

# Toolkit for National Coalitions



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"The launch of the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition marks the start of a new era in the Commission's work to increase the digital skills of everyone in Europe."

**Andrus Ansip**

 European Commission |  @Ansip\_EU  
#DSJCoalition

## PURPOSE OF THIS TOOLKIT

One of the main objectives of the Secretariat for the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition (Secretariat) is to support the dissemination of the activities and actions of the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition at a national level. This will be achieved by setting up National Coalitions for Digital Jobs across Europe.

This toolkit clarifies the role of National Coalitions and gives guidance on how to set them up. It describes the support that the Secretariat will provide to those stakeholders who are interested in setting up National Coalition. The toolkit is built upon the Toolkit for National and Local Coalition that was created and disseminated during the Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs (2012-2015). This toolkit will be updated during the DSJC with renewed examples and supporting documents.

The toolkit provides practical examples and solutions that can be adapted by National Coalitions to respond to country specific or regional specific needs.

The toolkit for National Coalitions is structured as follows:

- *Overview of the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition*
- *National Coalitions within the context of the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition*
- *Guidelines for the management of National Coalitions*
- *Mentoring plan providing stakeholders with detailed information about the support they can receive from the Secretariat*
  - *Including information about funding opportunities available to NCs*

The toolkit is intended to serve as a guide for stakeholders, however it is not a binding document. National Coalition stakeholders are encouraged to explore new methods and ideas, to broaden the focus, and to be creative and innovative to reach the aims of the DSJC. Practices described in this toolkit are not one-size fits all and it is suggested for stakeholders to explore practices that may best fit according to their national needs.

The toolkit will include new case studies and examples of successful activities. Therefore, National Coalitions are encouraged to provide feedback on the toolkit and share best practices.

## The Secretariat

The Secretariat of the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition (led by DIGITALEUROPE, European Schoolnet and ALL DIGITAL) supports the European Commission by mobilising stakeholders who can contribute to reducing the digital skills gap in Europe, and by coordinating the management of Member States National Coalitions.



For National Coalitions, support includes seed funding and other key services on capacity building, knowledge sharing and advocacy inter alia: visits to NCs, coaching on fundraising (national and EU) and matchmaking online events between NCs and pledgers to grow the network of likeminded organisations active in digital skills.

## OVERVIEW OF THE DIGITAL SKILLS AND JOBS COALITION

The Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition is a multi-stakeholder partnership that seeks to tackle the digital skills gap in Europe, while considering the growing demand for ICT related professionals, the need of digital skills in all industries, and in all sectors of life. In 2016 the European Commission launched the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition as part of the [New Skills Agenda for Europe](#), with the aim to mobilise actors and stakeholders that have the capacity to train, re-skill and up-skill the labour force with the digital skills they need to remain employable and to gain productivity.

The DSJC invites all organizations, groups or government bodies making actions to boost digital skills in Europe to:

- [Become a member](#) of the Coalition by endorsing the objectives and principles of the [Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition Members Charter](#)
- [Make pledges for action](#) in the areas identified in the Charter. Pledges are concrete commitments to address the digital skills gap
- Establish [national digital skills and jobs coalitions](#) where none exist today and reinforce existing and emerging ones
- Share [best practices](#) which can be replicated and scaled up across Europe.

The DSJC also supports the dissemination of information regarding available EU funds (including European Structural and Investment Funds, Youth Employment Initiative, Erasmus+) for members and supporters of the DSJC, as such funding can help support the aims of the DSJC.


The founding year of the DSJC foresees a shortage of over 500,000 ICT professionals by 2020<sup>1</sup>. This demand is growing at a rate of 4% a year. At the same time, nearly 1 in 5 young Europeans are unemployed. This is at a time when 44% of Europeans have insufficient digital skills.<sup>2</sup> Basic digital skills, for example, are described as being able to use a mailbox, editing tools or installing a new device. The DSJC aims to address these challenges.

