



Digital Skills Pact

A national commitment to empower Portugal

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XXV GOVERNO CONSTITUCIONAL

Executive Summary

The **Digital Skills Pact**, as Action #17 of the **2026–2027 Action Plan of the Portugal Digital Strategy**, is a priority for the XXV Constitutional Government to accelerate the digital empowerment of citizens and organisations. Mastering digital skills is considered a critical factor for social mobility, civic participation, economic productivity and state modernisation, fully aligned with the objectives of the European Union's Digital Decade.

Recent indicators shows continued progress but highlights the need to accelerate this trend. According to **DESI 2025**, only **56% of the population** aged 16 to 74 have at least basic digital skills, placing Portugal in **16th position in the EU**, below the target of **80% by 2030**. Moreover, only 30% have digital skills above the basic level, compared to the target of **40% by 2030**.

In the business sector, **74.3% of SMEs** had a basic level of digital intensity in 2024 with a target of **90% by 2030**. ICT specialists account for **5.2% of total employment**, above the European average but below the national (**7%**) and European (**10%**) targets. The share of women in ICT (**23%**) is higher than the EU average, but far from the **30%** target by 2030.

Digital empowerment has a direct economic impact: studies by ACEPI and GoingNext, in partnership with Porto Business School, estimate that digitalisation has already contributed to **13% of the national GDP**.

In this context, the Pact stands as a central instrument for inclusion, the enhancement of human capital and the reinforcement of competitiveness. It results from a participatory process including consultation with more than **15 companies and associations** and a public consultation with **52 contributions**.

Its execution is based on an integrated strategy that incorporates training in **basic, intermediate, advanced, and emerging skills**, through public-private partnerships. This approach ensures tailored learning pathways aligned with different levels of digital maturity, with a particular focus on workers and more vulnerable groups.

Through this Pact, the XXV Constitutional Government reaffirms its commitment to **empower Portugal to lead the digital transformation in Europe**, promoting a more productive, inclusive and resilient economy.

