



# DEP4ALL

THE NCP NETWORK FOR THE  
DIGITAL EUROPE PROGRAMME

## DEEP DIVE – SO4 Advanced Digital Skills

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June 24th 2025

# HOUSEKEEPING RULES



- Training **will be recorded**



- Recordings & presentation **will be published**



- Sorry, we keep your mic **muted** as default



- Please send your **questions to the Chat**



- **Answering** your questions in follow-up



- In-depth **information** bilaterally from your **DEP NCP**

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# AGENDA

- **OVERVIEW OF SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 4**
  - Relevant policies
  - Facts and figures
- **SECTORAL DIGITAL SKILLS ACADEMIES**
  - Approach and objectives
  - What to consider and where to find it
- **THE LUMP SUM FUNDING INSTRUMENT**
  - The budget table
  - EC evaluation
- **WHAT ELSE IS RELEVANT?**

# OVERVIEW OF SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 4

Get some insights about what happened thus far under SO4 and learn more about relevant EU policies and key strategic goals

# THE MAIN OBJECTIVES OF DEP



**Build digital infrastructures and capacities** in critical sectors (AI, data spaces, cloud, supercomputing, chips, cybersecurity, digital transformation of public administration, skills)



**Achieve scale through collective co-investments**

Given the size of investments needed, scale required, and risks involved Europe needs to pool the resources together



**Regain control over Europe's value chains**

and ensure Europe's technological sovereignty



**Better address Europe's economic and societal challenges**

E.g. climate, health, mobility and public services



**Ensure broad take-up of digital technologies across all regions of EU**

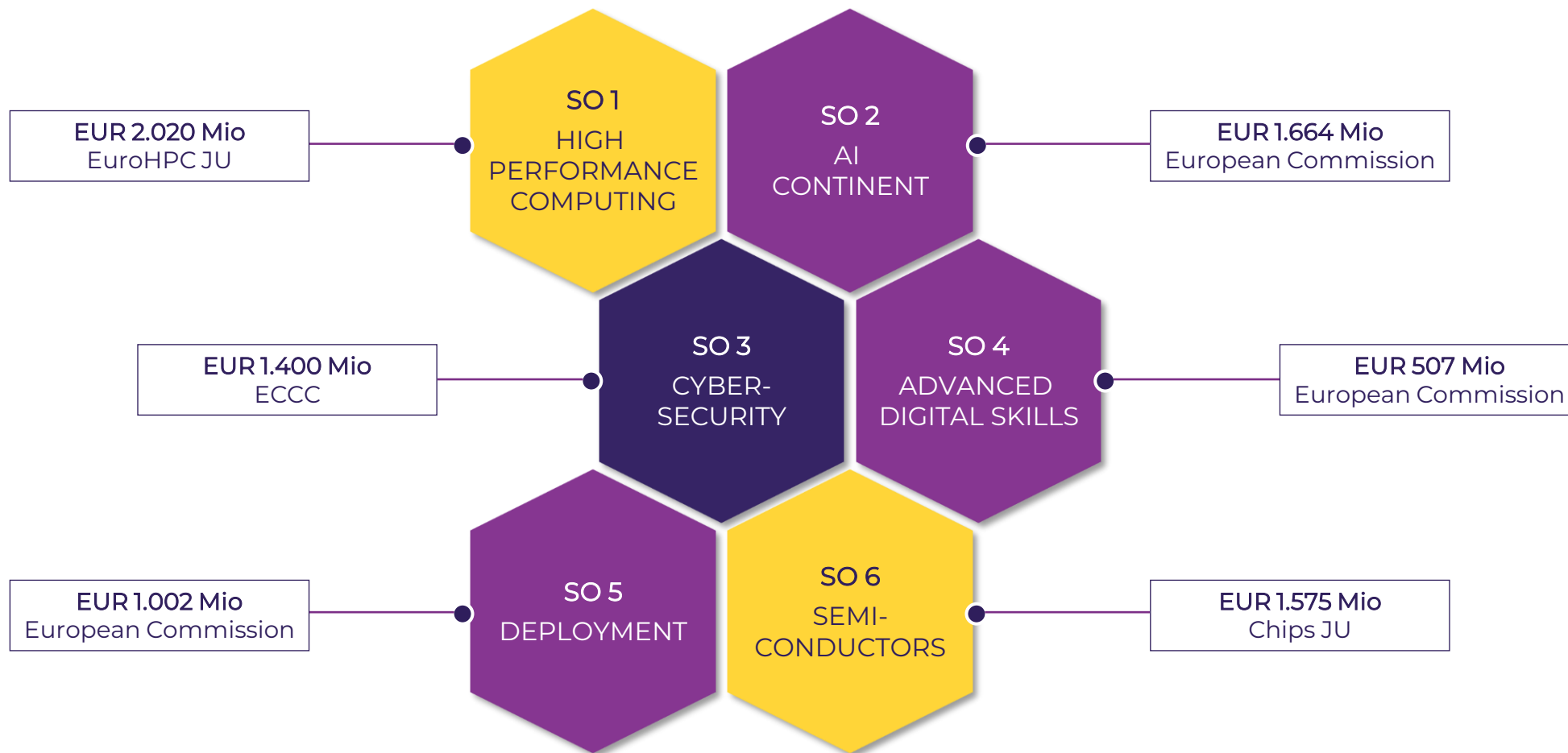
In deploying latest technologies to offer best services to citizens and business



