TechTown

action plan for digital growth
2022

cēsis

Contents

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TechTown Cēsis Local Action Group

Introduction

"The digital economy is everywhere; it has transformed and will continue to transform the economy, in terms of productivity and connectivity, especially for SMEs."

(Expert Group on Taxation of the Digital Economy, European Commission, 2013)

On national level, the digital economy is seen as an increasingly important part of business development in Latvia, with a vivid start-up scene and exciting international happenings in the nation's capital Riga and "Start-ups law" developed in 2017. The sector is cited in a number of important national documents including 'Development of Smart Specialization Strategy', and the 'Sustainable Long-Term Strategy for Latvia to 2030', however there is no digital strategy on the national level.

Recognising the rapidly changing nature of the Economy, Cēsis municipality has included Digital industries among the most important economic sectors in its **"Strategy for long term development 2015-2030".**

In September 2015 Cēsis municipality joined **TechTown** – an URBACT III Action Planning network of 11 small and medium sized cities from the EU on the mission to understand the present and future of digital economy and strive to grow digital jobs. In order to grasp the topic, TechTown looked more closely into several topics: **Better understanding the digital economy**; **Growing Digital Jobs** (through start-ups, through transformation of traditional industry, smart city agenda, and providing spaces and places for connections); **Finding, growing, retaining and returning talent**; and **Governance.**

Cēsis context

Cēsis is a town about 85 km East of Riga in the Centre of Latvia, well connected to the major cities. Municipal territory consists of Cēsis city (urbanised area) and Vaive parish (countryside).


After a period of economic recession in 2009-2012 and many citizens leaving the country in the hopes of a better economic situation, the population of Cēsis is currently stable at 18 246. In the recent years the city has been experiencing a significant increase of interest from potential new residents, mainly – young families, who seek a quieter, yet lively and culturally varied place to live and nurture their offspring.

Territory **172,82 km^2**

Cēsis
19,3 km^2

Vaive parish
153,5 km^2
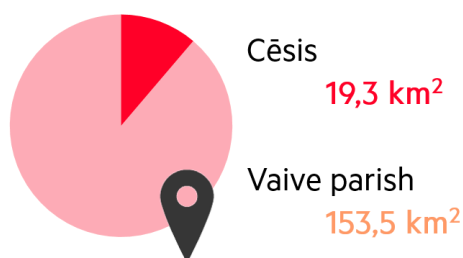
Inhabitants **18 246**

Cēsis
91%

Vaive parish
9%
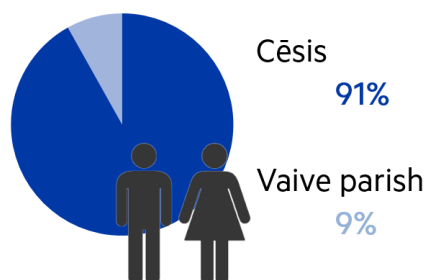
Since 2009, Cēsis has invested heavily in cultural infrastructure, seeking ways to develop cultural and educational tourism as one of the most important local business sectors. Cēsis was also bidding for the European Capital of Culture 2014 alongside Riga, proving its ambition for revival.

Business

The general situation in the job market is stable, and Cēsis is proud of a low unemployment rate of 4,4% in December 2017 (compared to the national rate of 6,8% and regional rate of 7,5%)[1], however it does not always play well for attracting new business, as employers are hesitant to open an enterprise with the risk of insufficient pool of potential employees. Many residents of Cēsis are frequently travelling for work to larger cities like Valmiera and Riga.

