AppSkil

European ICT Sector Skills Alliance - VET Open Course for Mobile Apps Creators

Memorandum of Cooperation

for the promotion of the AppSkil EU ICT Skills Alliance
and the improvement of ICT skills
through membership to the "Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition"
(D6.6.1)

Contents

A. Memorandum of Cooperation

Memorandum of Cooperation for the promotion of the AppSkil EU ICT Skills Alliance
and the improvement of ICT skills through membership to the "Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition"

ii

Memorandum of Cooperation

for the promotion of the AppSkil EU ICT Skills Alliance and the improvement of ICT skills

through membership to the "Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition"

Terms of Cooperation

This Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) defines the objectives, terms and procedures for cooperation between the signatory institutions willing to promote the AppSkil EU ICT Skills Alliance and to improve ICT skills through membership to the "Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition".

Being active in the ICT sector, signatories welcome the launch of the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition by the European Commission and endorse its principles and goals. They consider it important to facilitate links between the AppSkil European ICT Sector Skills Alliance and the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition (at EU and national levels), also to foster the transferability of the AppSkil project results.

The contracting parties agree to exchange and cooperate with the aim of:

- joining the AppSkil EU ICT Skills Alliance (if not already members),

- supporting the AppSkil EU ICT Skills Alliance and supplement their activities based on AppSkil experience and results,

- becoming members of the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition, by endorsing the objectives and principles of the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition Members Charter,

- becoming members of the national digital skill coalitions in their countries,

- making pledges for action in the areas identified in the Charter of the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition (pledges are concrete commitments to address the digital skills gap),

- sharing effective practices which can be replicated and scaled up across Europe,

- establishing a long lasting partnership that will govern the development of the mobile apps skills in the European ICT sector,

- elaborating on ways to extend the collaboration for the promotion of digital skills in the above described framework, to identify synergies and ways to complement their activities in the ICT sector.

Mutual Benefit

The signatory institutions, based upon the principles of mutual benefit and respect for each other's independence, express their will to cooperate with the aim to reduce digital skills gaps. Moreover, they agree that this Memorandum of Cooperation is not a formal legal agreement giving rise to any legal relationship, rights, duties or consequences, but it is only an expression and record of the purpose of the parties regarding which the parties will continue to discuss.

Funding

Nothing in this MoC shall be deemed to be a commitment or obligation of funds from the signatory institutions.

Entry into force

This MoC shall become effective upon signature by the representative from the signatory institution.

Signatory Institutions

Institution name and logo

Address

Web site

Institution representative

Position

Date and Signature

B. Project Information

1. Background information

1.1. Challenge

In the EU, 8.2 million persons were employed in 2016 as ICT specialists, representing 3.7% of total employment. Over recent years, both the number and the share of ICT specialists in total employment have continuously risen to better adapt to an ever digitalised world.[1] One of the fastest growing segments of ICT sector is that of mobile applications. The ICT sector's workforce is constituted by professionals able to move across and apply their knowledge in several segments of the sector, including mobile app segment.

On the demand side, in 2016, 1 in 5 enterprises in the EU (20%) employed ICT specialists and nearly 1 in 10 (9%) recruited or tried to recruit ICT specialists. However, 41% of enterprises which recruited or tried to recruit ICT specialists had difficulties in filling vacancies.[2]

According to the European Commission, the demand for digital technology professionals has grown by 4% annually in the last ten years. Yet digital skills are lacking in Europe at all levels. Despite continued strong employment growth, the number of unfilled vacancies for ICT professionals is expected to almost double to 756.000 by 2020. Furthermore, almost half the EU population lacks basic digital skills; with around 20% of people having none at all.[3]

To conclude, the demand for ICT personnel keeps growing steadily in spite of the crisis that affected most of the economy. However, Europe currently is not producing the talent with the right skills and there are simply not enough skilled ICT professionals to meet current demand. The reason for this is that competence mismatches are a major issue for all sectors, as technology evolves quickly and creates new demand for competences. And the lack of e-skilled professionals threatens ICT's ability to act as a catalyst for growth, innovation, and competitiveness. Consequently, continuous professional development for ICT professionals is essential to sustain their employability and to combat the mismatches that can threaten Europe's essential future labour supply. [4]

The challenge is to equip current and future ICT professionals, and in particular those aspiring to work in the mobile apps field, with a diversified skill set to cope effectively with the full range

---

[1] http://skillspanorama.cedefop.europa.eu/en

[2] http://skillspanorama.cedefop.europa.eu/en

[3] COM(2016) 381, 10.6.2016, "A new skills Agenda for Europe, Working together to strengthen human capital, employability and competitiveness".