**Support SMEs to acquire or access the latest technologies and skills**

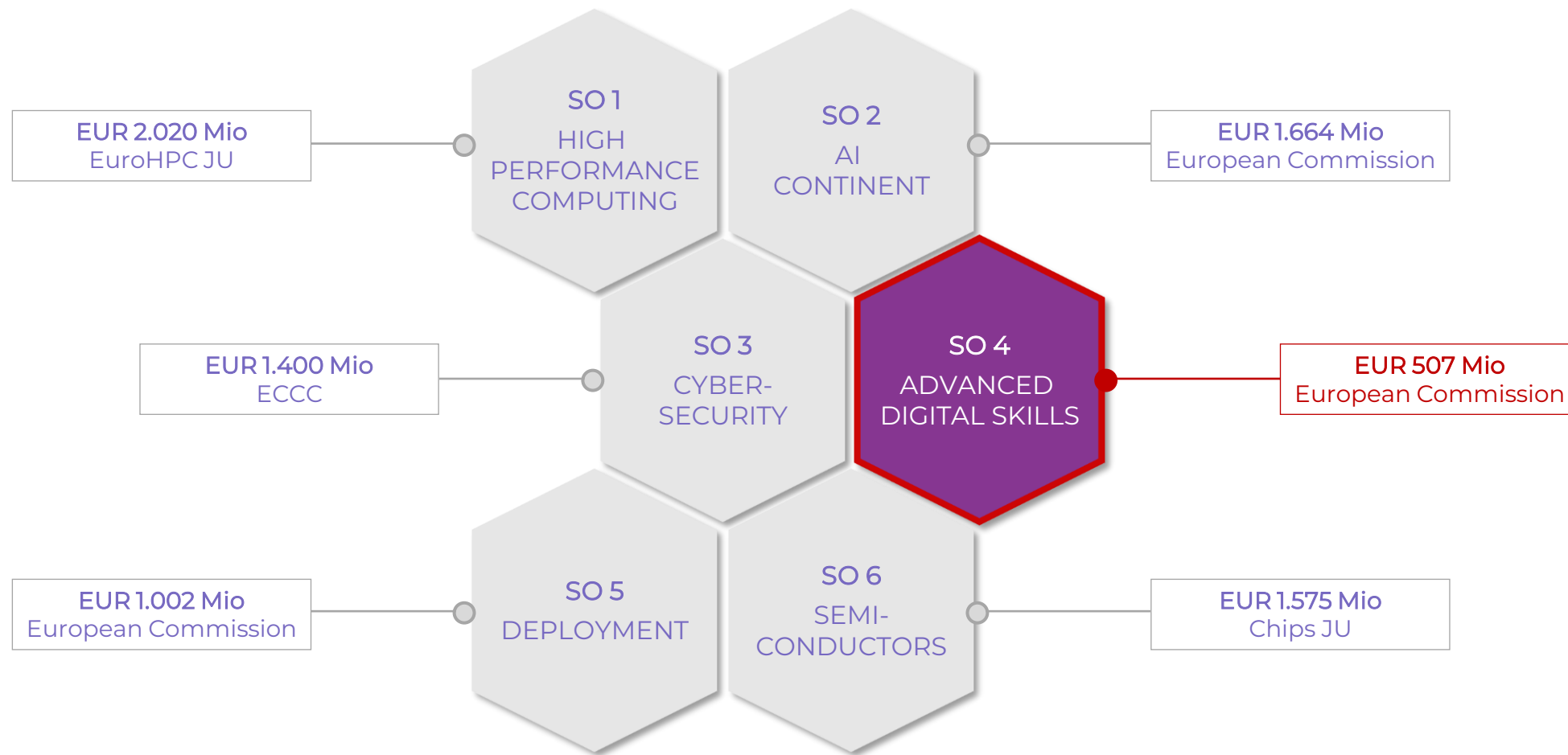
More than 400,000 EU vacancies in these fields

# DEP OVERVIEW – BUDGET AND IMPLEMENTATION



**TOTAL DEP BUDGET EUR 8.168 MIO**

# DEP OVERVIEW – BUDGET AND IMPLEMENTATION



TOTAL DEP BUDGET EUR 8.168 MIO

# SOME FACTS AND FIGURES

## KEY FACTS

Implementing entity: European Commission

Available budget: 0,5 bn EUR



## MAIN OBJECTIVES

- Increase Europe's talent pool and support EU objective of **20 Mio** ICT specialists in Europe by 2030
- Boost the **excellence of EU education and training** institutions in key digital technology areas
- Support **close cooperation with industry and research** and promote girls & women in Digital

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Over **20,000 participants** in the 800+ educational and training programmes in highly specialized fields, like AI, robotics, cybersecurity, or quantum
- Initiatives for **key sectors** and **specific target groups**
  - Skills for **cybersecurity, semiconductors and HPC**
  - Supporting **girls and women** in digital

## OUTLOOK

- Sectoral digital skills academies
- Excellence in higher education and training programmes in key digital areas and applied technologies



# POLICY BACKGROUND

## Digital Decade Policy Programme

The Advanced Digital Skills objective of the Digital Europe Programme supports the **Digital Decade Policy Programme** by funding education, training, and capacity-building initiatives that help meet the EU's 2030 targets for digital talent and workforce development.

