

The European Pact for Youth

*Boosting Business-Education Partnerships
for Youth Employability and Inclusion*

Explanatory Note

**On the Terms of Engagement, Proposed Actions,
Steering & Coordination, and Supportive Organisations**

1. Why a 'Pact for Youth'?

Making education an integral part of Europe's economy

In August 2015, 4.6 million young Europeans were unemployed. This represents over 20% of the economically active population under 25 years in the EU-28 - with large variations among Member States. More than 4.4 million Europeans are early leavers from education and training. Taking into account young people that are neither in employment, education or training (NEETs), there are more than 7 million inactive 15-24-year-olds in Europe. Yet, 2 million job vacancies remain unfilled.

Many young people are living in an environment that makes it hard for them to bridge from education to employment or from unemployment into work, and the wealth of their talent and potential is not being utilised. They do not have the opportunities to learn new skills that they could utilise throughout their careers; they are also deprived of full participation in the development of an inclusive society. Meanwhile Europe will be challenged with new heights of demand for skilled labour, as it contends with the complex global economy. At the same time, thousands of young migrants and refugees with varying levels and types of skills are entering Europe and could help to fill some of the skills gaps identified by companies

In order to address this structural issue, we want to join forces to create a fair and equitable culture of partnership between business, education and youth across Europe.

Together, we must invest much more effort, expertise and creativity in meaningful cooperation on education and training, which will equip these young people with the knowledge, skills, qualifications, and the recognition and validation of these, to prepare them for the world of work and active citizenship.

A business challenge

Phenomena such as the '**internet of things**', **demographic change** and the **circular economy** require a readiness in students and businesses for new and modern types of jobs still to be created. The pace of change is only likely to increase, and businesses are at the forefront of the day-to-day challenges it brings. Enterprises want to better **understand and anticipate basic, transversal, job-specific and high-end skills, including digital, entrepreneurial, green and soft skills**, which are necessary to succeed in today's emerging jobs - from genetic technicians to creative engineers to social media managers. While this has, for a long time, been both a governmental and an educational challenge, it is now also a major challenge of the business world.

Joint leadership for youth employability, skills and competitiveness

Former European Council President Herman van Rompuy made a strong appeal for cooperation between the European institutions and business leaders on jobs and competitiveness (Enterprise 2020 Summit, November 2012). In response to his appeal, CSR Europe launched the [European Business Campaign on Skills for Jobs \(2013-2017\)](#) which is aimed to equip 5 million young people across Europe with the skills required to perform and evolve in today's fast-moving business environment. Concretely, this Campaign supports companies with new capabilities to support youth skills, entrepreneurship and apprenticeships.

Forty-two national business network members of CSR Europe collaborated on the [Enterprise 2020 Manifesto \(2015-2020\)](#) adopted at the Milan Expo in June 2015. Through the Manifesto they seek to inspire, support and engage their membership of 10,000 enterprises in business-education partnerships, innovation and transparency. Now, in close collaboration with the European Union leaders, CSR Europe has prepared a **European Pact for Youth** to build on recent European initiatives to support youth on skills and employability - including the Campaign and the Manifesto. **The Pact is open for all stakeholders** in business, education and training, the youth sector and other relevant stakeholders **willing to support its objectives and targets**. This initiative is also open to **candidate countries and EFTA countries**

The Pact embodies strong and joint leadership, at European level, from the business community and policy makers - and with strong support from education, training and youth sectors - towards a common vision: ***to create a fair and equitable culture of partnership between business, education and youth in Europe.***

Through the [Skills for Jobs Campaign](#), CSR Europe is mobilising its network of companies and National Partner Organisations across Europe to shape and scale-up business initiatives to increase job opportunities and enhance lifelong employability. One of its main aims is reinforcing pathways to jobs by bringing businesses closer to the education sector.

The Campaign aims to equip 5 million (mainly young) people across Europe with the skills required to perform and evolve in today's competitive and fast-moving business environment, contributing to making Europe a better place to work.

The Campaign is part of CSR Europe's Enterprise 2020 flagship initiative which aims to inspire and engage 10,000 enterprises on education, innovation and transparency and shape the business contribution to the European Union's Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

2. Three commitments to engage in the Pact

If you would like your enterprise, business association, school, university, public or private employment service, youth organisation, or other type of organisation to contribute to and benefit from the **European Pact for Youth**, there are three levels of engagement which we ask you to commit to during the period between December 2015 and December 2017.

2.1. Each organisation commits to contributing to one or more of the objectives of the Pact and related proposed actions:

- (1) To boost the number and quality of business-education partnerships for youth employability and inclusion [[See proposed actions in Box 1](#)]
- (2) To reduce the skills gaps [[See proposed actions in Box 2](#)]

In line with these objectives and proposed actions, business will engage with the European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility and all supportive organisations, to support the creation of 10,000 quality business-education partnerships, with the shared target to establish together at least 100,000 new good quality apprenticeships, traineeships or entry-level jobs.