[4] e-Competence in Europe, Analysing Europe's Gaps and Mismatches for a Stronger ICT Profession, 2014, Council of European Professional Informatics Societies (CEPIS)

of issues involved in the adequate response to current job market needs and in the commercially successful creation of mobile apps.

1.2. The AppSkil EU ICT Sector Skills Alliance

AppSkil project (https://appskil.eu/) created a European ICT Sector Skills Alliance focused on the mobile apps field, which i) acts as a collaboration platform linking VET providers, sector representatives and VET authorities, to respond to skills needs and mismatches and ii) strengthen current and future ICT staff, working or aspiring to work in the mobile apps field, with business and design skills to improve sustainable employment results. Thus, the AppSkil EU Sector Skills Alliance contributes to the matching of workforce skills in mobile apps creation with labour market needs, improving sustainable employment in the sector. It provides ICT professionals with mobile apps creation skills required but missing from the market, enhancing personal development and job performance improvement.

1.3. The Digital Skills and Job Coalition

In 2016 the European Commission launched the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition, as part of the Skills Agenda for Europe, with the aim to build strong partnerships and work in cooperation to reduce digital skills gaps in Europe. It brings together Member States, companies, social partners, non-profit organisations and education providers, who take action to tackle the lack of digital skills. The aim is to ensure that everyone acquires the digital skills they need to remain productive and employable and included.

According to the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition Members Charter, citizens need adequate and appropriate digital skills to be empowered in a digital economy and society. Digital skills are needed at all levels but the supply is not able to meet increasing demand and digital skills gaps are emerging. To adequately address these challenges related to both the digital skills of ICT professionals and the digital skills for all citizens, we need to develop high level digital skills for ICT professionals in all industry sectors and to 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 (among other). The basic challenges concerning "ICT professionals" are related to "Ensuring certification and standardisation" and "Upskilling of ICT professionals in a-life-long-learning perspective". Regarding "citizens" the challenge is related to "providing relevant digital skills training opportunities for all".

Furthermore, in its new Skills Agenda for Europe the Commission asked all Member States to develop national digital skills strategies by mid-2017 and to set up national coalitions to support their implementation. National Coalitions for Digital Skills and Jobs are partnerships between digital skills actors in Member States who work together to improve digital skills at national, regional or local level. They bring together ICT and ICT-using companies, education and training

providers, education and employment ministries, public and private employment services, associations, non-profit organisations and social partners, who develop concrete measures to bring digital skills to all levels of society. They collaborate in areas such as increasing industry-led training, certifying skills, improving school and university curricula, and raising awareness about ICT careers, especially among young people and women.

1.4. Linking AppSkil and the Digital Skills and Job Coalition

The AppSkil EU ICT Skills Alliance and the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition both work to address the ICT skills gaps and train ICT workers and thus recognise common objectives in the field.

In the above described context, AppSkil project and its results perfectly fits into the challenge "ICT professionals" of the Digital Skills Coalition, specifically in "Ensuring certification and standardisation" and "Up skilling of ICT professionals in a life-long-learning perspective" challenges, while AppSkil can also bring value in the challenge "citizen" as well, specifically in "Providing relevant digital skills training opportunities for all".

AppSkil consortium members have identified the value of belonging to the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition, both at national and European level, and are committed to facilitate links between (a) members and potential members of the AppSkil EU ICT Skills Alliance, as well as interested parties, involved in encouraging and supporting ICT sector stakeholders, and (b) the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition.

Members of the European ICT Skills Sector Alliance, intend to join the Coalition and the respective national digital skills coalition and their objective is to further enhance collaboration, to find synergies and ways to expand and complement relevant activities.