[Digital Decade Policy Programme](#)

## Union of Skills

The **Union of Skills** is an EU initiative to strengthen cross-border skills development and mobility in support of the green and digital transitions. It aims to deliver higher basic skills, enable lifelong upskilling, facilitate EU-wide recruitment, attract and retain talent, and ensure strong skills governance.

[Union of Skills](#)

## Digital Education Action Plan

Under the head of two priorities of the **Action Plan** (1) digfostering the development of a high-performing ital education ecosystem plus (2) enhancing digital skills and competences for the digital transformation, the EU agreed on activities meeting the need for higher levels of digital capacity of education and training systems and institutions.

[Digital Education Action Plan \(2021-27\)](#)

## European Skills Agenda

The **European Skills Agenda** is a five-year plan to help individuals and businesses develop more and better skills ad to put them to use.

[European Skills Agenda](#)

See also - [EU-Policies/Digital Skills](#)

# RELEVANT SECTOR SPECIFIC POLICIES

## Quantum

- [European Declaration of Quantum Technologies](#)
- [European Quantum Flagship](#)
- [European Chips Act](#)

## GenAI

- [AI Innovation Package](#)
- [AI Continent Action Plan](#)
- [Apply AI strategy](#)

## Virtual Worlds

- [EU initiative on Web 4.0 and virtual worlds](#)
- [Virtual Worlds fit for people](#)

See also - [EU-Policies/Digital Skills](#)

# DIGITAL EUROPE REGULATION

provides concrete measurable indicators to monitor/report on the progress of the programme

For the Digital Skills Academies, 2 out of 3 indicators are asked for

4.1. The number of persons who have received training to acquire advanced digital skills supported by the Programme

4.3. The number of people reporting an improved employment situation after the end of the training supported by the Programme

All three funded projects will be requested to provide data related to these performance indicators!

**▼ B**

**Specific Objective 4 – Advanced Digital Skills**

- 4.1. The number of persons who have received training to acquire advanced digital skills supported by the Programme
- 4.2. The number of enterprises, in particular SMEs, having difficulty recruiting ICT specialists
- 4.3. The number of people reporting an improved employment situation after the end of the training supported by the Programme

# BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLES & PAST ACTIVITIES



## GreenChips-EDU

- [GreenChips-EDU](#)
- GreenChips-EDU brings together European key players in microelectronics education and innovation. The project focuses on green chips designed for sustainability.
- Excellent project targeting the shortage of skilled workers in the EU by empowering students to contribute to a green and circular economy.

Digital Simple Grant, 10/23-09/27  
18 Partners, 7,16 Mio€ EU contribution

## Past activities

- 50 signed grants
- 210MEUR EU contribution supporting skills in key areas like Cyber, Chips, Quantum, Healthcare, DestinE
- Data Space for Skills (started 01/25)
- Digital Skills and Jobs Platform

see also:  
[Digital Europe DASHBOARD](#)



# QUESTION 1

# SECTORAL DIGITAL SKILLS ACADEMIES

Four new sectoral digital skills academies are planned to be funded under Work Programme 2025-27 – learn about previous funded projects under SO4 and specific requirements for the current call

# SECTORAL SKILLS ACADEMIES – APPROACH



COLLABORATION



TACKLE FRAGMENTATION



ALIGNMENT WITH JOB MARKET NEEDS

# FOUR NEW SECTORAL SKILLS ACADEMIES

CALL 8

Sectoral digital skills  
academies: **Quantum  
Skills Digital Academy**

Sectoral digital skills  
academies: **Digital Skills  
Academy in GenAI**

Sectoral digital skills  
academies: **Virtual  
Worlds Skills Academy**



AI SKILLS ACADEMY

UPCOMING

*Sectoral digital skills  
academies: **Digital Skills  
in EU AI factories***

*Sectoral digital skills  
academies:  
**Semiconductors Skills  
Academy***



# SCOPE OF THE SECTORAL SKILLS ACADEMIES

Sectoral digital skills  
academies: **Quantum  
Skills Digital Academy**

Sectoral digital skills  
academies: **Digital Skills  
Academy in GenAI**

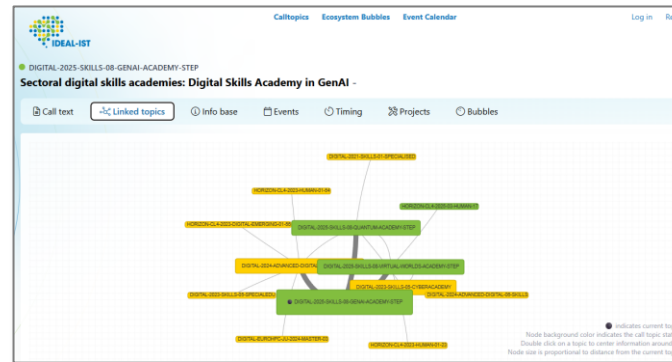
Sectoral digital skills  
academies: **Virtual  
Worlds Skills Academy**