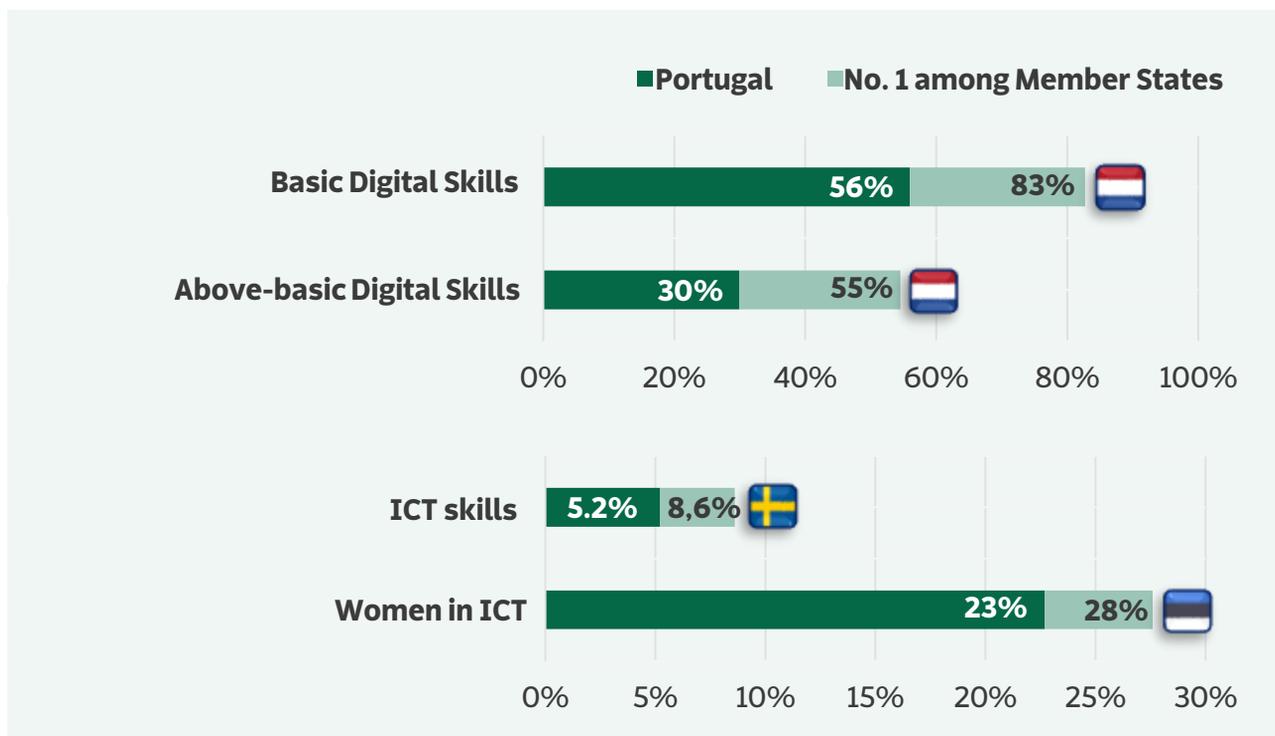
The Need

The promotion of digital skills constitutes a strategic pillar for inclusion and social cohesion, fostering the development of human capital and equal opportunities throughout the national territory.

Recent studies and indicators show progress in Portugal's digital upskilling, however it **also highlights the need to significantly accelerate this trajectory to meet the ambitious targets of the European Union's Digital Decade by 2030** and to ensure a greater convergence with the most digitally advanced European countries. The data from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) on the evolution of digital skills in Portugal also corroborate these conclusions.

Portugal must therefore make a decisive investment in the development of digital skills, to position itself among the most digitally advanced countries and **as a critical factor for competitiveness, productivity and innovation capacity**.

Digital Skills | Current situation in Portugal



Strategy Definition

Digital literacy has become a new condition for citizenship and a foundation of national competitiveness. Therefore, the Pact stands as a **fundamental capacity-building strategy** for all citizens, aimed at **positioning Portugal among Europe's digitally most advanced leaders**.

The Pact was developed on the basis of four fundamental guiding principles:

Equal access

For all citizens, regardless of their geographic location, age group or socio-economic condition, ensuring that digital skills development is a driver of social inclusion and territorial cohesion

Lifelong learning

Recognising the need for continuous reskilling and upskilling given the rapid technological change and the digital transformation of economies and societies

Digital ecosystem

Ensuring coordination between the various actors in the digital ecosystem, to ensure that training content is aligned with labor market needs

Sustainability and innovation

Promoting the monitoring of objectives and ensuring that investment contributes to the country's economic growth and building a digitally prepared society

The Pact adopts the following definitions of skills:

- **Basic skills**, focused on the safe use of digital tools and services, the research for and critical evaluation of information, online communication, privacy protection and initial use of AI tools, including in digital public services.
- **Intermediate and advanced skills**, developed through reskilling and upskilling programmes in areas with higher employability, including data management and analysis, digital content creation, collaboration on interactive platforms, advanced digital security and process automation using AI.
- **Emerging technological skills**, ensuring training in domains such as AI, data science, cybersecurity, cloud computing, and next-generation technologies.