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<sup>1</sup> Empirica, Innovation Leadership Skills for the High - Tech Economy - Demand, Supply and Forecasting, see:

[http://leadership2017.eu/fileadmin/scale\\_conference/documents/huesing\\_20170126.pdf](http://leadership2017.eu/fileadmin/scale_conference/documents/huesing_20170126.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Digital Economy and Society Index 2017, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_MEMO-17-352\\_en.htm?locale=en](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-17-352_en.htm?locale=en)



[The members charter](#) outlines outcomes of the DSJC. Initiatives led under the DSJC are expected to culminate in and seek to:

- Train 1 million young unemployed people for vacant digital jobs through internships/traineeships, apprenticeships and short-term training programmes.
- Support the upskilling and retraining of the workforce and take concrete measures to support small and medium enterprises (SMEs) who face specific challenges in attracting and retaining digital talent and retraining their workforce.
- Modernise education and training to provide all students and teachers with the opportunity to use digital tools and materials in their teaching and learning activities and to develop and upgrade their digital skills.
- Reorient and make use of available funding to support digital skills and carry out awareness-raising about the importance of digital skills for employability, competitiveness and participation in society.

## NATIONAL COALITIONS WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE DIGITAL SKILLS AND JOBS COALITION

### THE PURPOSE OF ESTABLISHING NATIONAL COALITIONS

There are many reasons to establish a National Coalition, and all these reasons relate to addressing the growing digital skills gap in member states. As the digital economy and the single market are growing and are becoming more integrated, there are plenty of opportunities for individuals and businesses alike. However, not everyone has the right skills to take advantage of all the possibilities, possibilities which range from benefiting from the increased efficiency offered through e-government services to working in today's increasingly digital labour market. Without a serious effort made through the cooperation of various stakeholders many citizens risk missing out on the possibilities offered by today's digital society. Thus, enabling people to acquire and develop relevant digital skills is crucial.

Nearly half of Europeans have no or low digital skills, 44% lack basic digital skills (such as using a mailbox, editing documents or installing new devices). These basic digital skills are considered standard for many jobs today.


Digital skills shortages vary from country to country. According to the [Digital Economy and Society Index 2017 \(DESI\)](#), Denmark, Luxembourg, Finland, Sweden and the Netherlands have most digitally savvy people. These are those who possess at least basic user skills that enable individuals to interact online and consume digital goods and services. Such skills empower the workforce to take advantage of technology for enhanced productivity and economic growth. There remains however room for improvement in offering ICT training, up-skilling and re-skilling the workforce. As some countries, may be lagging in digital skills, and some countries may be advanced in digital skills (like the five listed above), the local situation in each country should be analysed to develop the best programmes and approach to boost digital skills according to the four areas outlines in the member's charter. The digital skill shortage may indeed be relative considering the demands of current day industry.



#### **Estonia is a global leader in the adoption of e-government services and incorporating digitalisation into school's curriculums.**

Adoption of digitalisation on a national level helps Estonia remain in a comfortably advanced position in the 2017 DESI index. However, there is room for improvement. The Estonian national coalition developed part of its action plan based on finding gaps in areas of integration of digital technologies and skills. The coalition is composed of various societal and industrial stakeholders and each researched their sectors to find key gaps and propose solutions to bridging these gaps. An action plan is under development based on the outcome of this process.





The reports from the [Digital Economy and Society Index](#) and [The European Digital Progress report per country](#) can serve as good resources that can help guide the initial discussions when trying to find the best approaches to raising the level of digital skills in specific countries.

Active efforts to promote digital inclusion, digital careers and life-long education are needed to prepare young Europeans for careers in the technology sector. All students leaving university or high school today must be prepared to continue learning, upskilling, and reskilling, adapting to new developments in digital trends and technologies, regardless of whether they are in the ICT sector or not.

Countries that have not established a National Coalitions are encouraged to develop one and identify key areas wherein concrete actions can be developed to bridge the digital skills gap. The action plan can focus on a few initial sectors wherein digital skills gaps need to be addressed before broadening the scope of the action plan. For example, if a study was published identifying a gap that a large number of IT professionals will be needed in the near future, actions to address this gap can be made involving various stakeholders giving a basis for National Coalition actions. Actions can also be focused on ensuring all citizens have the digital skills they need to take advantage of e-government services and online public services.