- **Knowledge, education, and training**
  - Complement existing information on the skills needs
  - Design and implement educational programs and trainings
- **Building the ecosystem**
  - Enable a network of stakeholder
  - Dissemination
- **Measuring progress**
  - Develop a robust methodology
  - Suggest adjustments to the Academy

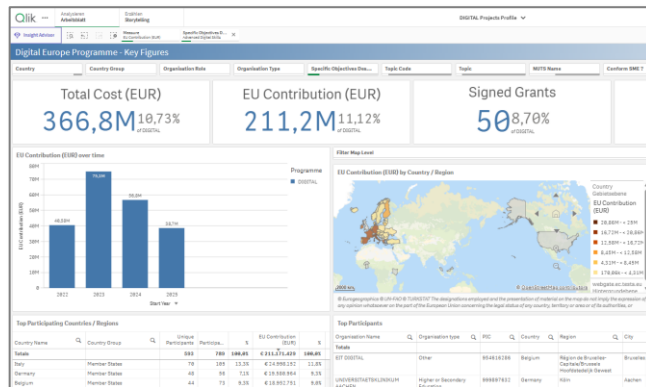
# PILLAR 1: KNOWLEDGE, EDUCATION, AND TRAINING



<https://zenodo.org/records/15056357>



<https://topictree.eu/>



[Digital Europe Dashboard](#)



[Blueprint for a European degree](#)

LEADS

Deliverables published  
by the LEADS project

„Gap Analysis“  
(July 2024)

„Consolidated  
recommendations for the  
development of Advanced  
Digital skills in Europe“  
(Jan 2025)

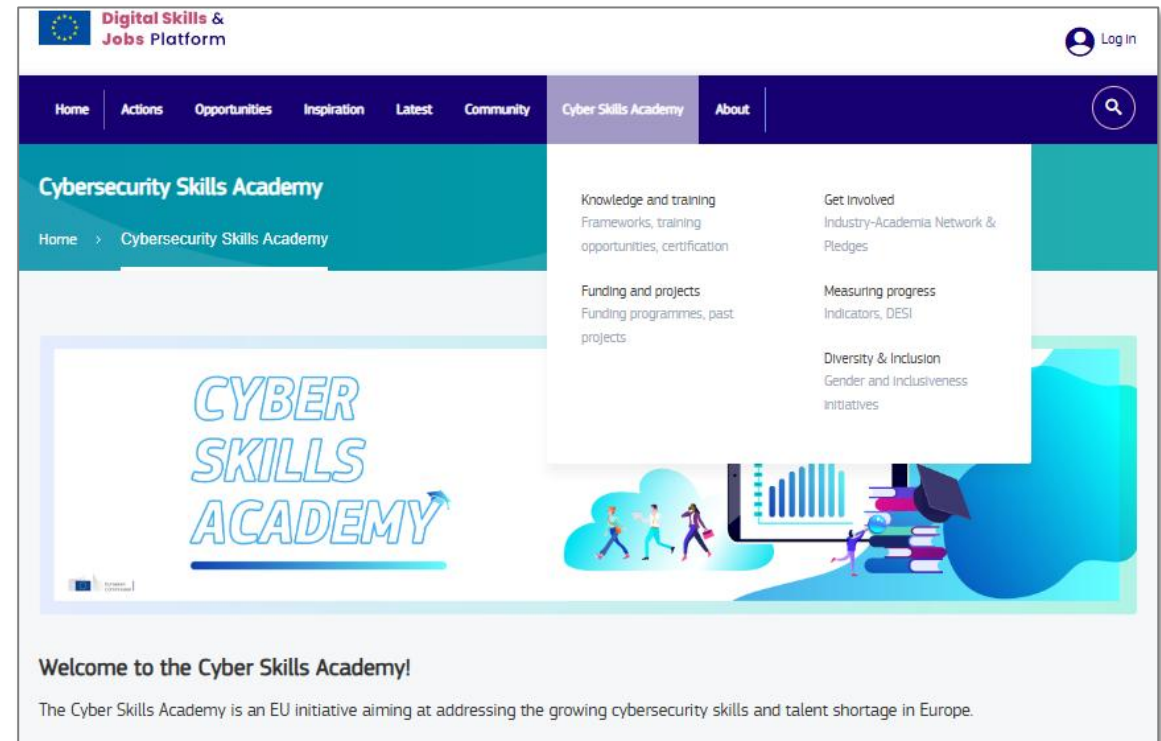
„Final ADS demand and  
forecast report“  
(June 2025)

# PILLAR 2: BUILDING THE ECOSYSTEM

Topics under 9th Digital Europe Call  
(Q4/25 – Q1/26)

**ELEVATE**  
European League of Advanced  
Digital Skills Academies

European Advanced Digital Skills  
Competitions



<https://digital-skills-jobs.europa.eu/en/cybersecurity-skills-academy>

# PILLAR 3: MEASURING PROGRESS

## State of the Digital Decade 2025 report

The State of the Digital Decade 2025 report evaluates the progress of the EU's digital transformation towards achieving the Digital Decade Policy Programme 2030 goals.