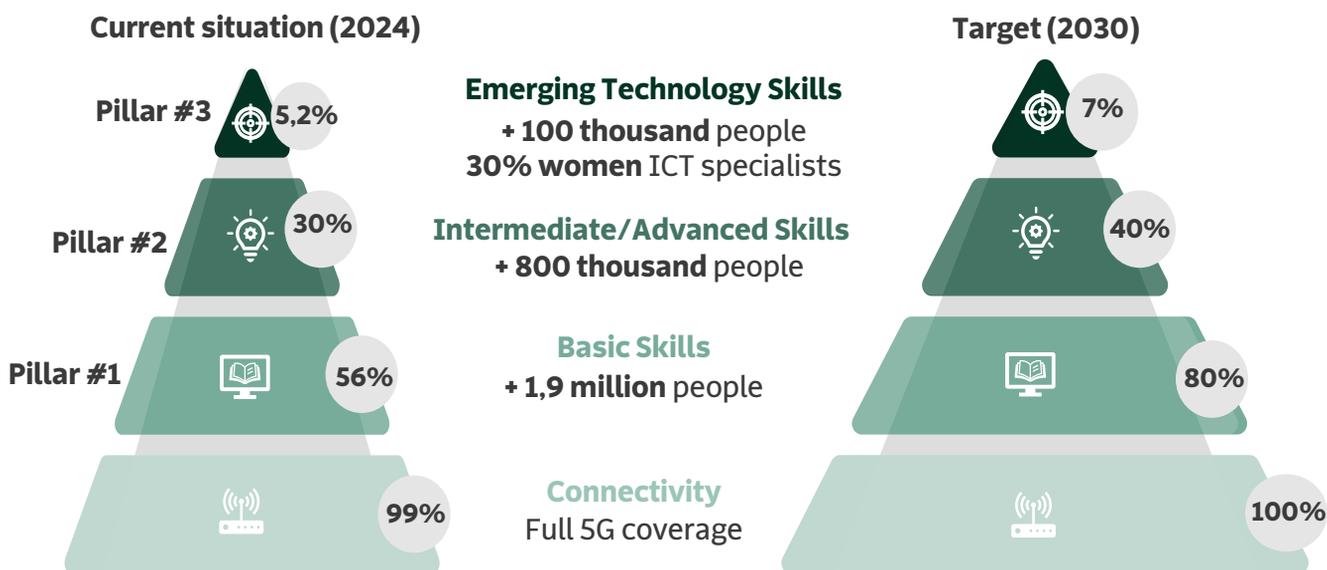
Targets and Strategic Objectives

The strategic objectives are aligned with the targets set under the Digital Decade 2030 framework.

An additional strategic area has been incorporated relating to intermediate and advanced digital literacy for people in active employment, recognised as crucial for business progress. This indicator covers digital skills above the basic level up to the most advanced capabilities, bridging the gap between basic digital skills and specialised competences in emerging technological domains.

These targets encompass **key areas for a more capable and inclusive society**: (i) basic digital literacy across society; (ii) intermediate to advanced digital literacy for the working-age population; (iii) the number of specialists working in emerging technological fields; and (iv) the number of women specialists in these emerging sectors.

Targets and objectives to be achieved by 2030



2026-2030 Action Plan

Action Areas

1. Basic Digital Skills

Promote social inclusion and cohesion, **ensuring that no citizen, region or social group is excluded** from the technological transition and the full participation in digital citizenship

2. Intermediate to Advanced Digital Skills

Foster cooperation between the private sector, academia and public administration, to develop intermediate to advanced digital skills initiatives that benefit the working-age population and businesses

3. Emerging Technological Skills

Promote the **training of the national workforce in emerging technological skills**, namely, artificial intelligence, data science, cybersecurity, among others

4. Transversal

Define and implement **the necessary instruments to operationalise the Pact** across the different phases of the training cycle

The Pact is operationalised through **17 initiatives**, enabled through several **partnerships** with higher education institutions, companies, cooperations, associations, and public entities, ensuring **relevance, employability and content quality**.

1. Basic Digital Skills

Objective | **Ensure that no citizen, region or social group is excluded from the technological and digital transition process**

	Start Date	End Date
1.1 Programs to capacitate citizens with basic digital skills (via Community Digital Workers)	1S 2026	2S 2030
<p>Promotion of structured digital skills training actions aimed at providing the population with the basic digital competencies needed for a full, inclusive, and safe participation in the digital society. The success of this initiative will rely on a broad network of partners, and its implementation will involve the creation of Community Digital Agents, technical and/or volunteers' staff, serving as multipliers of digital skills.</p> <p>This line of action includes the delivery of the IEFP Digital Skills Certificate Program. It also encompasses targeted actions for people with disabilities, in line with the National Strategy for the Inclusion of People with Disabilities.</p> <p>These actions should target at least 75% of participants in: i) ages [45 - 70]; ii) rural areas and iii) individuals with less than secondary schooling.</p>		
1.2 Mobile units with instructors and digital equipment	2S 2026	2S 2030
<p>Creation of mobile units equipped with instructors and digital equipment to strengthen and bring training activities closer to people across the national territory.</p>		
1.3 Multimedia campaigns to promote programmes	2S 2026	2S 2028
<p>Multimedia campaigns to promote the Pact programs and initiatives (TV, radio, social networks, materials for health centers, schools, citizens shop, among others).</p>		
1.4 Mobile devices for the most socioeconomically vulnerable population	1S 2026	2S 2029
<p>Assessment of access to mobile devices for people in situations of greater socio-economic vulnerability, ensuring their participation in training initiatives for the development of basic digital skills.</p>		