It is natural that National Coalitions will grow in membership and this will widen the focus of actions of the NC and the scope of the action plan. Digital skills are a very horizontal issue, and many sectors not traditionally linked to IT and ICT may be affected by digitalisation and experience a gap. Understanding this can ensure strategies to bridge the digital skills gap across sectors. From 2018 onwards the annual DESI reports will make mention of National Coalitions in the national reports.

## WHAT ARE NATIONAL COALITIONS

National Coalitions are multi-stakeholder partnerships that aim to promote and implement the objectives of the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition (DSJC) to work together to improve digital skills in their respective Member State, by means of **concrete action plans** most appropriate to the national circumstances.

In their respective countries, National Coalitions unite actions that aim to bridge both the digital skills gaps and digital jobs gaps. Any actions that can contribute to reducing the gap between people looking for jobs in the ICT market, all industrial sectors and develop basic and advanced digital skills for all citizens can and should be considered.

National Coalitions cover a whole Member State territory and can include a Member State Ministry or Government Agency, or are endorsed by a state ministry or agency. The coordination of a national coalition often includes or is solely coordinated from a ministry or government coordinator, though this remains a practice more than a rule. National Coalitions are also coordinated through industry partners that operate on a national level, the digital champion, and non-governmental agencies that operate on a national level. In all cases the coordination of a national coalition should be open and capable of bringing together a broad number of stakeholders across the whole country, and be capable of coordinating activities that can operate nationally. It is important that if the coordination of a national coalition were to be changed the National Coalition structure would still survive. Coordinators serve mostly to administer the national coalition, rather than manage it, this can and should be shared between members. Some of these activities can also be tailored to meet the needs of certain marginalised groups, and thus can be focused on a subnational level.

## ROLE AND OBJECTIVES OF NATIONAL COALITIONS

- National Coalitions should facilitate connecting public authorities, business, education, training and labour market stakeholders to take concrete measures that bridge the digital skills gap and raise competences for all. This can be done by supporting teachers and educators and promoting active involvement of business and other organisations
- National Coalitions should support Member States in developing comprehensive national digital skills strategies

National Coalitions support the objectives of [the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition Members Charter](#), namely:

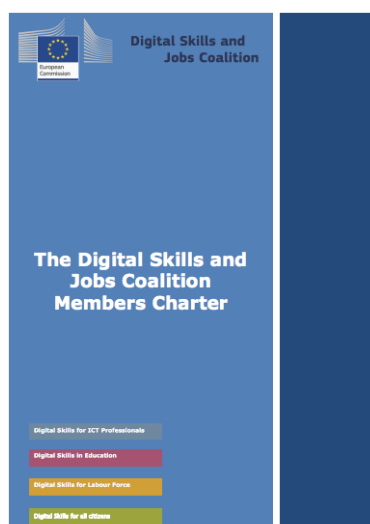


FIGURE 1 MEMBERS CHARTER OF DSJC

- 1) Educate and train more young people for digital professions, so that a large pool of talented young digital professionals, with increased female participation, who are ready for work and can take up the growing number of unfilled vacancies for ICT professionals in Europe.
- 2) Up-skill and re-skill the European labour force with the digital skills they need to remain productive in the jobs they have and to become employable for new ones.
- 3) Modernise education and training systems for the digital age, bringing digital skills and competences to all levels of education and training.
- 4) Improve the digital skills of all citizens so that they can play an active role in modern society, strengthening social inclusion.

NCs actions can be and are organised around the following themes:



FIGURE 2 THEMES OF THE DSJC

- **Digital skills for labour force:** developing digital skills for the digital economy (upskilling and reskilling workers, jobseekers; actions on career advice and guidance).
- **Digital skills for all citizens:** developing digital skills of the general population, for all citizens to be active part of the digital society, and ensuring the process of digitisation leaves no one behind;

National Coalitions are free to choose which themes they wish to focus on, depending the needs they have identified. In the case of digital skills for all citizens, as the topic is iniquitous it may be overlooked as an area of focus. It can be a good idea to consider how members are engaged in all thematic pillars, to see how actions can be thoroughly developed on all topic areas. It is not compulsory to develop actions on all themes, and for emerging national coalitions, it may not be feasible to do so. As the national coalition is launched and more meetings are held and the action plan is developed it is natural that more thematic and sectoral areas will be covered. It is important to develop actions, projects and policies that are concrete and sustainable, and build the coalition from those key actions.