The 2025 report identifies improvement and challenges in achieving digital targets in EU countries. Despite advancements in areas like basic 5G coverage and the deployment of edge nodes, the EU is still far from reaching its goals for deploying foundational technologies such as AI, semi-conductors, stand-alone 5G or digital skills and protecting vulnerable groups such as children.

While EU countries have increased their efforts and their national Digital Decade roadmaps include measures worth EUR 288.6 billion, the report stresses the need for further public and private intervention and investment to enhance the EU's technological capacity, ensuring better infrastructure and digital skills development.

You can find the main report and its annex on this page, as well as a summary of the 27 country reports.

### See also:

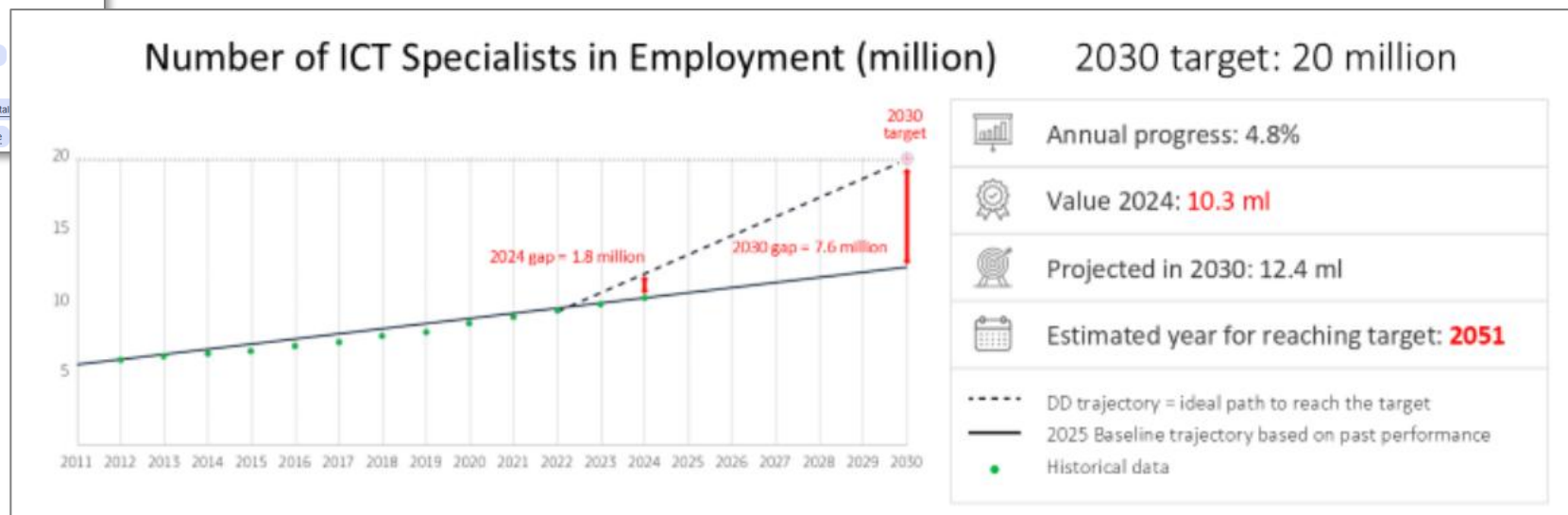
- The full country reports and the country fact pages
- The whole State of the Digital Decade 2025 package.



### Related topics

- Shaping the Digital Single Market
- Creating a digital society
- Research and Innovation
- Digital
- Media
- Digital Cultural heritage

## State of the Digital Decade 2025 report



# SECTORAL SKILLS ACADEMIES – QUANTUM

Sectoral digital skills  
academies: **Quantum  
Skills Digital Academy**

Sectoral digital skills  
academies: Digital Skills  
Academy in GenAI

Sectoral digital skills  
academies: Virtual Worlds  
Skills Academy

## Quantum Flagship: Education & Training

Two large European Projects in education & training funded by DEP:

- DigiQ: Digitally Enhanced Quantum Technology Master
- QTIndu: Quantum Technology Courses for Industry

Synergies with other EU funding programmes and existing education and training initiatives such as the EIT Campus, the EIT Community AI and the Deep Tech Talent Initiative (DTTI)

# SECTORAL SKILLS ACADEMIES – GENAI

Sectoral digital skills  
academies: Quantum  
Skills Digital Academy

Sectoral digital skills  
academies: **Digital Skills  
Academy in GenAI**

Sectoral digital skills  
academies: Virtual Worlds  
Skills Academy

Covers only the establishment of the **first part** of the AI Skills Academy (focused on AI and GenAI).