- (3) To contribute to the EU and national policies on skills for competitiveness and employability [[See related action proposals in Box 3](#)].

2.2. Each organisation promotes the Pact and shares information on its projects, results and future plans on business-educations partnerships

Your organisation can choose the most appropriate channel(s) of communication (e.g. your website, annual report, magazine, social media, and press) and inform CSR Europe. A project link and description will then be added to the Skills for Jobs Business Impact Map. This is an **interactive map of Europe** that will be made available online, highlighting all the partnership initiatives that will inspire others and provide impact analysis. The [Drop'pin@Eures](#) website can, among others, be used as a platform for matchmaking and publicising offers related to the European Pact for Youth.

Skills for Jobs Business Impact Map

The [Skills for Jobs Business Impact Map](#), an online tool that was created to showcase the good practice examples from CSR Europe's network of 10,000 companies, will be expanded to include all initiatives falling under the Pact for Youth.

The Business Impact Map:

- 1) Showcases existing best practices that can inspire others*
- 2) Demonstrates the geographical impact and scale of activities*
- 3) Provides a platform for connection and collaboration*

2.3. Each organisation will actively participate in the 1st European Enterprise-Education Summit in late 2017.

In late 2017, the EU leaders and CSR Europe, together with all supportive organisations of the Pact, will organise the 1st European Enterprise-Education Summit to report on the outcomes of the European Pact for Youth and provide a state of play on business-education partnerships across Europe. Leaders from the business, education and youth sectors will present proposals for the future and for follow-up on the Pact. The Summit will act as a platform for new partnership and collaboration opportunities between business, education and youth stakeholders, as well as policy makers.

Steering and coordination

Commissioner Marianne Thyssen and Viscount Etienne Davignon, Minister of State and President of CSR Europe will **co-chair a Leaders Group**¹ that will meet at least once a year to provide strategic direction and steer the Pact towards its objectives.

CSR Europe will invite representatives from business, education and youth organisations, and other relevant stakeholders to participate in a **Group of Sherpas** to secure the coordination and sharing of responsibilities for the implementation of the Pact. This group will establish a Roadmap for the period 2016-2017², which will be submitted to the first meeting of the Leaders Group for approval.

The European Commission will provide **technical support** to the Group of Sherpas and assist the participating stakeholders in the implementation of the Pact.

To reinforce the involvement and commitment of the business community, the Group of Sherpas may establish **working groups and other relevant fora** to ensure the active and constructive involvement of companies and organisations participating in the Pact.

¹ *A first meeting of the Leaders' Group will take place in Brussels in February/March 2016. The European Skills Agenda will also be part of the discussions of this first meeting. A second meeting is scheduled for 24 May 2016.*

² *A first meeting of the Sherpa Group will take place in December 2015.*

Box 1: Proposed actions related to Objective 1 of the Pact

The **business-education partnerships** will be achieved through **28 action plans** established in the Member States, coordinated and facilitated by CSR Europe. CSR networks in EFTA and candidate countries are invited to join. **To boost the number and quality of business-education partnerships**, you can, for instance:

- a) Promote the wealth of **good practice on business-education partnerships** to inspire others, including through Flagship schools, and Directors of schools promoting excellent business-education partnerships;
- b) **Measure, benchmark and report** on how such partnerships benefit companies by providing them with the opportunities to increase their innovation potential and competitiveness, while also benefiting young people by improving their education and employment outcomes.

These proposals are indicative and not exhaustive. Through these partnerships, you can for instance choose to:

- **Establish joint business-school initiatives** such as guest lecturers from business in schools, job shadowing for teachers, student visits in the workplace, etc.;
- Support **social partners, sector associations, chambers of commerce and other relevant stakeholders** in their dialogue with local, regional, national and European authorities;
- **Explore new potentials** for making business-education partnerships habitual in youth education and workforce development across Europe;
- Develop partnerships between businesses, schools, learners and teachers to **advocate for the importance of the teachers, raise the attractiveness of the teacher profession and demonstrate the key importance of education** for economic development, employability, social development and social cohesion.