## HOW NATIONAL COALITIONS ARE ORGANISED

National Coalitions should be ready to involve as many stakeholders committed to bridging the digital skills gap. The number of stakeholders can, should and often grows as the National Coalition develops.

National Coalitions are composed of a variety of stakeholders and may include, but are not limited to:

- National and local authorities (education, enterprise, employment services and information society services)
- ICT and ICT-using industry players (from large to small companies, Chambers of Commerce)
- Education and training providers, including universities
- Public and private employment services
- The [Digital Champions](#) and other relevant digital skills ambassadors
- Representatives from the European Commission's local offices
- Civil society (youth associations, employer federations, library networks, etc.)

While some National Coalitions may seek a formal legal status, National Coalitions do not need to be officially recognised legal companies (private, public or NGOs). They can remain as informal partnerships among stakeholders from multiple sectors who share a common objective. Registering as a legal entity may be a strategy to attract necessary funding and improve coordination of the coalition. The most relevant form of a legal entity for the National Coalition may be that of a NGO or social enterprise.

National Coalitions are free to decide how they wish to govern themselves. This can include agreeing to a Memorandum of Understanding. There are different structures of governance including some coalitions are governed through a core secretariat or steering committee which meets on a regular basis to ensure development of the coalition. A round-table format be ideal to develop, and a plan an action plan. Ideally, to ensure to coalition remains inclusive, there should occasionally be meetings or conferences that are open to all members and potential stakeholders.

## Key Principles of National Coalitions

National Coalitions should be founded based on the following principles:

- Be **open** to all new relevant stakeholders. It is important to allow the coalition to grow, and be ready to incorporate new stakeholders and even new sectors
- Be willing to share best practices and to exchange knowledge with other National Coalitions. There will be a few events held throughout the year for National Coalitions, however best practices can regularly be shared through the [LinkedIn community](#).
- Promote participation inside the Coalition through meetings and events and share activities of the coalition publicly. There should be some being a point of contact that the public can access for activities related to digital skills and jobs in their country through the Coalition.
- Prepare a communication and awareness raising strategy, to ensure that the members and the public of the Coalition increase efforts to stimulate the development of digital skills and careers.
- Promote modernisation of education curricula to better meet the labour market's needs. This can be supported by inviting the ministry of education to activities of the coalition.
- Promote the delivery of industry training programmes. *This action can be supported through [pledges](#).*
- Work with Member State governments to give support in developing a comprehensive *national digital skills strategy*.
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of the National Coalition.

## HOW SHOULD NATIONAL COALITIONS BE MANAGED?



### PHASE 1

Build the National Coalition



### PHASE 2

Develop an action and dissemination



### PHASE 3

Get the word out

## PHASE 1: BUILD THE NATIONAL COALITION


**To build a National Coalition, stakeholders should identify potential partners that are engaged in digital skills and digital jobs.**

National Coalitions often are formed first by establishing dialogue with some key partners who have the capacity to reach out on the matter of digital skills and jobs at a national level.

In this process the potential contributions that each stakeholder can bring to the National Coalition are identified. Stakeholders are brought together to discuss how they could get involved and the value that they could gain from being a member of a National Coalition. They should demonstrate the following commitments:

- Participate in events, meetings, conferences on the topics of DSJC to build the network
- Identify specific actions that can be taken to address one or more of the objectives of the DSJC.
- Represent the National Coalition in events, meetings and conferences.
- Allocate or match resources to support the Coalition actions.
- Disseminate and promote the National Coalition's actions at national, regional or local level.
- Fundraise to support the National Coalition's actions.

The key factor to engage new stakeholders in emerging National Coalition is to demonstrate the added value of their support and involvement that can be met by



addressing and supporting their specific interests. Naturally, stakeholders need to trust an initiative before endorsing it and credibility often can be offered by the profile of other stakeholders already involved.

