Key Principles for

National Coalitions for Digital Jobs

Draft - for discussion purposes only

The shortage of ICT specialists is a problem for the European economy as a whole. Nevertheless, given the diversity of educational systems and labour market conditions, each Member State faces a set of specific challenges. It is thus up to national coalitions to define the most effective actions which can be undertaken in their respective countries to address the shortage of ICT specialists. Even so, certain key principles should be addressed as widely as possible across Europe:

Composition

National coalitions should be composed of all relevant national stakeholders, including ICT companies, non-ICT companies, education and training providers, public authorities (e.g. ministry of employment, ministry of education, ministry/agency responsible for the Digital Agenda for Europe, etc.), digital champions, public and private employment services as well as other interested parties such as SME representatives, associations, NGOs, local EC representative offices and social partners. Openness to new relevant partners shall be a key design principle of all National Coalitions.

Coordination

Each National Coalition should have one coordinating entity. This could be either one of the organisations involved in the Coalition, or the Digital Champion of the respective country or a steering committee composed of key stakeholders.

Action Plan

Each National Coalition should endeavour to formulate and start implementing an Action Plan and a roadmap no later than two months after its launch. This Action Plan should be based on an analysis of the particular challenges in each country or region and have clear objectives and impact indicators. Each National Coalition should work with the Grand Coalition Thematic Network¹ to facilitate implementation of the Action Plan and exchange best practices.

¹ The Thematic Network in support of the Grand Coalition, with a budget of € 1 million from the Competitiveness and Innovation programme, will be launched within February 2014.

Public funding for ICT training

National Coalitions should appoint one contact person in each country, possibly from a ministry, to answer questions and direct stakeholders to public funding opportunities. As regards the European Social Fund, European Regional Development Fund, Erasmus+ and other relevant funding programmes, National Coalitions are encouraged to express the need for using European funding for ICT mobility, ICT education and training to their respective EU programme management authorities.

Industry-led training

National Coalitions should promote the delivery of training packages designed by or co-designed with the ICT industry in order to meet employers' skills needs. The recipients of such trainings could be ICT practitioners, career changers, including midcareer workers from adjacent work areas, young people, and the unemployed. National Coalitions should also promote effective placement services that help to bring people into jobs.

Modernising curricula

National Coalitions should be active promoters of the modernisation of education curricula, bringing business and education providers together, underlining both the need for enhanced ICT and computer science teaching and learning as a part of general education and for the adaptation of ICT training to market needs.

Promoting certification

National Coalitions should promote the adoption of the European e-Competence Framework, a common reference framework for certification for digital skills which is internationally recognised.

Raising awareness

National Coalitions should have a communication and awareness raising strategy in order to ensure that their members increase efforts to stimulate the choice of ICT as a career. They should also appoint a person or an entity that will coordinate and monitor all communication and awareness raising activities. Such activities could involve reaching out to young people (including girls), their teachers and parents, the unemployed and career-changers as well as improving young people's and schools' access to inspiring role models in ICT. Informal learning opportunities through e.g. computer clubs, should also be promoted. To this end, national coalitions should employ various publicity tools, such as events, online and offline media.

These key principles and guidelines are neither exhaustive nor mandatory.