



Digital Opportunity TRAINEESHIPS



Developing digital skills abroad

Digital Opportunity Traineeships – an EU-funded training initiative – aims to help companies fill vacancies with digitally competent candidates.

Digital skills are not only required in the ICT sector, but increasingly across all sectors. Knowledge of cybersecurity, data analytics and machine learning for example are needed in fields as diverse as banking and manufacturing, farming and health. A computer-literate workforce is also vital to maintain Europe's global competitiveness in a fast-changing world.

Knowledge of digital skills also improves the life opportunities of citizens. For students and recent graduates, temporary work placements could provide a unique chance to develop digital skills at a faster pace than could be achieved through formal education, and increase their employability. To this end, the EUR 10 million the 'Digital Opportunity Traineeships' initiative will provide working experience in the digital field to up to 6 000 university students and recent graduates in 2018-20.

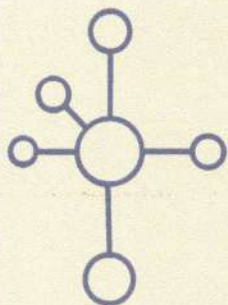
WHY NOW?

Some 35 % of the labour force – which includes farmers, marketing specialists, bank employees and factory workers – currently lack sufficient digital skills, despite an ever-increasing need for them. Around 40 % of enterprises, many of them SMEs, report that they have difficulty to recruit ICT specialists. As a result, there are at least 350 000 open vacancies due to a mismatch between the skills candidates have and the actual skills required by employers. This supply-and-demand gap is expected to grow in all sectors of the economy.

The Digital Opportunity Traineeships project will tackle this economic and social challenge by tapping into the dynamism of the private sector. Since many educational systems are still in a process of modernisation and adding digital education and development to their curricula, the digital skills gained on the job have never been more important.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

The initiative, which is funded by the European Commission's Horizon 2020 programme and implemented through highly successful **Erasmus+ Programme**, will enable participants to gain valuable work experience through traineeships with businesses abroad. These cross-border traineeships will be made available to students from all disciplines keen to develop their digital skills.



The European Commission is interested in engaging companies – from SMEs to large corporations – that have the capacity to train students on the job, but do not necessarily have the resources or time to organise internships programmes on their own. No matter their size, many companies are struggling to find people with the right skills on the job market.

Companies can publish their offers on the platforms **Drop'pin@EURES** or **ErasmusIntern** or advertise them through direct contacts with university career or international relations offices. Students can then apply for placements through their universities, according to procedures established by their university for Erasmus+ traineeships.

Once on their traineeships, successful candidates will develop their digital skills via training and practice. This can include app development and software; installation, maintenance and management of IT systems and networks; cybersecurity; data analytics, artificial intelligence applications; programming languages; search engine optimisation (SEO) and digital marketing.

Students will receive an average allowance of EUR 500 per month via the initiative, but the precise amount will depend on the sending and receiving countries.

BACKGROUND



The Digital Opportunity Traineeships initiative builds on concerted European Commission efforts to tackle the skills gap and address high levels of youth unemployment. This follows key communications published by the European Commission, including '**A new Skills Agenda for Europe**' (June 2016), and '**Towards a European Education Area by 2025**'. These present a number of actions and initiatives with the ambition to tackle the skills deficit in Europe.



Secondly, the **Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition**, the flagship initiative in the **New Skills Agenda** dedicated to the development of digital skills, was launched in December 2016. This brings together Member States, companies, social partners, non-profit organisations and education providers who take action to tackle the lack of digital skills in Europe.



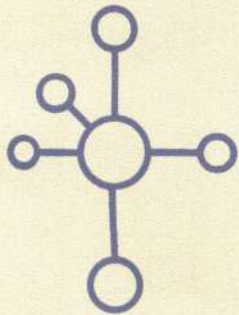
- ▶ <http://bit.ly/DigitalOpportunities>
- ▶ <https://ec.europa.eu/eures/public/opportunities>
- ▶ <https://erasmusintern.org/>
- ▶ https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/opportunities_en

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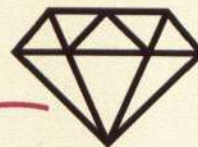




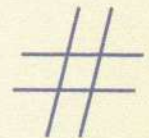
Digital Opportunity



TRAINEESHIPS
INITIATIVE



WANT
TO HELP
CREATE THE
TALENT OF
TOMORROW?



