Press release Blueprint launch

How to build a human-centric data space: Introducing the Blueprint for the European Data Space for Skills & Employment

The DS4Skills project, funded by the European Commission under the Digital Europe Programme and led by DIGITALEUROPE, has launched its **Blueprint for a European Data Space for Skills & Employment** (https://skillsdataspace-blueprint.eu/), a comprehensive guide for creating and managing data spaces that collect, store, and share skills & employment data.

A human-centric Data Space for Skills & Employment is needed to equip the EU population with essential skills for the future.

In today's world of technological advancements, improving education for future generations and upskilling the workforce is crucial.

Europe is currently experiencing an increase in the need for training, career changes and professional development. Figures from a recent McKinsey study on the future of work in Europe show that **more than 94 million people in Europe will need to learn new skills and, by 2030, more than 21 million people in Europe could be looking for new career paths.** Moreover, one of the 4 pillars of the European Data Strategy is to upskill Europeans with digital skills that are lacking, such as data science, AI and Cybersecurity.

To address this, a network of interconnected data (about skills, educational profiles, job offers, training opportunities, etc.) is indispensable to **developing relevant training programs, anticipating hiring needs and skill deficiencies, matching individuals with suitable opportunities, and offering personalized and lifelong learning services.** However, today this information is scattered across a wide range of public and private organisations, which makes it difficult for both employers and individuals to seize opportunities and find relevant resources when needed.

For the future of training and skills, it's crucial to have a human-centric data space, that enables individuals to control their own data while still sharing it with the whole ecosystem of stakeholders. To make this a reality, **individuals and organizations need to be equipped with tools that empower them to manage their data and facilitate its trustworthy sharing and utilization.** A new set of technical components, as well as business and governance models, should be defined to enable such decentralized data sharing and ensure that any organisation can easily connect to the data space while maintaining its sovereignty.

The DS4Skills Blueprint: a roadmap to an inclusive, thriving digital future.

The DS4Skills Blueprint emerges to address the considerations necessary for building a human-centric data space. **As a public resource, it offers a roadmap and strategic plan for the future Skills & Employment Data Space**, emphasizing key aspects such as interoperability, data quality, AI capabilities, and governance.

The blueprint offers organisations practical tools and visual guidelines to adopt the data space and develop specific use cases that benefit both citizens and organizations. **To illustrate each section and its recommendations, a fictional skills data space, called EU-Dune, was created.** This use case allows users to follow "Matilda's Journey" and understand how a skills data space could work in real life to support citizens in their career progression and training options, empowered by data-driven insights and seamless data interconnections. This use case is described under the "Usage Scenarios" chapter.

This first version of the DS4Skills Blueprint, developed by a set of expert partners and in collaboration with a wide community of interested stakeholders and the Data Spaces Support Centre (DSSC), includes:

1. **Usage Scenarios:** Practical applications for the data space.
2. **Business Models:** Frameworks for data space use cases.
3. **Governance Models:** Structures ensuring effective data management.
4. **Technical Architecture:** Building blocks for seamless integration.
5. **User Experience Recommendations:** Enhancing usability for diverse needs.

The DS4Skills project coordinator, Jose Martinez-Usero, adds: "We are very proud to present the Blueprint for a European Data Space for Skills & Employment, which is the result of a collaborative effort between our consortium partners and various skills data initiatives across Europe. We believe that this Blueprint will pave the way for a more efficient and effective use of skills data in the European data landscape, and foster innovation, collaboration, and value creation for individuals, organisations, and society."

More than a blueprint, it's a call to action and a roadmap to an inclusive, thriving digital future.

You can access the DS4Skills Blueprint here: https://skillsdataspace-blueprint.eu/

Project information:

The DS4Skills project involves 14 partners from the industry, education, and data sectors in the European Union, and aims to develop a human-centric and trusted ecosystem to share and access skills data. The project is a preparatory action that provides input for future projects on the deployment of the future European Data Spaces for Skills & Employment.

The DS4Skills project, funded by the Digital Europe Programme, was finalised in 2023. As part of their main outcomes, it produced a Blueprint, with guidelines to build an efficient and effective skills data space, and an Online Inventory, which collects and analyses different platforms, services, apps, and emerging data space initiatives related to skills and education. As a continuation of this initiative in 2024, an initial pilot application on the market will be deployed by EDGE-Skills, a 20M€ project coordinated by Prometheus-x , which launched on 23 January 2024.

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