Artificial Intelligence Skills Alliance (ARISA): [ARISA AI Skills Academy](#)

Target EU's strategic sectors (see AI Innovation Package)

Funded projects under DEP: [AI and Health](#), [AIGov-X](#), [AI4CI](#) ...  
... and CEF: [xAIM](#), [AIGov](#)

# SECTORAL SKILLS ACADEMIES – VIRTUAL WORLDS

Sectoral digital skills  
academies: Quantum  
Skills Digital Academy

Sectoral digital skills  
academies: Digital Skills  
Academy in GenAI

Sectoral digital skills  
academies: **Virtual  
Worlds Skills Academy**

## Interdisciplinarity approach:

- innovative technologies
- creative subjects and
- social sciences and humanities

Competence and qualification framework (CQF)

Synergies with EU-wide ongoing initiatives or schemes (e.g. Erasmus+)



# WHAT'S NEXT – TOPICS UNDER SO4

## CALL 8

15.04.25 – 02.09.25

Sectoral digital skills  
academies: **Quantum  
Skills Digital Academy**

Sectoral digital skills  
academies: **Digital Skills  
Academy in GenAI**

Sectoral digital skills  
academies: **Virtual  
Worlds Skills Academy**

## CALL 9

Q4/25 – Q1/26

Sectoral digital skills  
academies:  
EU AI factories

**ELEVATE**  
European League of  
Advanced Digital Skills  
Academies

European Advanced Digital  
Skills Competitions

## CALL 10

Q2/26 – Q3/26

Excellence in higher  
education and training  
programmes in key digital  
areas and applied  
technologies (2<sup>nd</sup> WS)

Digital Skills and Jobs  
Platform

EdTech accelerator

## CALL 11

Q1/27 – Q2/27

Excellence in higher  
education and training  
programmes in key digital  
areas and applied  
technologies (1<sup>st</sup> WS)

Sectoral digital skills  
academies:  
Semiconductors Skills  
Academy

Supporting the  
coordination of the  
Cybersecurity Skills  
Academy





## QUESTION 2

# THE FUNDING INSTRUMENT LUMP SUM

While the funding instrument lump sum is already well established under Horizon Europe, it is fairly new for Digital Europe. Currently, this instrument is solely used under SO4 – inform yourself about specifics for this instrument

# LUMP SUM IN DIGITAL EUROPE

*What does lump sum mean?*

The costs of the project participants are not covered by financial reporting, but by a lump sum determined in advance.

## *STANDARD*

- *Standard Application Process via Funding and Tenders Portal*
- *Proposal PART A + PART B*
- *Evaluation Criteria*
- *Reporting Periods*
- *Technical Reporting*
- *Pre-financing*

## **SPECIFICS for LUMP SUM projects**

- Detailed Budget Table (Excel file)
- Model Grant Agreement for Lump Sum Grants
- Project design (Work Packages)
- Fixed Lump Sum share
- Payment when work packages are completed
- no financial audits

*EU Decision on Lump sum for DEP*

# LUMP SUM IN DIGITAL EUROPE

The screenshot shows an Excel spreadsheet titled 'Tp1\_Detailed Budget Table (DEP LSII).xslm'. The interface includes a ribbon with tabs like 'Datei', 'Start', 'Einfügen', 'Seitenlayout', 'Formeln', 'Daten', 'Überprüfen', 'Ansicht', and 'Hilfe'. The active sheet is 'BEN list', and the formula bar shows 'Go to Beneficiaries and Affiliated Entities list'.

The spreadsheet content includes a header section for the 'Digital Europe Programme' with a logo and a green box stating: 'Generate the Excel file in macro-free format Ready for the online submission system'. Below this is an 'Instructions' section with a green box: 'Go to Beneficiaries and Affiliated Entities list'.

The main table is 'BENEFICIARY 1 - CALCULATION SHEET'. It has columns for 'COST CATEGORY', 'PM/items', 'Cost per PM/item', and 'BEN TOTAL COSTS'. The table lists various cost categories and their corresponding values.

COST CATEGORY	PM/items	Cost per PM/item	BEN TOTAL COSTS
<b>A.1 Employees (or equivalent)</b>			
SENIOR EXPERTS (or equivalent in the private sector)			0,00
JUNIOR EXPERTS (or equivalent in the private sector)			0,00
TECHNICAL PERSONNEL (or equivalent in the private sector)			0,00
ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL (or equivalent in the private sector)			0,00
OTHERS			0,00
<b>A.2 Natural Persons under direct contract</b>			0,00
<b>A.3 Seconded Persons</b>			0,00
<b>A.4 SME owners and natural person beneficiaries</b>		8 745,40	0,00
<b>B. DIRECT SUBCONTRACTING COSTS</b>			0,00
<b>C. DIRECT PURCHASE COSTS</b>			0,00
<b>C.1 Travel and subsistence</b>			0,00
<b>C.2 Equipment (complete 'Depreciation costs' sheet)</b>			0,00
Equipment			0,00
Infrastructure			0,00
Other assets			0,00
<b>C.3 Other goods, works and services</b>			0,00
Consumables			0,00
Services for meetings, seminars			0,00
Services for dissemination activities (including website)			0,00
Other (shipment, insurance, translation, etc.)			0,00
<b>D. OTHER DIRECT COSTS</b>			0,00
<b>D.1 Financial support to third parties (if applicable in the topic specific conditions)</b>			0,00
<b>D.2 Internally invoiced goods and services</b>			0,00
<b>TOTAL DIRECT COSTS (A+B+C+D)</b>			0,00