The city has never been an industrial place, with the most important business sectors being services (esp. connected to tourism industry – accommodation, food etc.), food production, construction and real estate. Still, the public sector accounts for approximately 40% of employed people.
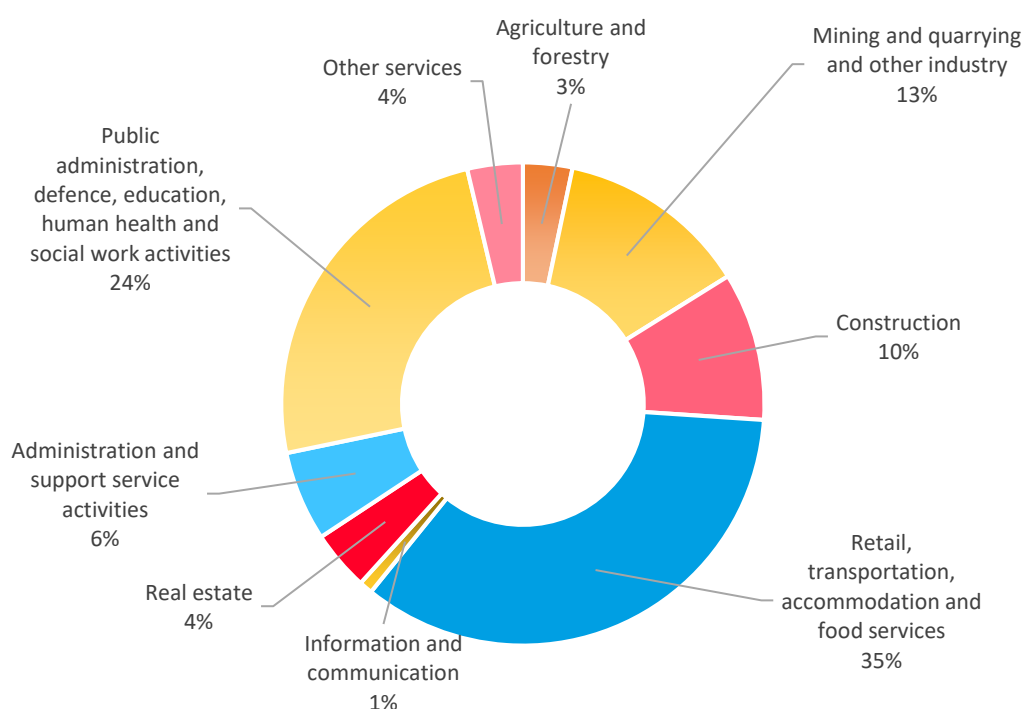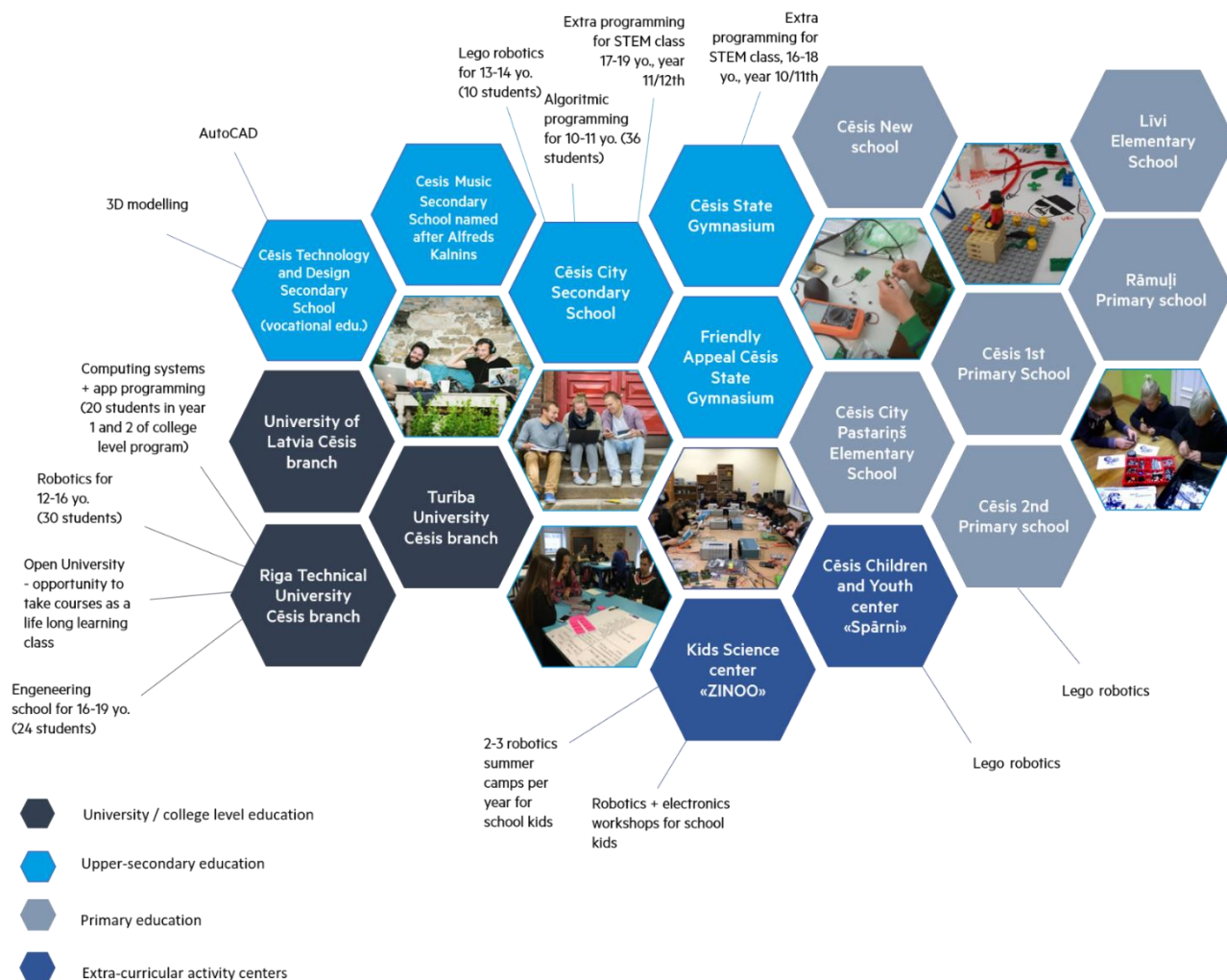

