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DIGITALEUROPE's recommendations on the Pact for Skills

In our response to the European Commission's stakeholder survey on the Pact for Skills, we outline our recommendations for broad and ambitious action that advances measurable indicators, skills forecasting, and industry involvement in investment activities.

52% of Europe's workforce need reskilling due to changes in the job market.[1] The upcoming Pact for Skills can help lower this figure and bring us closer to our success indicator for Europe, which is to leave only 32% workers in need of reskilling by 2025.[2]

The Pact should be ambitious and broad in scope, encompassing all individuals potentially interested in new skills to stay or re-enter the job market, and be aligned with other European-level initiatives like the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition. Focus on these aspects will help to ensure meaningful outcomes from the Pact.

In our response to the Commission's stakeholder survey on the Pact for Skills, we recommend attention on:

▸▸ **Measurable indicators**: we support the inclusion of KPIs to support commitments made by signatories. KPIs should be expressed in percentages rather than absolute figures to better monitor progress on commitments. This is the case for aspects such as targeted beneficiaries (like individuals trained or SMEs targeted) as well as regions covered in upskilling initiatives.

▸▸ **Skills forecasting**: the Pact's activities should leverage the capabilities of artificial intelligence (AI) and big data to predict mid- and long-term skills needs in specific sectors and across society. Past examples should inspire these efforts. For example, DIGITALEUROPE Belgian member

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[1] World Economic Forum, The Future of Jobs Report 2018.

[2] More info on our success indicators for Europe in our publication ''How to spend it: A digital investment plan for Europe''.

AGORIA[3] relied on AI's abilities to predict the trajectory of skills development until 2030 and inform decision-making on education and training. The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP)[4] is also focused on similar initiatives.

▶▶ **Alignment on investments' goals:** the most successful multi-stakeholder training initiatives are those that nurture a sense of co-ownership by both public and private actors. The Pact must keep this aspect at its core. It should forge a shared understanding among stakeholders about new training models. Today, a training facility is no longer just a physical location. It is also a synonym of various communications platforms for sharing best practices and knowledge. Multi-stakeholder partnerships should keep this into account.

▶▶ **Industry involvement in investment planning**: organisations in the digital space are at the forefront of innovative learning solutions.[5] Those deciding to sign up to the Charter in the Pact would send yet another signal of the industry's commitment to tackle Europe's skills gap. They should be granted a firmer role in shaping the priorities of the European Social Fund+, the European Regional Development Fund and their Operational Programmes. Closer industry involvement should start with a deeper involvement in the ESF+ advisory committees at national and regional level.

▶▶ **Formal skills' certification and validation**: the Pact should help to advance validation of knowledge and skills acquired by learners. Smoother cross-border job mobility and an easier transfer of competences between sectors would benefit from skills validation.

Read here our full response to the European Commission's stakeholder survey on the Pact for Skills (PDF).

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[3] In Belgium, AGORIA and employment agencies used AI to identify skills trends in the future of the country's labour market until 2030.

[4] CEDEFOP uses the classification of European skills, competences, qualification and occupations (ESCO) and complex big data analysis techniques to extract information on skills from online vacancies. More info here.

[5] More info on existing educational and training courses on cutting-edge digital technologies offered by DIGITALEUROPE members are here.

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About DIGITALEUROPE

DIGITALEUROPE represents the digital technology industry in Europe. Our members include some of the world's largest IT, telecoms and consumer electronics companies and national associations from every part of Europe. DIGITALEUROPE wants European businesses and citizens to benefit fully from digital technologies and for Europe to grow, attract and sustain the world's best digital technology companies. DIGITALEUROPE ensures industry participation in the development and implementation of EU policies.

DIGITALEUROPE Membership

Corporate Members

Accenture, Airbus, Amazon, AMD, Apple, Arçelik, Bayer, Bidao, Bosch, Bose, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Brother, Canon, Cisco, DATEV, Dell, Dropbox, Eli Lilly and Company, Epson, Ericsson, Facebook, Fujitsu, Google, Graphcore, Hewlett Packard Enterprise, Hitachi, HP Inc., HSBC, Huawei, Intel, Johnson & Johnson, JVC Kenwood Group, Konica Minolta, Kyocera, Lenovo, Lexmark, LG Electronics, Mastercard, METRO, Microsoft, Mitsubishi Electric Europe, Motorola Solutions, MSD Europe Inc., NEC, Nokia, Nvidia Ltd., Oki, OPPO, Oracle, Palo Alto Networks, Panasonic Europe, Philips, Qualcomm, Red Hat, Ricoh, Roche, Rockwell Automation, Samsung, SAP, SAS, Schneider Electric, Sharp Electronics, Siemens, Siemens Healthineers, Sony, Swatch Group, Tata Consultancy Services, Technicolor, Texas Instruments, Toshiba, TP Vision, UnitedHealth Group, Visa, VMware, Workday, Xerox.