The Quality Internships and Apprenticeships Tool (QIA-A)

The Quality Internships & Apprenticeships Tool (QIA-A) is designed to assist companies in assessing and improving the quality of their internships and apprenticeships. Developed by CSR Europe in partnership with the European Youth Forum and based on the European Quality Charter on Internships and Apprenticeships, it is a practical benchmarking tool for companies to:

- 1) *Identify whether they have the necessary processes in place to assure the quality and effectiveness of their internship/apprenticeship schemes;*
- 2) *Compare their results with other companies, and identify best practices and areas for improvement.*

The Science-Technology-Engineering-Mathematics T Tool (STEM-Pi)

Developed in the framework of CSR Europe's collaborative project Deploy your Talents – Stepping up the STEM Agenda for Europe, the assessment tool supports companies to increase the impact of their science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) business programmes. It provides companies with:

- 1) *A conceptual framework to assess the type and quality of their activities;*
- 2) *A benchmark against best practices and examples for peer-to-peer learning.*

Box 2: Proposed actions related to Objective 2 of the Pact

To reduce the skills gaps, you can develop or expand partnerships that will:

- a) **Anticipate and communicate more clearly** on basic, job-specific, transversal and high-end skills needs - including digital, entrepreneurial, soft and green skills;
- b) **Recognise and validate** prior learning, including non-formal and informal learning; and also skills and qualifications acquired outside the EU, in particular for migrants and refugees;
- c) **Offer more high quality traineeships, apprenticeships, entry level jobs and youth learner mobility opportunities** in close cooperation with educational and training providers, as well as Youth Guarantee providers; all traineeships shall, as a minimum, comply with the EU Quality Framework for Traineeships³;
- d) **Develop actions for inclusiveness in business and in education**, with particular attention to diversity and citizenship **and our common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination**;
- e) **Establish a culture of cooperation and exchange** between business and education and training providers in view of skills anticipation and skills matching.

These proposals are indicative and not exhaustive. Through these partnerships, you can also choose to:

- Increase **interest in humanities, science, technology, engineering, maths and entrepreneurship** by making learning more attractive, creative, participative and meaningful and by raising youth motivation to create individual learning pathways;
- Help students to develop their key competences, including basic skills, **transversal competences** (e.g. learning to learn, initiative-taking, teamwork and cultural awareness) and **soft skills** (e.g. respecting others, resolving conflict, oral, written, non-verbal and listening skills, critical thinking, decision-making, self-control, self-confidence, sense of well-being and pride);
- Help schools and businesses to cooperate, to open up to the wider world (including youth organisations and the youth work sector) and **support teachers and trainers** to improve their pedagogical skills, their knowledge of business and industry, **to regain confidence, to take new roles and to develop leadership skills**;
- Develop **high quality vocational education and training, higher education, apprenticeships and traineeships** aligned with the skills required to support employability and economic growth;
- **Promote inclusiveness and diverse participation** in education across gender, minority ethnic groups, young people with disabilities, young people in care, and with particular attention to early leavers from education and training;
- **Promote educational support for young migrants and refugees**, for example in terms of basic skills (e.g.: language of the host country), re-skilling or up-skilling, validation of prior learning or recognition of qualifications acquired outside the EU to facilitate their integration in the labour market;
- Strengthen the **acquisition, recognition and validation** of skills and qualifications, with a particular focus on non-formal and informal learning (including youth work);

³ http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lisa/141424.pdf

- Give pupils and students **guidance** when selecting a course of study, by informing them about the career opportunities and job prospects linked to a certain choice;
- **Help students become more labour-market ready**, by providing them with strategic information and "real-life" experiences about working life and the labour market within the curriculum. For instance carrying out projects, taking mock job interviews, filling out resume or a professional profile on social media;
- Make use of **supply-chains** to support policies aimed at the inclusion and professional development of young vulnerable groups;
- **Promote intra-EU mobility for young apprentices, trainees, graduates and workers** to expand opportunities for young people and better address labour markets' skills mismatches; and with the support of national and EU-driven measures and schemes.

Box 3: Proposed actions related to Objective 3 of the Pact

To contribute to the EU and national policy on skills for competitiveness and employability:

- a) Commit business leaders, to work with schools, vocational education and training providers, higher education institutions, public and private employment services, social partners, chambers of commerce, industry and crafts, and other organisations and networks supporting the Pact for Youth to **elaborate joint actions at all levels – European, national, regional and local** – that will lead to more significant and long standing impact for the benefit of young people and companies;
- b) Increase the **active participation of companies in EU programmes and initiatives**, in particular, the Skills Agenda, Youth Guarantee, Quality Framework for Traineeships, European Alliance for Apprenticeships, including more long-term mobility for apprentices in line with recent initiatives from the Jacques Delors Institute and MEP Jean Arthuis, EURES and Your first EURES job, and Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs, and make full use of financing opportunities under Erasmus+, the European Fund for Strategic Investments, the European Social Fund, the EIB "Skills and Jobs" programme, Horizon2020, and the European Regional Development Fund.