## Detailed Budget Tables

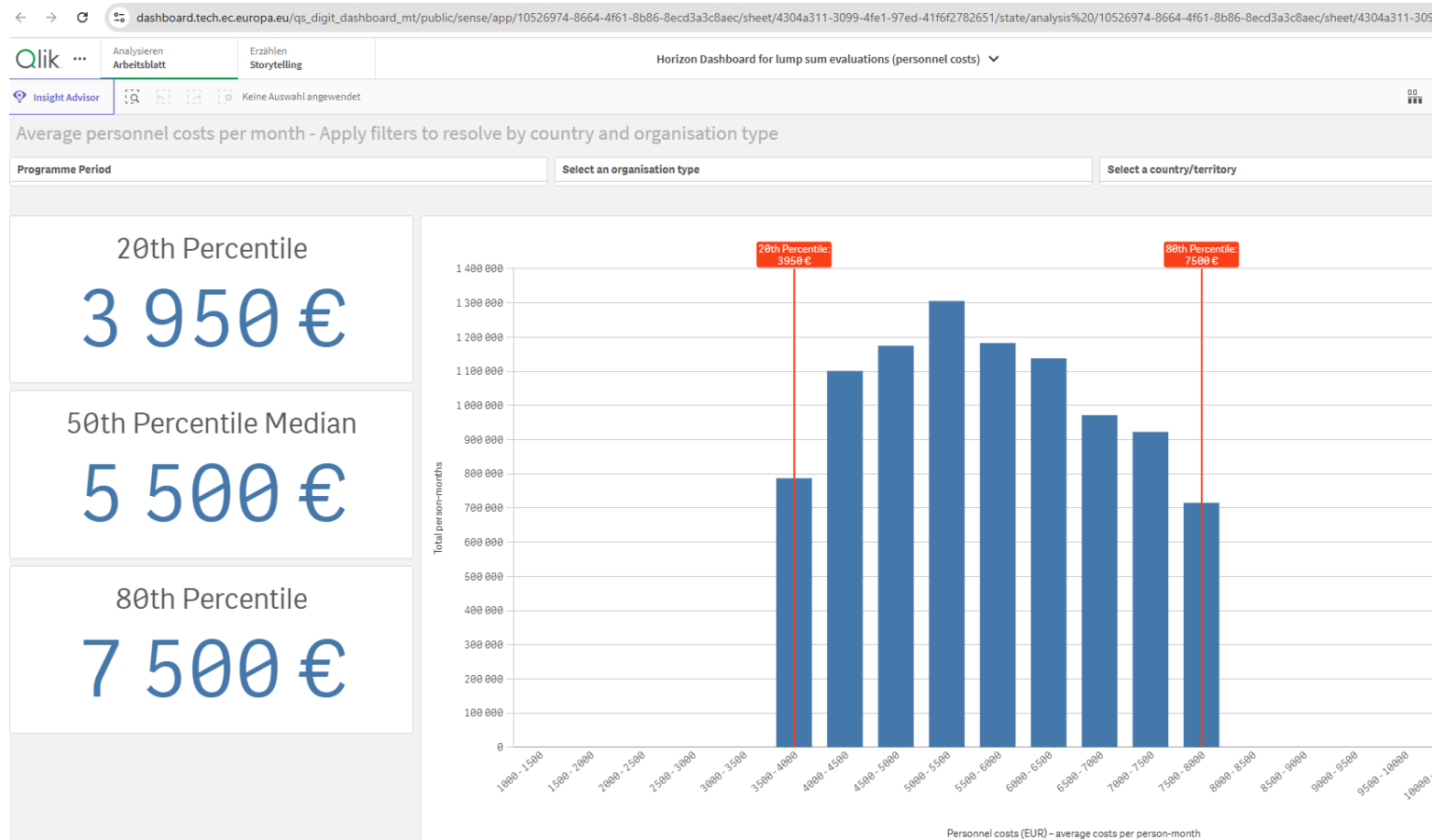
- compulsory !
- Excel file to be downloaded from submission system (like Part B)
- one .xslm file per project to be uploaded as .xlsx/.xls
- includes individual Beneficiary Sheets
- TAB "any comments" to clarify/justify budget estimations (e.g. high travel costs)