National Trade Associations

Austria: IOÖ
Belarus: INFOPARK
Belgium: AGORIA
Croatia: Croatian Chamber of Economy
Cyprus: CITEA
Denmark: DI Digital, IT BRANCHEN, Dansk Erhverv
Estonia: ITL
Finland: TIF
France: AFNUM, Syntec Numérique, Tech in France

Germany: BITKOM, ZVEI
Greece: SEPE
Hungary: IVSZ
Ireland: Technology Ireland
Italy: Anitec-Assinform
Lithuania: INFOBALT
Luxembourg: APSI
Netherlands: NLdigital, FIAR
Norway: Abelia
Poland: KIGEIT, PIIT, ZIPSEE
Portugal: AGEFE
Romania: ANIS, APDETIC

Slovakia: ITAS
Slovenia: GZS
Spain: AMETIC
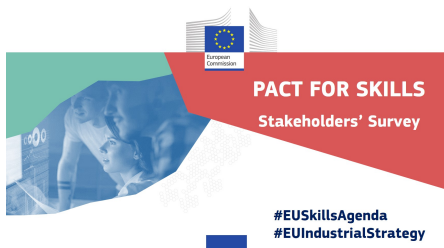**Sweden:** Teknikföretagen, IT&Telekomföretagen
Switzerland: SWICO
Turkey: Digital Turkey Platform, ECID
Ukraine: IT UKRAINE
United Kingdom: techUK

Pact for Skills - Stakeholders' survey

> Fields marked with * are mandatory.

This survey asks about **your view of the Pact for Skills** and about different options to strengthen it. The initiative is a first flagship action of the European Skills Agenda and Industrial Strategy for Europe.

The Commission is proposing a Pact for Skills as **a new engagement and model for skills** that will help meet COVID-19 challenges and deliver on the ambitions of the recovery pathway, the EU Industrial Strategy and the green and digital transition. Industry, public and private employers, social partners, education and training providers and employment agencies will be called to **work together** and to create a shared vision and action.

The main objective of the Pact is to mobilise and incentivize all relevant stakeholders to **take concrete actions for the upskilling and reskilling of people of working age**, by pooling efforts and setting up partnerships addressing the needs of the labour market, supporting green and digital transitions as well as local, regional growth strategies.

The Pact will embrace **enterprises, social partners, training providers, local and regional authorise and other relevant stakeholders** willing to work on quality upskilling and reskilling. It will also foster **large-scale public-private partnerships** mobilising key stakeholders to work out scalable and sustainable solutions for training in specific sectors. In this aspect it will focus on industrial ecosystems for the recovery and the green transition.

To ensure a common understanding of key principles underlying upskilling and reskilling activities, to help the different organisations joining the Pact for Skills, to rally around common values and priorities, and to achieve shared objectives the Pact will follow a **Charter**.

The Charter will be a set of principles regarding quality of commitments on upskilling and reskilling of working age people. It will be firmly anchored in the principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights. It will also support the goals of the European Green Deal and the digital transformation, as set out in the Commission communication "A strong Social Europe for Just Transitions".

The aim is to **launch the Pact for Skills** in November during the 2020 European Vocational Skills Week. Individual actors and partnerships joining the Pact will be asked to sign up to the Charter (commit to the

principles defined in the Charter).

This questionnaire will take about 10-15 minutes to complete. The answers you provide will assist the European Commission to develop the Pact for Skills, and its Charter, and strengthen the support for upskilling and reskilling for all people of working age.

Thank you for your interest!