National Coalitions should be neutral and inclusive in terms of technology and services promoted to the users. As they are multi-stakeholder partnerships, National Coalitions are open to companies that can sometimes be competitors (e.g. Microsoft and Google), but also to governmental bodies, and to formal as well as non-formal education providers. The process to engage stakeholders could be challenging in the absence of a compelling value proposition for joining the Coalition. It is important to provide the interested stakeholders with background information about the policy context, but also with compelling information such as the possibility to network with key players in and between industries, and the educational system. Often, understanding the urgency of unfilled jobs, or digital skills shortages faced in the process of a digital transformation can be compelling enough to encourage stakeholders to join the coalition.

The Secretariat of the DSJC has therefore developed a [Value Proposition](#) that can be used by existing National Coalitions to attract new stakeholders in their DSJC related activities, but also by any stakeholder interested to set up a new national Coalition. This can be found on the European Commission's [website of the DSJC](#).

The Value Proposition clearly articulates to all types of stakeholders


- I. The potential benefits of participation in the activities of the DSJC and
- II. How they can contribute to the DSJC, including by setting up a NC.

Looking at the experiences of current National Coalitions, it is highly recommended to appoint a Coordinator to a National Coalition. The coordinator can be an organisation or a person, and would have the following responsibilities:

- Facilitate communications for the National Coalition
  - This can be both internal and external communications
  - Monitor the development of the action plan and evaluate the action plan of the National Coalition
  - Develop the National Coalition by engaging new stakeholders to take part in the National Coalition and the DSJC
  - Act as a contact point with the Secretariat of the DSJC, the European Commission and external stakeholders

Some National Coalitions can divide coordination responsibilities between different partners to ensure a balanced workload. For example, one coordinator could maintain a website and social media channels, one coordinator would be responsible for





reporting, and yet another coordinator would be responsible for dialogue within the coalition. There is no standard on how much time should be dedicated to coordination duties, this can vary very much depending on how much the duties of coordination is supported financially, or how much the coordinating organisation is willing to allow their employee to spend working on the coalition. If funding and support permits, a full-time coordinator may be possible, though this is not always common practice. Depending on the coordinating organisation, coalition duties may be complementary to work already being done, and a separate role is not needed.

## Identify the problems that the National Coalition needs to address

Keeping in mind the priorities and key actions of the [DSJC](#), the emerging National Coalitions should identify key challenges it needs to address at local, regional or national level. These should be adapted per the specific economic and social contexts of each country, but also on the capacities and resources the emerging National Coalition has at its disposal. The process of identifying, prioritising and selecting the problems to be addressed is of utmost important, as it will form the strategy per which key actions are will be formed.

Various resources can be employed into getting an overall picture of the digital skills gap at the national level. [The DESI 2017](#) country reports can be a resource that identifies the biggest gaps in a country, be it digital skills, basic digital skills, upskilling for professionals or connectivity. Additionally, [The European Digital Progress Report 2017](#) presents an extended analysis of member states progress in R&D in ICT.

Some National Coalitions have a stakeholder that will identify the digital skills gap. Many countries may already employ skills or jobs audits of digital skills per sector. In the case of skills or jobs gaps, coalition actions tailored to narrowing that gap can serve as a valuable and measurable outcome of the national coalition.



The Maltese Coalition in 2017 launched an [audit of digital skills](#) in the country. The audit aims to ensure “the knowledge and skills attained by students and employees must match the skills required by the industry.” Thus the training of students will help pipeline the skills foreseen by industry, ensuring students will have the skills they need to get the jobs available when they graduate.

While European resources like the DESI and EDPR reports can be valuable. Countries that rank above average may find the need to focus on relative gaps domestically. For some countries, bridging the digital skills gaps may not mean bridging a digital jobs gap, but promoting digital skills to sectors of all citizens as government and public services are digitised, to ensure basic services remain efficient and accessible for everyone.

## PHASE 2: DEVELOP AN ACTION AND DISSEMINATION PLAN

Once the National Coalition has been established, stakeholders should identify and agree on what are the objectives of the national coalition and what resources are to be allocated, for at least one year of activities. To do this, the partnership should create an action and dissemination plan that identifies the strategic objectives and sets the actions to be implemented during the National Coalition's first year of activities.

