

Digital Champions

Helping every European become digital



The Finnish Digital Champion is the founder of Rails Girls, which aims to overcome the gender divide in technology. It gives women of all ages a first experience in coding with which to build their own ideas. The project has quickly spread around the world and now events with enthusiastic girls and women are organised in Europe, as well as in the US, China and Singapore. The picture is from Rails Girls in the Netherlands 2013.

Unlocking a huge economic and social potential

The Digital Champion initiative was inspired by the United Kingdom, which appointed Martha Lane Fox to increase the nation's digital skills in order to unlock the huge economic and social benefits of the internet.



The UK Digital Champion helping to get all generations online.

A connected continent

The Digital Champions are ambassadors for the Digital Agenda for Europe and are appointed by their Member States to help every European become digital.

The Digital Champions' core vocation is to promote the role and use of information and communication technologies by connecting people, policies, sectors. Their main priority is to make sure that citizens can connect to the internet, an essential part of making Europe a

connected continent.

Many Digital Champions focus on teaching digital skills to children, young people, women and disabled people to make sure that they get the most from the digital world.

The Irish Champion, Lord David Puttnam, is working actively on early adoption of digital technology and online education by promoting digital skills and encouraging teachers to share teaching resources online.



The Belgian Champion has organised more than five CoderDojos, which aims at teaching basic coding skills. This session was for senior managers but coached by children.



Grand Coalitions for digital jobs in Poland, Spain and Lithuania

The Champions have been instrumental in the launch of Grand Coalitions for digital skills and jobs in Poland Spain and Lithuania. In Poland the Coalition involved government, civil society and the private sector. The main tasks are to broaden digital participation through igniting interest, trust and raising awareness of the many benefits of internet literacy, as well as ensuring broadband access.

Free public access to computers, internet and wifi

The Digital Champions of Romania and Lithuania are committed to bringing free public access computers and the internet into public libraries and help their fellow citizens in rural areas to acquire basic ICT skills.

The Romanian Champion is the Director of the Biblionet programme which has equipped 2,300 public libraries with 10,000 computers to facilitate access to information and trained personnel that have allowed public libraries

to better serve their communities.

Other Champions, such as the one from Cyprus, are determined to make sure there are free Wi-Fi zones both in rural and urban areas.

Hands-on social media workshops



The Austrian Champion's initiative *Digitalks* aims at raising awareness in new digital technologies such as wikis, blogs, social networks and mobile platforms.

Digitalks targets adults who have little or no opportunity to gain practical experience and skills in digital technologies in their work.

Entrepreneurs and start-ups in focus



Promoting entrepreneurship and start-ups is important to many Champions.

The Bulgarian Digital Champion has, for example, established a Start-Up Advisory Board with prominent entrepreneurs and in February 2013 she ran a start-up week.

The Cypriot Champion also runs ICT innovation competitions.

Young people advise on the future



The Swedish Digital Champion, who is also the Head of the Digitalisation Committee, believes that children are able to both understand and handle the new digital world.

He has set up a group of young experts, called

the Junior Committee. It consists of boys and girls from the age of 7 to 18.

The Junior Committee gives advice. According to the Champion they are the "eyes into the future and help us understand how we get there".

Digital Champions across the EU

Austria
Meral Akin-Hecke



Cyprus
Stelios Himonas



France
Gilles Babinet



Latvia
Reinis Zitmanis



Belgium
Saskia van Uffelen



Czech Republic
Ondřej Felix



Hungary
István Erényi



Lithuania
Kestutis Juškevičius



Bulgaria
Gergana Passy



Denmark
Lars Frelle-Petersen



Ireland
David Puttnam



Luxembourg
Björn Ottersten



Croatia
Darko Parić



Finland
Linda Liukas



Italy
Francesco Caio



Malta
Godfrey Vella



Netherlands
Tineke Netelenbos



Romania
Paul-Andre Baran



Spain
Alicia Richart



25 Digital Champions in the European Union

Today 25 Member States have Digital Champions. They are all creative, motivated and lead innovative projects addressing issues that are crucial to the future of Europe.

The Digital Champions contribute to ICT education, digital inclusion, access and e-government.

Furthermore, many are active in promoting the digital skills and entrepreneurship of young people.

The Champions could also play a key role in helping the EU tackle youth unemployment by sharing innovative ideas which have worked in their own country.

Poland
Włodzimierz Marciński



Slovakia
Peter Pellegrini



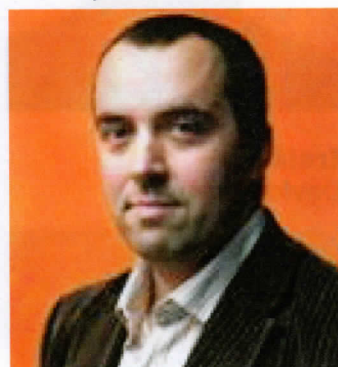
Sweden
Jan Gulliksen



Portugal
António Murta



Slovenia
Aleš Spetič



United Kingdom
Martha Lane Fox



In 2014 the goal is that the School Dance goes global with the help of other Digital Champions

The School Dance links digital skills with dance

The School Dance project was initiated by the Slovakian Digital Champion.

It is a unique project that connects basic principles such as creating a team, recording a dance video and creating an interactive poster.

In total 300 schools and kindergartens have participated and there

have been over 800,000 page views.

The goal with the School Dance project is to create a generation of young people that are creative, skilled in the field of ICT and well prepared for future employment. And at the same time they are having fun!