



**PACT FOR
SKILLS**

NETWORKING EVENT FOR PACT FOR SKILLS MEMBERS

European Commission | 31 May 2022

Following the launch of the Pact for Skills in November 2020 – a shared engagement model for skill development in Europe – the European Commission organised its first networking event to allow Pact members to learn more about the initiative and the activities implemented by their fellow members. The event was livestreamed and had 212 participants.

Key messages from the European Commission

The first Pact for Skills Networking event offered a unique opportunity for Pact members to foster a dialogue on **upskilling and reskilling** measures within the industrial ecosystems. Pact members gathered online to exchange their experiences and provide inspiration across different partnerships and ecosystems. Participants included representatives of industry, regional and national authorities, social partners, sectoral organisations, and education and training providers. They were invited to identify synergies in **addressing labour and skill shortages**, and in facilitating the digital and green transitions, by helping workers to move from declining sectors to more sustainable sectors while preventing periods of unemployment. As emphasised by **Manuela Geleng**, Director at the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (DG EMPL), the European Commission is dedicated to **increasing investments** in upskilling and reskilling opportunities and supporting Pact members to generate tangible impact through their commitments.

'The Pact is based on a very simple idea: that upskilling and reskilling measures are shared between many actors. We need to work together to maximise their impact.'

Manuela Geleng, Director at DG EMPL

Considering the support provided by the Commission, **Jakub Boratynski**, Director at the Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW), noted that the ultimate goal of the Pact for Skills is to achieve a successful adaptation to the future needs of the labour market. The Commission is supporting Pact members to develop **practical measures** for skills and is providing information on investment and regulation.

To underpin these activities the European Commission established the **Pact for Skills Support Services**. These aim to provide information and guidance on EU funding, access to skills intelligence, knowledge, relevant resources and networking opportunities. This Networking event was one of the first activities organised by the Support Services to **showcase best practices**. Pact members were invited to join forces to effectively implement the commitments and practical measures, to create lasting impact in their sectors.

Best practice examples for Pact for Skills commitments

Members of the Pact can make concrete commitments under the Pact for Skills to foster upskilling and to reskill. Members of the Pact across the EU shared their experiences, informing participants about how they took concrete action to upskill and reskill people. They highlighted their **key targets** and **progress** achieved through their commitments.

Social Economy Partnership (Belgium) **Patrizia Bussi**

Aim to upskill and reskill 5% of the sector's workforce each year, attract young talent, and increase the number of graduates in social economy business programmes.

European Project Department at Fundatia Ecologica Green (Romania) **Irina Stanciu**

Re-qualification of 1,170 people through both short-term training and post-secondary vocational education and training (VET).

Transilvania IT Cluster (Romania) **Andra Tanase**

Upskilling and reskilling of 316 employees on digital trends and communications technology. 50 employees, 87 small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and public service organisations (PSOs), accessed training and mentoring services focusing on digital skills development.

Innopharma Global (Ireland) **Dr Daniela Angione**

A data-driven digital innovation tool which helps identify best practices in different value chains, and assess labour market needs based on data provided by industries.

Collaboration through the Pact for Skills: Large-scale and regional partnerships

The Pact seeks to enhance cooperation at ecosystem, regional and local levels. At these different levels actions can be better adapted to address concrete skills needs of specific ecosystems/sectors, the local and regional labour market, and through the up- and re-skilling needs of workers.

Regional and large-scale skills partnerships are a **framework for sectoral collaboration** to coordinate action on skills, generate a shared understanding of skill needs and challenges, and benefit from a larger community of **mutual learning**.

Through partnerships and national and European networks, members can ensure the long-term impact of their sectoral commitments. For example, **Panos Fitsilis** presented the work of the University of Thessaly (Greece) regarding the development of **excellence centres** for skills related to digital transformation, such as the [DevOPS project](#) offering innovative job profiles for smart cities.

'This process is of major importance for the European Commission. It will only be successful if it is based on real partnerships of all players at national and regional level.'
Jakub Boratynski, Director at DG GROW

Moreover, **Barbara Tosi**, Director at Consorzio Scuola Comunità Impresa (Italy), explained that her organisation has committed to the creation of a Vocational Education and Training Centre of Excellence as a bridge between education systems and the labour market while promoting **regional cultural and economic growth**.

Knowledge sharing within the ecosystems

Eight parallel breakout sessions were organised to allow Pact members to share knowledge within and across ecosystems. Among the **common challenges** that they identified are **reaching target audiences** in remote areas, promoting more **sustainable behaviour**, and the need to translate available resources supporting upskilling and reskilling across Europe in local languages.

The **attractiveness of upskilling** and the need to **support SMEs** with targeted resources emerged in several ecosystems.

Dealing with the unpredictable and **precarious** nature of **employment** in some sectors poses particular challenges. It is difficult to attract and keep young talent, as well as to provide the lifelong learning perspective to employers in sectors with a higher number of mobile workers and uncertainty about the future.

Throughout the discussions, Pact members reinforced the urgent need to **adapt skills to the future labour market**, which stands out as key challenges in several sectors. Participants remarked that addressing emerging skills needs and the adaptability of skills are essential to support Europe's efforts towards a green and digital economy that will continue to create new and sustainable jobs across all sectors.

The discussions highlighted the importance of **regional specificities** and the need for organisations to **collaborate with private and public players** to achieve lasting impact of skilling actions in their sectors. For the success of the initiatives, the involvement of education providers, workers' representative organisations, authorities and employers are equally essential.

Take-aways of the event

A key take-away was the persistence of both sector specific and overarching challenges which showcase the need for **stronger collaboration** on skills development, and in promoting a **culture of lifelong learning** in key industrial ecosystems in Europe. As emphasised by **Alison Crabb**, Head of Skills Agenda Unit at DG EMPL, building strong skills partnerships at European and regional level and anticipating skills needs are key for upskilling and reskilling people in Europe. Continuous efforts of members to translate their commitments into real skills development initiatives are crucial in bringing the Pact to life. For this, the Pact for Skills Support Services can provide valuable guidance

Pact for Skills members can translate the objectives of the Pact into reality by:

- Making commitments to implement and monitor upskilling and reskilling in their organisations.
- Joining an existing partnership to join forces with other organisations.
- Establishing sectoral or cross-sectoral regional partnerships for upskilling and reskilling.

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