The action and dissemination plan will help the National Coalitions stakeholders to have a clear understanding on who is doing what and when. It will keep the implementation of the activities on the right track, facilitate reporting, and ease the interaction between various stakeholders on common actions. Experience of NCs tells that it may be a good idea to organise the work of the Coalitions' stakeholders around topics, tackle at regular working group meetings.

Attention should be given to how existing tools and initiatives at local level can be scaled up. At the same time, a major consideration should be given to the National Coalition pledges that generally can have a local impact, be open to all citizens assuring a two-way dialogue and interaction that can only add more value.

### **Complete an action and dissemination plan**

An Action plan should include providing information about the following information. An action plan template if needed is found in the annex:

- Background to the National Coalition
- National Coalition structure and contact details: emails, website, social media
- Main objectives of the National Coalition
- Key actions and milestones
- Communication activities
- Partners involved

[The Shared Concept](#) (created by the European Commission and representatives of the Member States gathered in the Digital Single Market working group on digital skills) includes a list of suggested activities that National Coalitions can implement in their priority areas, through their action and dissemination plans.

## PHASE 3: GETTING THE WORD OUT


National Coalition should organise an official launch event and present the action and dissemination plan. To do so, stakeholders should:

- Organise a launch event with stakeholders including key stakeholders and the media
  - Activities during the launch event can vary from signing a memorandum of understanding, holding a public event or integrating the launch of the National Coalition already into a public event on digital skills.
  - It is encouraged to notify the Secretariat ahead of the launch event in order support dissemination of a National Coalition.
  - The media should be invited and activities of the launch event should be shared on social media.
- Issue, share a press release to promote the launch of the National Coalition
- Communicate that this National Coalition operates in coordination of the DSJC and make reference to the [members charter](#) of the DSJC.
- If the National Coalition has a website, ensure that the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition logo is visible and there is a URL to the EC's Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition website: <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/digital-skills-jobs-coalition>
- Implement the communications activities identified in the action and dissemination plan

There is no strict definition on what a launch event can entail. It may be as simple as a meeting signalling a point in time that henceforth the coalition is active, it can also be a public high level meeting wherein the head of government may be present. It is also possible that the actions of the coalition may start before the launch event

For coalitions that are already launched or are already established from the Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs, it is suggested to re-launch in a meeting with coalition stakeholders and refer to the renewed mandate of the DSJC.

There is no common branding or labelling for a National Coalition. Stakeholders are free to choose names for their National Coalition as they find fitting, taking into



consideration how a name can facilitate outreach and communication of the National Coalition nationally. Messages accompanying the National Coalition's name, however, should reflect the relationship with the European Commission's DSJC. The use of the DSJC visual identity is highly recommended in all communications and dissemination material related to the Coalition. If the coalition has a website, it is required to have a logo for the DSJC. This is encouraged as it supports a transnational identity of the concept of the DSJC.

The DSJC visual identity can be obtained from the Secretariat.

## DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY INTERNSHIPS

The Digital Opportunity Traineeships initiative is an EU-funded project to provide cross-border traineeships in digital skills for 6 000 students and recent graduates from 2018 to 2020. The project is open to all Erasmus+ Programme Countries and to the Horizon 2020 Associated Countries. The first traineeships will start in spring 2018.

The Digital Opportunity Traineeships will strengthen ICT specialist skills in fields such as cybersecurity, big data, quantum technology and software development, or boost digital marketing skills. The trainees will receive an allowance of around EUR 500 per month, for a maximum duration of 5 months.

### **How do students apply?**

Students and recent graduates apply through their university, according to the timing and procedures established by the university for Erasmus+ traineeships.

### **How do companies get involved?**

Companies publish their offers on the platforms [Drop'pin@EURES](mailto:Drop'pin@EURES) or Erasmus Intern, or they can advertise them through direct contacts with universities' career offices.