2. Intermediate to Advanced Digital Skills

Objective | **Promote lifelong learning among the active population**

	Start Date	End Date
2.1 Mapping of priority areas for digital training	1S 2026	2S 2027
Identification of priority areas for digital training, through consultations with associations and companies, to ensure greater employability.		
2.2 Intermediate to Advanced Digital training for the working-age population	2S 2026	2S 2030
Implementation of intermediate and advanced-level digital skills programmes, directed at working-age citizens, including the unemployed, to develop digital skills aligned with labor market demands and employability, particularly through reskilling and upskilling.		
These initiatives will include skills assessments, certified training plans, and potential access to financial supports for course participation. Implementation will be promoted through partnerships between public and private entities.		
2.3 Digital skills training for Public Administration workers	1S 2026	2S 2030
Digital skills training initiatives for Public Administration workers, leveraging on existing programmes to foster skills for public service modernisation and the use of digital tools. This will include an accelerated training plan for artificial intelligence in the public administration.		
2.4 Digital training programs for SME workers	1S 2026	2S 2030
Implementation of training programs tailored to diverse profiles, with a focus on digital leadership, artificial intelligence, data analysis, cybersecurity and business digital tools. Incentives for SMEs may also be considered, to promote workforce training.		

3. Emerging Technological Skills

Objective | **Promote the upskilling of the national workforce in emerging technological skills**

Start Date

End Date

Awareness-raising initiatives in schools

2S 2026

2S 2030

3.1

Launching of awareness-raising initiatives targeted at students in the last years of basic education and secondary school, to promote knowledge about the implications of Artificial Intelligence (through the revision of the Essential Learning Outcomes) and to foster an inclusive, informed perception of technological fields, deconstructing stereotypes associated with these choices. The initiatives will seek to stimulate interest in technology-related careers.

Emerging technology skills programmes for the working-age active population

2S 2026

2S 2030

3.2

Implementation of emerging technology skills programmes, directed at the active population, particularly in areas such as automation, artificial and generative intelligence, cybersecurity, data science, digital twins, cloud computing, robotics and cognitive systems, among others. Execution will be promoted through partnerships between public and private entities.

These initiatives may include short-duration specialisation courses, building on participants' existing academic background and professional experience.

Non-academic PhD programmes

2S 2026

2S 2029

3.3

Access to doctorate programs in non-academic environment for emerging technological fields, aimed at strengthening national scientific and innovation capacity.

Implementation of the National "Girls in STEM" Program

1S 2026

2S 2030

3.4

Operationalisation of the National "Girls in STEM" Programme, with particular emphasis on measures led by the Agency for Technological Reform of the State (ARTE).

4. Transversal Pillar

Objective | **Implementing the necessary instruments to operationalise the Pact across all stages of the training cycle**

	Start Date	End Date
4.1 Digital maturity assessment tool and training plan	1S 2026	2S 2026
Develop a digital maturity assessment tool to identify capacity-building needs and design personalised training plans, based on skills development objectives. This initiative will include the mapping and regular updating of digital professions, including those in the IEFP framework, and the association of these profiles to relevant training content and competences for an efficient career progression.		
4.2 Reorganisation of public training domains and centralisation in a single aggregator	1S 2026	2S 2027
This initiative aims to reorganise the domains of public training supply and centralise digital training opportunities (public and private) in a single aggregator, ensuring that all digital training offers are available in one place for easier access.		
4.3 Microcredentials development	2S 2026	2S 2030
Develop and implement a national microcredentials system to recognise, validate, and certify acquired competences. This measure aims to promote flexibility and modularity in training, support professional requalification pathways and strengthen the connection between the labor market and training supply. This initiative is aligned with European-level initiatives.		
4.4 Digital training wallet	1S 2027	2S 2028
Develop a digital portfolio wallet of citizens' training pathways, integrated into the gov.pt application, to securely and interoperably consolidate records of qualifications, microcredentials, and lifelong learning achievements.		
4.5 Partnership Network	1S 2026	2S 2030
Establish a partnership network, namely with companies, sectoral and social associations, non-profit organisations and academia, to support the implementation of the Pact in its lines of action.		



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