Introduction

Here you can find a factsheet on the Pact for Skills (European Commission proposal).
Pact_for_Skills_v3.pdf

About you

* 1. I am giving my contribution as:

○ Large employer (more than 250 employees)
○ Micro, small or medium employer (up to 249 employees)
○ Public authority (local, regional or national)
○ Private or public employment services
○ Trade union (social partner)
○ Employer's organisation (social partner)
○ Chamber of commerce, trade and crafts
● Sectoral organisation
○ Training provider
○ Representative of an industrial cluster (member of a groups of specialised enterprises, often SMEs, and other related supporting actors in a location that cooperate closely)
○ Researcher
○ Other

* 2. Country of origin:

BE - Belgium

Ecosystem you work in:

☐ Aerospace and Defence	☑ Digital	☐ Mobility-Transport-Automotive	☐ Textiles
☐ Agri-Food	☐ Electronics	☐ Proximity and Social Economy	☐ Tourism
☐ Construction	☐ Energy-Intensive Industries	☐ Renewable Energy	☐ N/A
☐ Creative and cultural Industries	☐ Health	☐ Retail	

* 3. Name and surname/Organisation

100 character(s) maximum

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* 4. Email

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☑ I accept the privacy statement.

Pact for Skills

Q1.

The Pact for Skills aims to mobilise and incentivise all relevant stakeholders to take concrete commitments for the upskilling and reskilling of people of working age, and, when relevant, pool efforts thanks to partnerships.

Is this objective:

○ too ambitious

◉ about right

○ not ambitious enough

Q2.

All stakeholders joining the Pact will be asked to sign up to a Charter (set of principles ensuring quality upskilling and reskilling). The Charter should be firmly anchored in the principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights. It should also support the goals of the European Green Deal and the digital transformation, as set out in the Commission communication "A strong Social Europe for Just Transitions".

How important, in your opinion, are these principles in supporting the upskilling and reskilling of the EU's people of working age?

Promoting a culture of lifelong learning for all, which could be described as follow:	Very important	Important	Neutral	Less important	Not important at all
Skills of every employee are considered essential for the success of an organisation.	◉	○	○	○	○
Every employee is aware of the value of skills and benefits of upskilling and reskilling and is motivated and incentivised to improve constantly knowledge and skills.	◉	○	○	○	○

	Very important	Important	Neutral	Less important	Not important at all
The upskilling and reskilling scheme is developed for and with employees and is supported from all management levels.	●				
The upskilling and reskilling scheme includes guidance and career development support for all employees and is supported by adequate and sustainable financial resources.	●				
The upskilling and reskilling scheme is subject to a regular quality assessment.	●				
A special attention is put on upskilling and reskilling of older workers and adults struggling with basic skills.			●		

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Building strong skills partnerships with relevant stakeholders, which could be described as follow:	Very important	Important	Neutral	Less important	Not important at all
The upskilling and reskilling scheme is developed and managed with a wide range of stakeholders, including training providers, public authorities, researchers, public or private employment services, social partners and other sectoral organisations.	●				

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Monitoring skills supply/ demand and anticipating skills needs, which could be described as follow:	Very important	Important	Neutral	Less important	Not important at all
Skills demand and supply of skills are regularly monitored and the skills needs are clearly communicated to individuals.	●				
Skills anticipation takes into account the need to support the digital and green transitions and the consequences of demographic change.	●				
If relevant, monitoring is based on existing tools and measures in order to support anticipation of skills needs.		●			
Upskilling and reskilling offer is built on the identified skills needs.	●				

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Working against discrimination and for gender equality and equal opportunities, which could be described as follow:	Very important	Important	Neutral	Less important	Not important at all
Everyone, regardless of age, gender, ethic origin, religion or background have access to high quality upskilling /reskilling opportunities.	◉	○	○	○	○
The upskilling and reskilling offer is designed in line with the needs and capacities of individuals and, when possible, relevant tools (including digital tools) are used to enable access to disadvantaged individuals.	◉	○	○	○	○
Everyone is offered validation and recognition of acquired skills.	◉	○	○	○	○

Q3.

Do the above-mentioned principles cover all important aspect regarding quality upskilling and reskilling? If no, please indicate what is missing.

1000 character(s) maximum

- Skills forecasting: it should leverage AI and big data's capabilities to predict mid- and long-term skills needs in sectors and society. There are examples from industry and CEDEFOP.
- Institutionalised multi-stakeholder collaborations: it will make students' work placement the norm. The Pact should embrace all those who need a new set of skills to stay or re-enter the job market.
- Involvement of public employment services: they are important actors in job matching and training. They can raise awareness about opportunities and related skills needs, including those in green business.
- Alignment of public and private investments for training: it is key the goals of private and public actors in PPPs are aligned. This will create a sense of co-ownership in training initiatives.
- Industry-recognised certification for reskilling/upskilling: it validates knowledge and skills and also make the latter transferable across countries, professions and gives a clear path to employment.