Did you know that
38 %
of companies found that
**the lack of digital skills
of their employees impacts
their performance?**



The Digital Opportunity Traineeships initiative aims to tackle this issue with relevant on-the-job training, provided by companies like yours, to prepare candidates for a career.



WHAT'S
IN IT FOR
YOUR
COMPANY?



- Access to candidates with strong skills and solid motivation
- Fresh ideas offered by young trainees
- Access to candidates from other countries
- Minimum admin hassle
- Financial support for trainees is provided, so it will mean little or no cost to the company
- Companies can decide on final candidates

At least

90 %

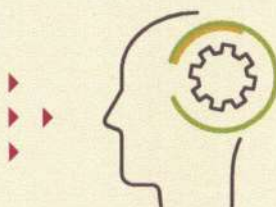
of jobs now require basic digital skills but there is a significant lack of digital knowledge in the European labour force – roughly

35 %

of workers do not have these skills.

WHAT
COMPANIES
SHOULD
KNOW

Your company can help change this and create the workforce of tomorrow.



Digital Skills
and
Jobs Coalition

Youth unemployment is high in the EU and at the same time there are 2 million job vacancies being on offer; this is linked also to the mismatches between the skills demanded and skills available. For ICT specialists alone, while there are over 350 000 job vacancies, 40% of companies looking for them cannot find the right people.

2 MILLION
JOB VACANCIES

HIGH YOUTH
UNEMPLOYMENT



Digital Opportunity Traineeships
seek to provide willing trainees
to your company to learn the
necessary skills to fill some
of these vacancies.



**CAN YOU
OFFER HANDS-ON
EXPERTISE IN ONE
OR MORE OF THE
FOLLOWING?**

- Development of apps, software, scripts, websites
- Installation, maintenance and management of IT systems and networks
- Data analytics
- Cybersecurity
- Cloud
- Quantum/artificial intelligence
- Encryption
- Block chain
- Data mining, privacy and visualisation
- Programming language
- Search Engine Optimisation (SEOs)
- Digital marketing
- Specific software apps for work
- Customer Care Management



**GET
INVOLVED
NOW**

**HOW DOES
IT WORK?**



Companies can publish the traineeship offers on one of two platforms – **Drop'pin@EURES** or **ErasmusIntern** – or they can advertise through direct contacts with university careers offices or international relations offices. The universities select candidates for traineeships based on specific criteria, and the company will choose the trainee from a pre-selected pool of candidates.

The EU-funded Digital Opportunity Traineeships initiative will offer up to 6 000 students and recent graduates the chance to improve their digital skills on the job in a company in a participating country. Traineeships will take place from spring 2018 to the end of 2020. Traineeships can last between 2 and 12 months. Each trainee will receive an allowance of around €500 a month through the initiative. Companies are encouraged to top up this allowance. To target students from specific universities following relevant courses please use this **list** of participating universities.



Digital Opportunity TRAINEESHIPS



Information for students Questions & Answers

The Digital Opportunity Traineeships – an EU-funded training initiative – aims to help companies fill vacancies with digitally competent candidates.

The initiative will raise awareness on the importance of on-the-job training for digital skills and help to attract more students to careers in ICT-related professions. Digital skills are not only required in the ICT sector, but increasingly across all sectors.

For students and recent graduates, temporary work placements are a unique chance to develop digital skills and improve their job prospects. The Digital Opportunity Traineeships initiative is designed to bring sustainable benefits to both businesses and job seekers.

Why should students and recent graduates be interested?

Today more and more jobs require advanced digital skills but only 36% of the labour force has them. One of the purposes of the Digital Opportunity Traineeships initiative is to encourage students and recent graduates from all disciplines to undertake traineeships that strengthen digital skills. This will increase their employability and enable them to obtain valuable work experience abroad. Traineeships are open to both women and men. Women are particularly encouraged to apply as they are currently underrepresented in STEM careers.

Find out more about **Erasmus+ traineeships**.

How can students apply?

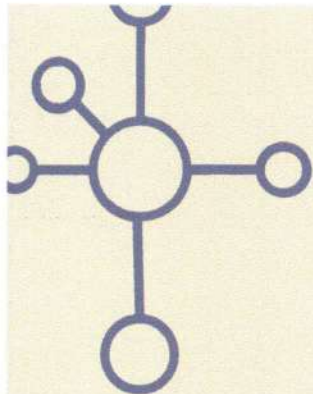
Students apply through their universities, according to the timing and procedures established by their university for Erasmus+ traineeships. Students should contact the Erasmus+ office at their university.