Education

An increasing number of young people leave Cēsis after graduating from secondary school and choose universities in Riga, Valmiera and abroad. The city is keen to develop strategies which will help to both retain talent and to attract it.

There are 1 private school and 6 local public schools in the municipality, and Cēsis is the only city outside the capital of Latvia that has 2 state level gymnasiums (highest secondary school rank) and two vocational education facilities - Cēsis Design and Technology school (before January 1st 2018- Cēsis Vocational school) and Cesis Music Secondary School named after Alfreds Kalnins. There are 3 university branches in Cēsis, each

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[1] According to Latvian Emplyment agency

delivering different higher education programs. Different kinds of educational opportunities are provided by kid's science centre "ZINOO" and Children and Youth centre "Spārni".

The picture above depicts various activities that educational facilities implement in order to foster digital skills learning among students: 2 out of 6 educational facilities who provide primary education offer digital education extracurricular activities (lego robotics and algorithmic programming with tablets) for students aged 10-14; 2 out of 3 secondary education facilities offer extra coding classes for high school students. Riga Technical University Cēsis branch has created additional activities for students aged 12-19, and lego robotics classes are also available in Cēsis Children and Youth centre. School representatives also mentioned that significantly more male students are involved in tech classes and extra-curricular activities, which also highlights the gender prejudice in technical activities.

In order to get a better understanding of the hindering factors behind creating more opportunities for digital skills training, the Local Group asked schools to participate in a poll. As the main factors schools mentioned these:

- Lack of qualified educators that could teach additional digital skills classes – 7/11 schools;
- Insufficient budget for establishing more extracurricular activities – 6/11 schools;
- Insufficient technology (tablets, learning kits, WiFi speed in schools, portable computers etc.) resources – 6/11 schools.

Some schools also mentioned factors such as lack of interest among the children and lack of understanding of the importance of digital skills among parents as significant reasons that do not motivate creation of new opportunities. Interestingly, none of the schools addressed the possibility to attract companies or start-ups that operate in the EdTech (e.g., LearnIt) industry as a possible service provider for teaching digital skills classes.