These proposals are indicative and not exhaustive. Through these partnerships, you can also choose to:

- **Liaise with the Youth Guarantee provider** in your locality/region in view of discussing your possible engagement in the process of delivery of the Youth Guarantee. Youth Guarantee providers are central actors that can facilitate school-to-work transitions for unemployed youth;
- **Devise targeted options for engaging unemployed youth** beyond the classic provision of a Youth Guarantee offer of a quality job placement, apprenticeship or traineeship. This could include career and job fairs, motivational speeches, offering mock interviews, offering mentoring and shadowing, contributing to the design and development of training courses, etc.;
- **Make use of European tools** and frameworks such as the School Education Gateway to connect schools, businesses and other relevant stakeholders;
- **Make use of Erasmus+ funding**, including for learner and staff mobility, as well as for Strategic Partnerships and Sector Skills Alliances, to link businesses with schools and develop intra-EU mobility;
- Engage your **business leaders and flagship schools** to act as co-architects of the national and EU agendas on skills;
- **Engage in leading business and/or education-driven initiatives:** (e.g. Alliance for YOUTH, European Business Campaign on Skills for Jobs, ESP, European Schoolnet initiatives);
- **Promote this agenda** through regional, national, sectoral or European level events, such as for example a European Week for Vocational Training;
- Strengthen the **cooperation with public and private employment services** to develop strategies for skills identification, orientation, profiling, matching and training;
- Use the Drop'pin@Eures website as a platform for **matchmaking** and publication of **offers** related to the Pact for Youth.
- **Offer more job opportunities for young people** in the EU labour markets through the EURES portal and the Your first EURES job.

SUPPORTERS OF THE PACT	
 <p>CSR Europe & National Partners</p>	<p>Our network of National Partner Organisations (NPOs) works with over 10,000 companies and key stakeholders in 30 countries across Europe to raise awareness, build capacity and mainstream CSR across the value chains of business and in policies. Through our collaborative action, engagement with the EU and membership services, we strive to lead a local, national and European movement towards responsible and sustainable business.</p>
 <p>Comité Européen de Coordination</p>	<p>We are the reference network for the establishment of partnerships that drive the creation and implementation of initiatives promoting vocational training and the integration of young people and adults who lack formal qualifications.</p>
 <p>BRITISH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN BELGIUM</p>	<p>We are a unique platform for bilateral and EU relations and a neutral forum for business leaders to acquire timely policy insights, to network and to connect with their peers and key decision makers.</p>
 <p>The Academy of Business in Society</p>	<p>We are a global network of over 130 companies and academic institutions whose expertise, commitment and resources are leveraged to invest in a more sustainable future for business in society.</p>
 <p>NOTRE EUROPE JACQUES DELORS INSTITUTE</p>	<p>Our think tank was founded by Jacques Delors in 1996. Our aim is to produce analyses and proposals targeting European decision-makers and a wider audience, and contribute to the debate on the European Union.</p>
 <p>DIGITALEUROPE</p>	<p>We foster, on behalf of our members, a business, policy and regulatory environment for Europe to nurture and support digital technology industries.</p>
 <p>ERT European Round Table of Industrialists</p>	<p>We bring together around 50 Chief Executives and Chairmen of major multinational companies of European parentage covering a wide range of industrial and technological sectors. Our member companies have a combined turnover exceeding € 1,300 billion, sustaining around 6.8 million jobs in Europe.</p>
 <p>OBESSU</p>	<p>Our platform for cooperation between European vocational education school student unions represents the school students as stakeholders of their educational systems, provides their unions with assistance and support, and enables the exchange of best practice and contributes to their development.</p>
 <p>VET4EU</p>	<p>We are a group formed by 6 European Associations (EfVET, EUproVET, EVBB, EVTA, EUCEN and EURASHE) that have decided to join forces in order to influence the European policies' content on Vocational Education and Training issues. We have the joint objective of assuring quality in VET and Higher Education.</p>

	<p>Our network of 31 European Ministries of Education aims to bring innovation in teaching and learning to Ministries of Education, schools, teachers, researchers, and industry partners. We help schools make effective use of educational technologies, equipping both teachers and pupils with the skills to achieve in the knowledge society.</p>
	<p>We are a business-driven movement that promotes a better transition from education and training to employment for our youth across Europe. The “Alliance for YOUth” wants to be a change agent in sharing knowledge and experiences to solve local barriers to youth employment.</p>
	<p>We represent 99 youth organisations, bringing together tens of millions of young people from all over Europe, organised in order to represent their common interests.</p>
	<p>We bring the public and private sectors together to provide young people in primary and secondary schools and early university with experiences that promote the skills, understanding and perspective that they will need to succeed in a global economy.</p>
	<p>We are an umbrella association that gathers 39 European organisations active in the field of education and training. These networks represent more than 50 000 educational institutions or associations covering all sectors of formal, non-formal and informal learning.</p>
	<p>Our mission is to expand educational opportunity around the world by increasing and accelerating the impact of national organisations that are cultivating the leadership necessary for change.</p>
	<p>We act as the eyes, ears and voice of the business community at EU level. We represent over 20 million businesses in Europe through 45 members and a European network of 1700 regional and local chambers – more than 93% of these businesses being small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs).</p>