For more information on applying, **visit the website**.

How are trainees selected?

After applying through their universities for the Erasmus+ grant, universities select trainees on the basis of criteria such as academic excellence, traineeship plan etc. Companies then select the candidates that fit their profiles, through platforms such as **Drop'pin@EURES** or **ErasmusIntern** or through bilateral direct contacts.





The initiative runs from June 2018 through 2020. Companies have been advertising their placements since December 2017, so opportunities are already available!

Are living costs paid for?

Trainees receive on average €500/month but the exact amount depends on the country. The trainees receive the grant via the university. As a general rule, companies are not involved in the transaction. Companies can top up this grant.

Can the students stay in their country of residence?

One of the objectives of the programme is to boost cross-border mobility and multicultural exchanges, so trainees must go abroad. There are **33 Programme countries** participating in Erasmus+. All the Horizon 2020 **Associated Countries** are eligible for the pilot as Erasmus+ partner countries.

What about VET (vocational education and training) students?

Digital Opportunity Traineeships only target higher education students and recent graduates. There are however other Erasmus+ traineeship opportunities for VET students.

For further details on traineeships, visit the **Erasmus+ website**.



- ▶ <http://bit.ly/DigitalOpportunities>
- ▶ <https://ec.europa.eu/eures/public/opportunities>
- ▶ <https://erasmusintern.org/>
- ▶ https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/opportunities_en

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#DigitalTraineeEU

#DigitalSkills





Journey for Companies



Companies of all sizes that are willing to host students enrolled in a university in another country. You will give them the opportunity to learn **specific digital skills** on the job.

Who
can
participate?



What's
in it for
companies?

Companies will benefit from the presence of highly motivated and talented trainees - and their fresh ideas!

Yes, the Erasmus+ trainees will receive an allowance of around €500/month paid directly to them by the university. Companies are encouraged to top up this allowance.

Are
trainees
paid?



How
do companies
participate in the
Digital Opportunity
Traineeships?




We're happy you asked! Companies can publish their offers on the **Drop'pin@EURES** or **ErasmusIntern** websites and mark the offer as a Digital Opportunity Traineeship. Companies can also establish direct contacts with universities to advertise their traineeship offers. By taking part in the Digital Opportunity Traineeships, companies commit to respect the European **Quality Framework for traineeships**.¹

Trainees can be selected directly through the platform where the offer is published. In parallel, the universities pre-select the candidates meeting criteria of Erasmus+ traineeships according to programme guidelines.

How
do I select the
trainees?

What
will the trainee
learn during the
traineeship?



A lot, we hope! You'll be shaping the type of worker you want to employ through on-the-job training. Before starting the traineeship, the hosting company and the trainee will sign a "Traineeship Learning Agreement" setting out the content and the expected outcomes of the traineeship.

¹ Please note that in some universities the Digital Opportunity Traineeships fall under the same procedures as Erasmus+ Traineeships.



Journey for Students



Who
can participate?

All students enrolled in a university from the 33 Erasmus+ **Programme countries** and in Horizon 2020 **Associated Countries**.

Check the information on your university's website and look for the Erasmus+ traineeships mobility opportunities. Or you can ask your university's careers or international relations offices about the conditions for the application and the selection procedure for the Digital Opportunity Traineeships¹.

How
do I apply?

What's
in it for students?

You can improve your digital skills doing a traineeship in a company in another participating country.

How
do I find a company for my traineeship?

The traineeship offers are available on **Drop'pin@EURES** or **ErasmusIntern** and marked as Digital Opportunity Traineeships. You can contact the companies directly through the websites.

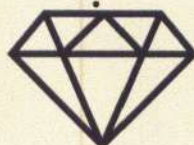
As soon as possible! Traineeships can start as of June 2018 and they can last from 2 to 12 months.

When
can I start?



A lot, we hope! Before starting the traineeship, you and the hosting company will sign a "Traineeship Learning Agreement" setting out the content and the expected outcomes of the traineeship. We're sure you will have a few things to share with the company, too.

What
will I learn during my traineeship?



Will
I be reimbursed?



Of course – we don't expect you to work for free! Erasmus+ trainees receive on average €500/month but the exact amount depends on the sending and receiving country. Companies can top up this grant – so be sure to talk to them about it.

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