



RESOLUTION

PROMOTING THE DIGITAL ECONOMY: CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR EUROPE'S YOUTH

Adopted at the YEPP Presidents Council
in Rome on 1st March 2014

Recognising:

- The information and communications (ICT) sector is of huge economic importance to the European Union, growing on average 7 times faster than other sectors across the European Union member states and internet based business is set to double across the 28 Member States.
- The lack of a cohesive legislative approach to the Digital Economy across the European Union member hinders sector growth.
- The apparent education gap between industries' needs and graduate outcomes across the European Union leading to unfilled vacancies in a time of high youth unemployment.
- Perceptions of Europe losing its competitive advantage are widespread as evidenced by recent remarks by British Prime Minister David Cameron and German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

Acknowledging:

- The concentration of European Union Structural Funding on investments in 30 out of the 254 regions of the European Union means that the majority of European citizens are not enjoying the infrastructural benefits of European Union financial support. Furthermore, digital infrastructure remains only a minor element of much of the targeted structural funding.
- Policies such as "Tigrihuppe" and "EstWin" in Estonia have been highly successful in promoting strong, innovative digital economies within some European member states. Outside of the European Union, governments in Hong Kong, South Korea and Japan have been responsible for developing digital infrastructures delivering unequalled connections speeds and widespread internet access.
- Promotion of the Digital Economy is one of the priorities of the Irish Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

- The success of organisations such as CoderDojo in cultivating the necessary skills to compete in the ICT sector from an early age.

YEPP calls on:

- European Union member states to focus on developing ICT skills through education at an early a stage as possible with a particular emphasis on programming.
- The targeting of European Union Structural Funding towards the development of high quality, high speed internet networks throughout the regions of the European Union targeting 90% connectivity rate by 2020 with average connection speeds of 100Mbits/s. Support should also be given to the development of technology sharing networks in technologies interlinked with the digital economy such as 3D printing.
- The development of a common policy for data protection across the European Union, removing a major bureaucratic barrier to innovators in the European Union.
- The promotion of ICT careers targeting young people across Europe modelled on previous European Commission campaigns such as the “All different – all equal” campaign.
- The exemption of corporate tax for the young Europeans digital entrepreneurs under 25 years old.