



The Digital Collective (DigiCo), with support from Google.org, announced its official launch in their event: Powering digital inclusion through a European collective

On November 21st, The Digital Collective (DigiCo) hosted its hybrid event **Powering digital inclusion through a European collective** to announce its official launch. **With grant support from Google.org, DigiCo and its partners aim to close the growing digital skills gap and the social and economical inclusion of vulnerable individuals across Europe.** As the 2023 European Year of Skills approaches, DigiCo reunited its community of stakeholders to discuss digital inclusion by diving into the specific case of migrants' and refugees' digital upskilling in a European context.

The event was hosted and transmitted from the Google offices in Brussels. During its opening speech, Gori Yahaya, Co-founder and Co-director at DigiCo, presented the topics around the two following panels and emphasised the importance of digital skills as a leveller for opportunities: **"Digital transition requires nothing less than a skills revolution, and those who need it most need to be at the forefront."** The Key Note speeches continued with Karen Massin, Head of Government Affairs and Public Policy for EU Institutions at Google. Karen Massin highlighted the importance of working together for a common goal, in the context of the support of Google.org to DigiCo. "We think that we all have a part to play. That is why it is so important to have this shared objective. If we work together, we become stronger," Karen concluded.

The first panel of the event, **Digital upskilling for the integration of migrants: 3 European case studies**, brought together three leaders working at the forefront of migrants' integration through digital inclusion in Germany, Belgium, and Switzerland. Sophie Jonke, Director at REDI School of Digital Integration (Germany), Didier Van Der, Director at Le Monde des Possibles (Belgium), and Dana Pavlychko, CEO at United for Ukraine (Switzerland), shared their comprehensive methods of integrating migrants and refugees by combining



digital upskilling with the provision of language learning and career workshops. Along the panel, **they discussed the tools and opportunities that digital skilling provides to access education and employment, along with the improvements that still need to be addressed.** The panel was moderated by Léa Ichikawa, Program Manager at DigiCo.

The second panel, **Pathways for a comprehensive labour integration of migrants: The role of digital**, was a multi stakeholder dialogue between four skills and labour market experts on the current strategies and mechanisms in the EU and neighbouring countries to integrate migrants in the job market. Tiina Polo, Senior Expert at DG EMPLOY (European Commission), Maria do Carmo Gomes, Senior Human Capital Development Expert at European Training Foundation (Italy), Karine Sonigo, Skills Digitalisation Specialist at ILO (Switzerland), and Amadou Sako, Regional Advisor and Project Officer at International Organisation of Employers (Switzerland), shared their perspectives on this complex issue. **During the panel, the speakers emphasised the need for a multisectoral approach to reach sustainable employment pathways.** Gori Yahaya, Co-founder and Co-director at DigiCo, moderated this section.

After the second panel of the evening, Lisa Varga, Co-founder and Co-director at DigiCo, presented the organisation's 2023 agenda. Through a collective digital approach, DigiCo aims to ensure people have access to skills that can help them thrive in the digital world. In order to achieve this, DigiCo's next year agenda will focus on partnering up with more organisations, reaching more people with their digital assessment platform "Skillify" -based on the European Digital Competence Framework for Citizens-, and expanding their Community of Practice. **"In 2023, we will sustain our targeted approach to digital inclusion. We will support groups who remain invisible in European frameworks,"** Lisa Varga concluded.

During the closing remarks Léa Ichikawa, Program Manager at DigiCo, stressed the importance of digital skills and a clear pathway for migrants integration: "We believe that we need to first look at marginalised groups, in order to create an



equitable society. We are advocating for more investment and attention to marginalised groups, and a focus on basic digital skills and digital literacy.”

You can watch the whole event on our [website](#).

About DigiCo

The Digital Collective (DigiCo) is a Brussels-based non-profit organisation whose mission is to close the digital skills gap and improve access to employment for vulnerable individuals across Europe. They do so by supporting impactful training programs and fostering a common approach to assessing digital skills. They cooperate with private, public, and non-profit actors in a multi-stakeholder approach.

About Google.org

Google.org, Google's philanthropy, supports nonprofits that address humanitarian issues and apply scalable, data-driven innovation to solving the world's biggest challenges. They accelerate their progress by connecting them with a unique blend of support that includes funding, products, and technical expertise from Google volunteers. They engage with these believers-turned-doers who significantly impact the communities they represent. They want a world that works for everyone.