Although there some learning and training opportunities available for interested students of different ages, these opportunities are not varied and does not address a wide range of digital skills (e.g., graphic design, web platforms, app coding, audio and visual skills, etc.). There are also no regular skills training options for adult and senior citizens.
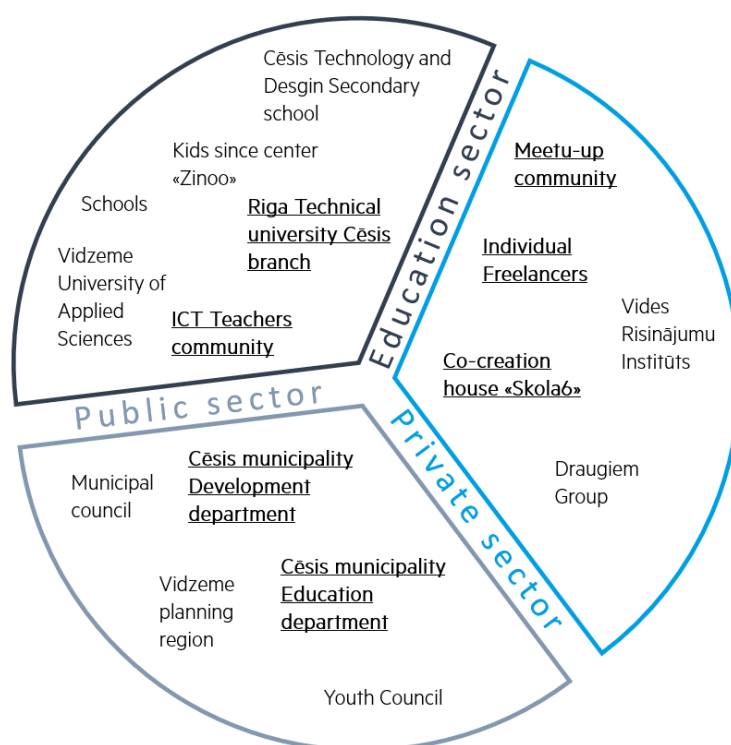
Digital ecosystem

We understand **digital businesses** as companies or individuals who have built their business around **specific skills** in the field of information technologies, software or hardware development, computer systems and equipment, programming and communication technologies OR if any of **these components are integral for the existence of the company**.

Digital businesses are not restricted by any other economic sector and, in fact, are rapidly transforming traditional industries. Digital businesses can be categorized in several groups depending on the field of influence, for example, education technologies (EdTech), financial technologies (FinTech), e-commerce, data management, advertising, marketing, health technologies (HealthTech), media, telecommunications, game development, software development etc.

There are currently **just 30 companies** in Cēsis working in the digital sector, most of which consist of 10 or less employees. These companies mainly represent e-commerce, marketing, software development, media and telecommunications.

The majority of traditional companies do not yet seem to recognise the need for digital services or the potential of spill over from the digital and creative sectors for their businesses.

The local **digital ecosystem** is comprised of 3 main types of representatives: education sector, public sector and private sector. For a town of slightly more that eighteen thousand inhabitants, the local ecosystem has a strong core consisting of the main activists and influencers, and a few more active organisations and stakeholders worth consulting.

Digital Ecosystem of Cēsis municipality

In the process of developing the "Action Plan for digital growth 2022" different local stakeholders were involved in discussions, meetings, local events and in TechTown international visits. However, there are several local actors, who created the core of the Local action group and who are also willing to invest time and resources into putting the plan to action, and these are:

- administration of Riga Technical University local branch in Cēsis – a recently established meeting and gathering place for local ICT events;
- Creative and digital industries centre «Skola6» which works as a connection point for SMEs and freelancers;
- Education department of the municipality, which is responsible for implementing education system in the municipal education facilities;
- and several local digital freelancers and enthusiasts passionate about the local community.