### LINK TO WEB PAGE

<https://ec.europa.eu/eures/public/opportunities>

<https://erasmusintern.org>

## SUPPORT SERVICES PROVIDED TO THE NATIONAL COALITIONS

### **Seed funding**

To give support to activities of National Coalitions, a small seed funding is foreseen. The Coalitions can use this funding to cover for instance costs related to reporting, organizing meetings, and communications. The funding is guaranteed via subcontractor agreement signed between the Secretariat (either DE or AD depending on who the contract is signed with) between the National Coalitions outlining responsibilities for each side. Seed funding to subcontractors is provided in tranches, based on the achievement of targets.

### **Mentoring and networking of National Coalitions**

The DSJC secretariat is committed to support the functioning of National Coalitions and the emerging of new ones. The Secretariat will design and implement the support services based on the needs of each National Coalition in capacity building, knowledge sharing and advocacy. This includes web meetings, face to face national coalition meetings, use of social media and visits from the secretariat to the National Coalitions.

### **Secretariat's visit to NCs**

Secretariat's visit to NCs are expected to be high-level meetings involving government and stakeholder partners of the Coalition, one or two times per year. These meetings should take a substantial part of a working day and give the opportunity to NC's partners (who are not the main contacts of the Coalition) to build communications and awareness of their programmes and to get familiar with the work done in digital skills matters by the European Commission.

### **Online Matchmaking events between National Coalitions – Pledgers**

**There will be webinars** to connect NCs and pledgers, to breed the network of likeminded organizations active in certain parts of Europe, to scale up each other's activities.

**Peer to peer support** is also provided through a [LinkedIn community](#) group. This platform serves as a location to:

- Promote events and news of the National Coalition to a broad range of stakeholders
- Share ideas and opportunities for funding

- Build transnational networks between coalitions

The Secretariat provides peer to peer support to all involved stakeholders. It will also coordinate and facilitate communications between existing National Coalitions that can provide support to emerging and new National Coalitions.

Additionally, to the Secretariats support the European Commission will organise annual gatherings for National Coalitions to create a network of support for existing and emerging Coalitions.

### **Funding Briefs and webinars**

There are many opportunities for National Coalitions to receive financial support for their activities. To help National Coalitions identify relevant opportunities for funding, a funding brief outlining potentially relevant European funding opportunities is sent to National Coalitions every month.

The Secretariat will organise a series of interactive online webinars, to provide concrete insight and support to National Coalitions on relevant funding opportunities and to inspire them to be active on fundraising at national level.



## VISIBILITY

### European Commission website

The DSJC website, hosted on the Europa.eu portal, includes a section dedicated to National Coalitions: <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/national-local-coalitions>

### Member and pledger badges

Every National Coalition is invited to become a member of the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition, therefore endorsing the objectives outlined in the [Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition Members Charter](#) by completing [the submission form](#). Furthermore, National Coalitions can also become a pledger by pledging a concrete commitment to carry out an action to reduce the digital skills gap in Europe.

Submitting a pledge for action happens by completing [the online form](#). Only organisations, not individuals may apply to complete a pledge. Acceptance of a pledge is subject to an approval procedure by the Secretariat and the European Commission.

In recognition of the commitment and support for the DSJC upon becoming a member or pledger of the DSJC, a badge will be sent. The pledger/member can use the badge (alongside the colour of the area of focus) on their website as well as in dissemination materials. National Coalitions are invited to ask their partner organisations to become members and/or pledgers.





## **Social media**

Main activities of National Coalition will be presented on the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition social media channels:

- Facebook page:
- Twitter: @DigitalSkillsEU
- LinkedIn: Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition community

NCs are invited to use the following hashtags on Twitter and Facebook:

#DSJCoalition, #DigitalSkills.