Furthermore, other identified ICT sector stakeholders, including social partners, professional associations in ICT and relevant VET providers, are encouraged to become members of both the AppSkil EU ICT Skills Alliance and the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition, with the aim to strengthen the exchange of knowledge between VET and the business world, to reduce digital skills gaps and to increase competitiveness in the ICT sector.

2. Area of Cooperation

2.1. Target group – Signatory institutions

ICT sector stakeholders, including social partners, professional associations in ICT, relevant VET providers and VET authorities, as well as bodies and organisations that contribute to the exchange of knowledge between VET and the business world, are encouraged to sign the proposed Memorandum of Cooperation.

2.2. Cooperation objectives

The signatory institutions will cooperate to strengthen the exchange of knowledge between VET and the business world and to increase the competiveness of the ICT sector mainly through the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition (at national and European level).

Strong cooperation between ICT companies, the education and training sector and VET authorities through the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition is expected to result to a collaborative platform which guarantees that learning and development is flexible, up-to-date, and rapidly responsive to needs to drive economic development and innovation in the sector. Thus, collaboration with national and European coalitions is expected to supplement the activities of the organisations involved and further enhance the role of the coalitions. In this context, ICT stakeholders will cooperate for the definition of common standards for designing ICT competences and qualifications at EU level that promote mutual trust, mobility and employability in the sector.

2.3. Procedure

Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition membership

The signatory institutions are expected to support the objectives and actions of the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition as outlined in the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition Members Charter and to become members of the Coalition, by filling the members form available at https://goo.gl/GPhafD . By endorsing the Charter, they agree in principle with the actions listed in the Charter but they do not need to commit to support all of them. They are also encouraged to take concrete actions according to their interests and capability in the form of a pledge for action. Pledges should target one or more of the Coalition's four target groups: citizens, the labour force, ICT specialists and education. As a member they will receive information about activities and invitations to meetings related to the work of the Coalition. Moreover, they may be consulted when relevant to contribute to the shaping of the Coalition roadmap.

National Coalitions membership

The signatory institutions are expected to contact their National Coalition to support their effort in their country. For doing so they can either get in touch with them directly, or contact the Digital Skills and Jobs Secretariat, who will liaise with the relevant coordinating body at the national level. More information is available at https://goo.gl/tPp9v6 .

If there is no National Coalition in their country, they can contact the Digital Skills and Jobs Secretariat and discuss how to start a one. The Secretariat can give advice on how to build a successful Coalition and provide relevant help.

2.4. Indicative time plan

The following diagram shows the duration of each activity related to the Memorandum of Cooperation:

Consultation phase (updated and final version of the MoC available)

August 2017 - Septemper 2017

Dissemination and lobbying activities | Signature of the Memorandum of Cooperation

October 2017 - November 2017

Submission and exchange of the signed Memorandum of Cooperation

December 2017

2.5. Feasibility of the cooperation

The following SWOT diagram includes the basic elements related to the feasibility of the cooperation among the signatory institutions, thus helping to focus on key issues.

It demonstrates the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats involved in the structured cooperation of ICT stakeholders. Strengths and weaknesses are internal aspects and they are within the control of the signatory parties / organisations signing the Memorandum of Cooperation. Opportunities and threats are external factors. This means that they are outside the direct control of the stakeholders involved and they are related to the relevant environment, policy priorities at national and European level and available policy instruments.

Strengths

- Strong and suitable AppSkil partnership combining systemic and sector related knowledge with a solid knowhow of ICT training practices
- Lobbying and dissemination activities planned to take place in October 2017
- Existing contacts of the AppSkil consortium members with ICT stakeholders and national coalitions.

Weaknesses

- AppSkil project ending in December 2017, thus creating time constraints for establishing collaborations and signing the MoC
- Most important contacts already take part in the AppSkil alliance and additional resources are needed to attract new members.
- Lack of additional funding

Opportunities

- Clear and updated strategy at a European level, currently implemented through the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition
- Simple and step-by-step procedure to be followed by interested parties.
- Available funding opportunities (& pilot projects).

Threats

- Potential update of the policy / strategy and/or the instruments to implement the strategy (EU level).
- Reduced interest by ICT stakeholders to actively engage in the suggested cooperation.
- Lack of National Coalitions in all European countries.
- Lack of funding to coordinate efforts currently implemented.