

EU study underlines the importance of MOOCs in building web talent

Brussels, 22 May 2014 – European entrepreneurs, education providers and students embrace the opportunities that Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) hold for building job-relevant web skills. According to a [study](#) published by the European Commission, MOOCs hold high potential for delivering quality web skills to students and life-long learners.

The European Commission strives to promote web entrepreneurship and the creation of new jobs in the digital sector. The study, carried out in the context of the Commission's "[MOOCs for Web Talent](#)" initiative, aimed at mapping the demand for and the supply of online courses that teach web skills. A desk research was conducted among 200 European providers of web skill-related courses and close to 3,000 participants took part in a survey addressed to students, entrepreneurs, and developers.

The key learnings from this study are:

- Among the survey sample, **MOOCs are a well-known phenomenon**: only 1 in 4 of the respondents did not know what a MOOC was.
- Industry professionals regard MOOCs as the **most suitable learning opportunity for web skills** (34% of the respondents thought so), outranking all other forms of vocational training (21%), on-site higher education (15%), and on-the-job training (24%).
- There is a **great supply of web skill-related MOOCs in Europe** (77 MOOCs currently available). Yet, online learners report having difficulties finding the courses that suit their needs.
- The entrepreneurs who took part in the survey are looking for employees with domain specific skills such as audio/video authoring, game design and animations, as well as iOS, Android and HTML5 skills, and ask providers to offer more **hands-on and skill-oriented online courses**.
- The majority of online learners who participated in the study (80%) already have a degree and are not searching for additional ones. However, they would like to display their newly acquired skills through **accredited certificates or badges** that would be recognized by their current or future employers.
- Universities and other education providers that also took part in the survey regard MOOCs as "**techno-pedagogic laboratories**" and make use of the large learning data samples that MOOCs bring about to improve their methods of online teaching.
- Providers are struggling with the amount of **resources** required to develop and deliver MOOCs. Also they expressed concerns about high cost, quality assurance and institutional culture.

Neelie Kroes, EU Commissioner for the Digital Agenda, comments: "Europe needs to catch up on building web talent that suits market needs. Our study shows that due to their reach and their wide acceptance, MOOCs are likely to become the first choice in delivering web skills to European learners. I call on universities and other education providers to incorporate MOOCs into their offerings."

The European Commission aims at developing a **roadmap of actions to encourage the use of MOOCs** for fostering web talent in Europe by creating an **active community** of universities and business schools in Europe interested in developing MOOCs in this field.

The next steps the Commission is going to take involve:

- The “MOOCs for Web Talent” network’s [webinar](#) on 3 July that address the key issues in and around MOOCs for web skills. Participants are **encouraged to suggest topics** of the webinar.
- Two **MOOC-related workshops** will go deeper into the subject: “[Untangling MOOC designs](#)” will take place on 27 May at the London Knowledge Lab. “[Can MOOCs save Europe’s unemployed youth?](#)” will take place on 17 September during the [EC-TEL 2014 conference](#).
- A wrap-up of the Commission’s actions resulting from the study as well as plans for the future will be presented at the [Slush 2014](#) conference.

Read the full [study](#) on European MOOCs related to web talent.

Find out more and join the [MOOCs for Web talent network](#).

About Startup Europe

[Startup Europe](#) is the European Commission's action plan aimed at strengthening the business environment for web entrepreneurs in Europe, contributing to innovation, growth and jobs.

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