## EUROPEAN FUNDING FOR SPECIFIC ACTIONS

### 1. European Structural and Investment Funds

This possibility was highlighted at the conclusions of the October 2013 [European Council](#), which stated that "part of the European Structural and Investment Funds (2014-2020) should be used for ICT education". The following funds could be considered:

- The [European Social Fund](#) (ESF) is one of the EU's Structural Funds, and the main tool for creating more and better jobs in Europe. More than €80 billion is earmarked for human capital investment in Member States between 2014 and 2020. Organisations interested in ESF funding for a project should contact the ESF Managing Authority in their country or region: [ESF local contact points](#).
- The [Youth Employment Initiative](#) aims to support young people (aged below 25) who are not in employment, education or training (NEETs), residing in regions experiencing youth unemployment rates above 25 % in 2012. Between 2014 and 2020, € 3.2 billion will come from targeted investment from the European Social Fund.
- The [European Regional Development Fund](#) aims to strengthen economic and social cohesion in the European Union by correcting imbalances between its regions. You can apply for regional funding to the authority managing the relevant regional programme. That body will evaluate your project and decide whether to grant funding. [Find your managing authority](#)
- Have a look at [other types of funds](#) here.

### 2. Your First EURES Job

[Your First EURES Job](#) is a job mobility scheme, intended to help young Europeans find a job, traineeship or apprenticeship in other EU countries. The scheme is part of the [Youth on the Move](#) package and the [Youth Opportunities Initiative](#). It could be incorporated into national [Youth Guarantee](#) schemes that include cooperation with other EU countries.

### 3. Erasmus+

The [Erasmus+](#) programme aims to boost skills and employability, as well as modernise Education, Training and Youth work. €14.7 billion is dedicated for Erasmus+ programme 2014 –2020. Erasmus+ supports transnational partnerships

among Education, Training and Youth institutions and organisations, in order to tackle skills gaps.

Organisations interested in Erasmus+ programme can find relevant information concerning the centralised funding opportunities and application procedures directly on the EACEA Agency website ([http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/funding\\_en](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/funding_en)) – Funding section - for the calls directly managed from the Agency. They could also contact the [National agencies for Erasmus](#) for decentralised funding opportunities.

#### 4. Horizon 2020

Horizon 2020 (<https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/what-horizon-2020>) is the biggest EU Research and Innovation programme ever, with nearly €80 billion of funding available over 7 years (2014 to 2020), in addition to the private investment that this money will attract. It promises more discoveries, breakthroughs, and world-firsts by taking great ideas from the lab to the market.

Horizon 2020 is the financial instrument implementing the [Innovation Union](#), a [Europe 2020](#) flagship initiative aimed at securing Europe's global competitiveness.


H2020 supports [SMEs](#) with a new instrument that runs throughout various funded research and innovation fields, enhances EU [international research](#) and Third Country participation, attaches high importance to integrate [social sciences and humanities](#) encourages to develop a [gender dimension](#) in project. Find more about the H2020 funding opportunities on the [Research & Innovation Participant Portal](#).

#### 5. Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI)

The [Employment and Social Innovation \(EaSI\) programme](#) is a financing instrument at the EU level, intended to promote high quality and sustainable employment, guaranteeing adequate and decent social protection, combating social exclusion and poverty and improving working conditions. The total budget for the EaSI programme 2014-2020 is €919.47 million.

As of January 2014, EaSI programmes support the following areas:

- The modernisation of employment and social policies with the [PROGRESS axis](#) (61% of the total budget);
  - To apply for funding, eligible organisations must respond to a [call for tender](#) or/and to a [call for proposals](#).
- Job mobility with the [EURES axis](#) (18% of the total budget);

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- To apply for funding, eligible organisations must respond to a [call for tender](#) or/and to a [call for proposals](#).
  - Access to micro-finance and social entrepreneurship with the [Microfinance and Social Entrepreneurship axis](#) (21% of the total budget).

## ANNEX 1: ACTION PLAN TEMPLATE FOR NATIONAL COALITIONS

# National Coalition

(enter country name)

## Action Plan 2018

The objective of the Action Plans is to describe your plan and how you will implement your associated activities in 2018.

### *Boosting Europe's Digital Skills*

Digital skills for ICT professionals

Digital skills in education

Digital skills for labour force

Digital skills for all citizens



## 1. Background to your National Coalition

*0,5-1 page is enough*

## 2. National Coalition structure and contact details:

emails, website, social media

## 3. Main objectives of the National Coalition

*0,5-1 page is enough*

## 4. Key actions and milestones

*Use as many pages as useful*

## 5. Communications activities

*Use as many pages as useful*

## Partners involved

*Use as many pages as useful*

## Other information, comments...