EC Training slides

# TIPS - BUDGET TABLES

- **PART A Budget:** Please enter '**EU requested amount**', NOT the 'total project budget' - the entry must be identical to the total amount from the lump sum breakdown.
- Please make sure that the **BENEFICIARY NAME** in Part A is identical to the beneficiary name in the budget table.
- The '**Comment Table**' is used to explain or **justify** exceptional **personnel costs and other direct costs** (e.g. senior experts with higher costs). Experts will evaluate person-months/involved personnel, if no sufficient explanation is given, an adjustment of the personnel costs can be requested.
- Use the **Horizon Dashboard** to compare the estimated monthly salary costs with the average **personnel costs** (from HE). Justification for (high) personnel costs is required if:
  - Senior expert - above the 80th percentile
  - Junior expert and technical staff - above the 50th percentile
  - Administrative and other staff - above the 20th percentile

# TIPS - PERSONNEL COSTS



## Personnel costs

The personnel costs planned in the Lump Sum project must be based on the 'actual personnel costs' from similar programmes.

The [Horizon Dashboard](#) serves as a comparison.

# TIPS – EVALUATION CRITERIA

## 1. Relevance

Plan cooperation and synergies with relevant national and European initiatives (e.g. EDIHs, ERASMUS+, DSJP, Data Spaces, etc.)

Planned activities must address the needs of the respective sector & be clearly described (credibly present needs analysis/ good knowledge of labour market, link to activities))

Clarify the added value of planned programmes compared to existing ones (state of the art)

Consider gender balance, ethical issues and inclusion of vulnerable groups (project & curricula)

Pilot/implement certification method (ELEVATE)

Describe alignment with central European and national political strategies in the subject area (e.g. Digital Education Action Plan 21-27)

## 2. Implementation

The objectives set must be realistic and clearly visible in the operational activities

Build on existing projects/results

Planning of pm must be traceable with planned activities in the respective reporting period

Plan resources and size of work packages appropriately and provide sufficient justification

Adequate allocation of pm per partner

Pay attention to different/complementary competences of the partners

Resources are often set high (PM, costs, role) and must be sufficiently justified if really necessary (HEU dashboard)

## 3. Impact

Set realistic but ambitious goals (e.g. number of students)

Emphasize the contribution to increasing Europe's competitiveness and the benefits for society (e.g. creation of new ICT specialists))

Sufficiently present KPIs for measuring performance

Utilize synergies with other EU-funded initiatives (e.g. promotion)

Plan collaboration with Digital Skills and Jobs Platform (landing page, dissemination)

Credibly demonstrate the sustainability of the programmes beyond the initial funding

# EC LUMP SUM ASSESSMENT – SOME FINDINGS

## Lump sum cuts following evaluation

- No cuts for 90% of proposals
- Proposals selected for funding were subject to reduction of 0,2% on average

## Lump sum cuts in final payments

- 96% of projects fully paid
  - Majority of projects partially paid were paid as declared
- Participants and experts are very satisfied with lump sum funding as it reduces administration and shifts the focus to content



<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/support/news/30194>



# LUMP SUM IN DIGITAL EUROPE

LUMP SUM instrument only used for call topics under Advanced Digital Skills (SO4)

## Reference documents

- [Model Grant Agreement](#) for Lump Sum Grants
- Detailed [Budget Tables for Lump Sum](#)

## Further information

- Call 8 Advanced Digital Skills Infoday: [Recording](#) (1:51:00)/[slides](#) (page 105-128)
- EC webinar (2022): [Lump Sum Funding in Horizon Europe: How does it work? How to write a proposal?](#)
- Horizon Dashboard for Lump Sum Evaluations ([HOW TO USE](#) it)
- [Guidance](#) on Lump Sum Funding in Horizon Europe (EK)



## QUESTION 3

# WHAT ELSE IS RELEVANT?

You are already well informed about the current call topics BUT there are further useful sources

# DEP4ALL – NCP NETWORK OBJECTIVES & SERVICES

## OBJECTIVES

*Improved and professionalised NCP support services*

NCP capacity building and knowledge development

*Exchange with NCPs from synergy programmes*

DIGITAL community building

*Enhancing the participation of new players in the Digital Europe programme*

Development of high-quality services for DIGITAL and stakeholders

## SERVICES for proposers

- Partnersearch

Online Matchmaking



Digital Europe ONSITE Brokerage event  
2./3. Juli 2025 - "The Future of Digital Investments in the EU" Conference, Aalborg (DK)

- Online Trainings for applicants

- Topic Tree



# DEP4ALL

THE NCP NETWORK FOR THE  
DIGITAL EUROPE PROGRAMME

## Q & A



# DEP4ALL

THE NCP NETWORK FOR THE  
DIGITAL EUROPE PROGRAMME

# Thank you!

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# Thank you for your attention and hope to see you on our next trainings!

## Coming up next!

- **DEP Deep Dive – SO2 – AI** (June 30th, 10.00 – 11.30)
- **DEP Deep Dive – SO3 – Cybersecurity** (July 2025)
- **DEP Deep Dive – SO5 – Deployment and best use of technologies** (July 15th, 1-2:30pm)
- **Black-belt DEP proposal writing and project management** (Date to be decided)

*[Click here](#) to register & to get access to slides and recordings from past trainings.*