Q4.

Joining the Pact will mean that an organisation or a partnership signs up to the Charter and that it will follow the key principles in all undertaken upskilling and reskilling activities/actions. In order to support organisations/partnerships in their efforts, the European Commission will offer a number of support services to the signatories of the Pact.

Which of these services would be the most useful for your organisation/partnership?

	Very useful	Useful	Neutral	Less useful	Not useful at all

Free access to a networking hub, which would provide: - support in finding partners and first meetings of a upskilling/reskilling partnership (if relevant) - links with existing EU tools e.g. Europass, Skills Panorama - access to your peers to exchange experience	◉	○	○	○	○
Free access to a knowledge hub, which would provide: - webinars, seminars, peer learning activities - updates on the EU policies and instruments - information on projects, tools, instruments and best practices	◉	○	○	○	○
Free access to guidance & resources hub, which would provide: - access to clear and detailed information on relevant EU funding - guidance to identify financial possibilities - faciliation of exchange between the Pact and national/ regional authorities regarding funding possibilities	◉	○	○	○	○
Promotion of upskilling and reskilling activities of your organisation/partnership	◉	○	○	○	○
Presenting your organisation/partnership as credible business leader committed to develop human capital through affiliation with the Pact	◉	○	○	○	○

Q5.

Are there other services that your organisation/partnership would expect when joining the Pact for Skills? If yes, please indicate what kind of services.

1000 character(s) maximum

> Public funding support is needed for early phases/pilots of upskilling campaigns.
>
> We also recommend the Commission to ensure the Pact for Skills is aligned with other similar initiatives at European level, such as the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition. This will help to ensure meaningful outcomes from the Pact. Alignment can be guaranteed through the creation of a single reference platform for all stakeholders.
>
> Finally, signing up to the Charter and demonstrating commitment to the Pact for Skills should also grant signatory organisations a role in the planning of the Operational Programmes and priorities for the European Social Fund+ and European Regional Development Fund, starting with a deeper involvement in ESF+ advisory committees at national and regional level.

Q6.

Should organisations/partnerships joining the Pact for Skills be obliged to describe their upskilling and reskilling commitments (schemes) with key performance indicators?

○ Yes
◉ No

Please explain why in your opinion organisations/partnerships joining the Pact should not be obliged to define their commitments by key performance indicators.

1000 character(s) maximum

> We ticked "No" to be able to give a nuanced answer in a text box. We support KPIs that define absolute numbers to reach in terms of individuals benefiting from upskilling/reskilling opportunities, SMEs involved in a given upskilling/reskilling scheme and regions covered by the upskilling/reskilling schemes. They are easier to monitor and thus implement than the percentual shares which are suggested as options to answer to Q6 if respondents tick "Yes' as answer to the question.

Q7.

What support would you be willing to offer regarding upskilling and reskilling of people of working age?

- ☑ help to identify skills needs in the value chain
- ☑ open training facilities
- ☐ develop inter-company training centres and give access to companies and individuals
- ☐ share HR tools/practices
- ☑ develop a coaching/mentoring programmes or job shadowing initiatives
- ☑ promote the benefits of upskilling and reskilling
- ☑ provide guidance/counselling services
- ☐ invest financial resources
- ☐ other

Q8.

Are there any other important issues you would like to mention?

1000 character(s) maximum

> NB: the options selected above reflect support that members within DIGITALEUROPE are willing to provide.
>
> Moreover, we also highlight that in the digitalised world, training facilities should not be considered only as physical locations any longer, but as communications platforms for sharing best practices and knowledge.

Q9.

Are there any activities/initiatives you are already implementing regarding upskilling and reskilling of adult age people that you would like to share with us and could be part of the Pact?

1000 character(s) maximum

Members within DIGITALEUROPE are already implementing the following:
- Upskilling on Advanced Analytics and AI
- Training during Partial Unemployment for shopfloor employees
- Upskilling/reskilling on Cloud
- Reskilling of IT profiles into cyber security practitioners
- Upskilling on Digital Collaboration Tools for all employees
- First awareness training campaigns on Green IT
- Blueprint for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills: the European Software Skills Alliance (in which also the secretariat of DIGITALEUROPE is involved)

Q10.

Would your organisation/partnership be interested in joining the Pact and committing to implement concrete upskilling and reskilling actions?

○ Yes
○ No

Thank you!

Contact

Contact Form