims to help stakeholders to develop an action plan that will help to bridge the gap between those seeking jobs in the ICT sector and industry needs. With the Secretariat's direction, European businesses and citizens will continue to benefit from the potential of digital technology.

7. The Coordination of the Secretariat

The tasks and the responsibilities of the Secretariat partners have been defined in a 'project roadmap' prepared by DIGITALEUROPE in collaboration with the other Secretariat partners. The activities of the Secretariat partners have been coordinated and facilitated through the establishment of three main project management bodies:

- A Steering Committee – composed by all Secretariat partners;
- Project Management Team – composed by the leaders of the six work areas;
- An Advisory Board – composed by representatives from the Commission, Digital Champions and some of the main pledgers of the Grand Coalition.

Plans for 2015

During 2015, the Secretariat will continue to support the successful implementation of the Grand Coalition through the following actions:

- implement a Student Placement Programme with National Coalitions;
- increase the offer of ICT training by enlarging participation to the EU ICT learning catalogue;

- disseminate information about the most sought after ICT job profiles and work with labour market organisations, employment agencies, pledgers and educational bodies to give graduates the possibility to gain the identified skills;
- establish a best practice on how to upgrade skills in SMEs;
- implement a mobility pilot through a “Digital Jobs Fair” in October 2015 in Madrid;
- continue the promotion of the uptake of the e-C, and development of innovative certification models for businesses and educators based on the e-CF;
- support innovative forms of digital education and promotion of coding initiatives;
- continue to disseminate the actions and the messages of the Grand Coalition to boost its membership;
- grow and strengthen National Coalitions for Digital Jobs

For more information about the Secretariat of the Grand Coalition, see:
<http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/secretariat-grand-coalition-digital-jobs>.

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