Creative and digital industries centre «Skola6» was established in September 2015 and opened to the public in April 2016. It was created to encourage entrepreneurial activities in the old town of Cēsis, gather creative and digital minds and work as a connection point. Skola6 is located in a former school building in the town centre and it has now become an established creative start-up centre and a co-working space with a complementary programme of pre-incubation and business support services for local entrepreneurs. There are currently 36 permanent residents in "Skola6", but the centre also acts as a community centre for locals, thus it attracts many more visitors for the open events. In cooperation with educational facilities and Cēsis municipality, new ways of attracting digital businesses are being developed in "Skola6".

Riga Technical University' local branch in Cēsis (RTU Cēsis) was opened in 2011 in order to provide local youth with undergraduate education opportunities. In 2016 RTU CF developed a unique **IT (app programming) college level study programme** to help develop digital skills among young people – for the second year the

program has accepted around 10 new students. One of the aspirations for RTU Cēsis is also to open an **Product design study program** and to eventually switch the aforementioned college program to a new focus – **Internet of Things in 2018.** RTU Cēsis is also actively developing opportunities for adult education, with 3D printing, robotics, coding etc. programmes.

Digital growth

Although the municipality of Cēsis has recognized Digital industries among the most important economic sectors in its **"Strategy for long term development 2015-2030",** the industry is developing a a slow pace. Ultimately, the city is working towards the aim of **growing digital businesses and jobs which would create a significant contribution for the local economy**. In order to gain a full understanding of the local digital growth potential and its challenges, the local group has identified main strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the local digital economy.

Digital Economy SWOT for Cēsis

Strengths	Weaknesses
Skola6 as a creative and digital centre and co-working space fosters connections and provides business support services	Schools are not equipped with the necessary technology to teach and inspire youth to take up tech careers
Skola6 as a pre-incubation and incubation service (provided by Valmiera incubator, run by Latvia Investment Agency)	A limited employment pool that makes it harder for new businesses to open in Cesis; lack of **skilled** people.
Riga Technical University branch – grows as a meeting and event place	Lack of infrastructure (office space) for larger digital companies to open in Cēsis – large investments needed
Established Meet-up community	Lack of understanding of the digital economy and the nature of digital jobs
Small scale of the city makes it easier to create change	Lack of interest in technical activities among children and students, especially girls
Different local stakeholders are equally interested in development of the digital economy and have shown the willingness to work together	Parents and educational staff often do not recognize and advise tech related career development
The city recognizes the importance of digitalisation and has shown initiative to create more digital services	Lack of local digital economy role models
Draugiem Group branch in Cēsis – showing the example of establishing business that can work flexibly from a town	Young people leaving the town for Valmiera, Riga and beyond - brain drain
Available fast speed internet and public Wifi access points	Lack of digital skills leading to difficulties attracting and retaining talent
Opportunities	**Threats**

The image of the city on the national scale – Cēsis attracts a lot of attention. This is an opportunity to attract more digital businesses and freelancers, and – events. Companies (such as Accenture, Microsoft) are willing to invest in education and skills training in the regions Operational programs (ERDF) investment in educational facilities – providing schools with broadband, technology and infrastructure redevelopment Latvia is at the doorstep of changing the school system towards a more skills-based learning	Lack of young individuals willing to enrol in IT university programs in Cēsis, which would continue to create a lack of talent Larger international companies based in Riga could drain local talent

The SWOT analyses show that the main weaknesses Cēsis municipality has to overcome are connected with the areas of **Understanding digital** and **Acquiring skills –** both citizens and organisations (educational facilities, business structures etc.) of Cēsis do not fully (1) understand digital economy and the (2) importance of acquiring digital skills (basic and advanced), thus it (3) does not create demand/supply driven training and learning opportunities.

problem statement

Lack of recognition of digital skills as relevant for all generations

At the same time, SWOT analyses also showed that Cēsis is on the right path towards creating a strong digital community and likeminded stakeholders. Some inspiration for future work can also be drawn from the activities implemented within the project period of 2015-2018:

- Creative and digital centre "Skola6" was created as a co-working space, a meeting place and a business support centre for creative and digital entrepreneurs,
- Riga Technical University branch in Cēsis has created a college level program in the IT sector, 20 students are studying in the 1st and 2nd year;
- Nationally important IT enterprise has created an open office in Cēsis and is planning for expansion, thus becoming the first "role model" business locally;
- Good initial cooperation ideas have been developed with Accenture Latvia,
- First two 'Cēsis IT meetup' events have been successfully organized with more than 40 participants in each,
- A community discussion platform (group) of 50 active 'digital' people has been established on Facebook,
- Several new extracurricular education programs have been launched in educational facilities,

- Talent Attraction conference organised by RTU Cēsis was held to discuss the 'brain drain' and opportunities to act on the issue,
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Thus, the main objective of this action plan for digital growth in Cēsis is:

objective

> **Develop understanding of digital economy and skills for all generations by 2022 in order to contribute to the growth of digital economy in Cēsis**

The objective is also supported by the recently published "Digital Education Action Plan"[2] by the European Commission, where the Commission states that digital competences have become key for citizens to participate in today's social, economic and civic life and like previous major technological advances, digitalisation is transforming the nature of work, and poses several new challenges:

90% of future jobs will require digital skills	44% of Europeans lack basic digital skills	Less than 20% of ICT proffesionals are female	More than 48 000 schools lack broadband connection	Digital wellbeing is threatened by misinformation, cyber bullying, data privacy issues

Strategic framework

With taking well considered and informed actions towards addressing the objective stated above, Cēsis Urbact Local Group (ULG) intend to influence the way we think and act on digital economy and digital skills.

In order to facilitate the change, the ULG plans to take up activities in four main priority areas:

1. **Raising awareness of digital economy and digital skills** among the society, especially parents and educational staff;
2. **Building local community of digital change makers** – by creating opportunities for people to meet and discuss issues in different organised events, we facilitate information exchange and new initiatives among the community members;

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[2] European Commission (17.012018) COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS **on the Digital Education Action Plan** https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/digital-education-action-plan.pdf

3. **Improving access to digital learning opportunities for all ages** – building skills for the future entrepreneurs and employees;
4. **Improving digital infrastructure** – by investing in the infrastructure and available technology, we encourage and enrich learning.

Links to Existing Strategies

Priorities set in "Cēsis local action plan for digital growth by 2022" are well aligned with existing strategies in the local, regional and national level:

- Digital industries are recognized among the most important economic sectors in "**Cēsis municipal Strategy for long term development 2015-2030**" as digital industries support creation of new high added value jobs without putting significant pressure on the local environment and facilitate faster economic growth;
- ICT sector is among the few economic specialization sectors Vidzeme region has included in its **"Vidzeme Planning region Sustainable Long term development strategy until 2030".** Areas such as computer programming for manufacturing needs, data analyses, app and game development are seen to have the most potential for development in the region;

At national level, the digital economy is seen as an important part of business development in Latvia. Although there is no national digital strategy, the last 2 years has shown increase in actions taken to support the sector, e.g., a new law on "Startup Support Act" was approved in November 2016 by the Cabinet of Ministers. The sector is also cited in a number of important national documents including "Development of Smart Specialisation Strategy", the 'Guidelines for supporting scientific and technology development and innovation 2014-2020' and the "Sustainable Long Term Strategy for Latvia to 2030".

Actions and indicators

By implementing a set of actions in 4 main priority areas, the city is working towards the aim of raising awareness of digital economy, improving locally available digital skills and, ultimately, growing digital businesses and jobs, which would contribute to the local economy.

Digital growth result indicators

Result	Result indicator	Baseline – year 2018	Target - year 2022
Increasing engagement in digital skills training	Number of people engaged in digital skills training such as robotics, lego-robotics, coding, 3D modelling etc. (measured by number of participants in each activity)	285	2000
Increasing female participation in digital skills training	Percentage of female members among participants of digital skills training	11%	30%
Increasing the understanding and recognition of digital skills among schools	Number of schools recognizing digital skills as a crucial part of education and skills-based learning	3	11
Increasing local entrepreneurial activity in digital economy	Number of digital businesses (according to Lursoft database)	30	40

1. Raising awareness of digital economy and digital skills

The priority aims to raise awareness of our common digital present and future and the skills needed to thrive and survive it. Cēsis municipality has only recently become aware of its relatively tiny, but existing local digital economy and community, and TechTown has helped to start building the bridge between local digital people, the society and the public administration. In this priority we seek for actions that could help build the continuum, especially among parents and youth, engaging them in activities that spark further interest in acquiring digital skills (priority 3).

Result	Output indicator	Baseline – year 2017	Target - year 2022
Increasing interest in digital economy and digital skills (esp. among parents and youth)	Unique persons participating in events in a year (calculated by registration forms)	80	300

Action 1.1.	Annual parents un-conference tour
Description	The idea is to bring together parents of 6 local schools for an afternoon of experiencing education their children receive at school and in their leisure activities. By combining creative, technical and practical workshops with informal lectures, parents will gain a better understanding of the skills needed to thrive in a digital present and future.

	The first attempt to organize school tour was held in April 2018, with various success rates in different schools. Experience showed that parents of pre-schoolers are much more interested in the topic than parents of young people above the age of 15. The activity will involve local digital community and educators in leading workshops, as well as attract relevant speakers. The workshop idea is inspired by activities in Digital Media Centre in Barnsley.		
Target audience	Parents and educators	**Action owner**	Education department of Cēsis municipality
Stakeholders	Schools RTU CF Digital community	**Finance & resources**	Space and technical equipment will be provided by schools or RTU CF Marketing – municipality's communications department Refreshments – 6 events, 50 people each , 4 EUR per person – 1200,00 EUR Salary for lectors and workshop leaders – 6 events, 2 speakers each, 150,00 EUR each – 1800,00 EUR
Date	Event will be held annually in March/April	**Tasks**	Form project team Find speakers Workshop leaders Develop program Marketing materials Communication with parents/attendants Event

Action 1.2.	Idea camps for youth – "Digital Challenges"		
Description	Idea camps for youth are organized in order to create interest and encourage young people to be creators and explore new career ideas. The first event was held in December 2017 and gathered 16 youngsters who formed 4 teams. During 8 hours youngsters went through a couple of short and inspirational digital-themed lectures, creative thinking activities, problem formulation and ideation, mentoring sessions and prototyping. In the end teams present their ideas and compete for prizes.		
Target audience	Youth aged 15-24 (school year 10 to 12, undergraduate students)	**Action owner**	Kids Science centre "ZINOO CĒSIS"
Stakeholders/Partners	Schools RTU CF Skola6 Education department of Cēsis municipality Draugiem Group	**Finance & resources**	Space and technical equipment will be provided by ZINOO Marketing – ZINOO Refreshments – needs financing – 40 participants, 2 meals, 6 EUR per person per meal – 480 EUR

			Prizes – need financing or sponsoring – 500 EUR
Date	Held 2 times per year right after school holidays in Spring and Autumn	**Tasks**	Form project team in ZINOO Meetings with partners to formulate challenges for each event Find mentors Develop program Marketing materials Communication with schools and attendants Event

2. Building local community of digital change makers

During TechTown project implementation, the Local group faced the challenge of grasping the size of the local digital community. By learning from peers of the TechTown project, we decided to jump into the unknown and throw an event in order to find an opportunity to meet the community in person. By February 2018 3 local meet-ups have been organized, bringing together more than 50 unique persons, interested in the digital economy. In the future the local group members will seek opportunities to build a larger and stronger community and empower self-organization of the community. We see that by creating opportunities for people to meet and discuss issues in different organised events, we facilitate information exchange and new initiatives among the community members.

Community building events will also help to put #TechTownCēsis on the map of Latvia, and eventually – the Baltics, as a place where tech events happen. We hope that this might create interest both from local non-tech people to explore new career opportunities, and also draw new public – future citizens - to Cēsis.

Result	Output indicator	Baseline – year 2017	Target - year 2022
Increasing participation levels in local digital events	Unique persons participating in events in a year (calculated by registration forms)	54	200
Increasing number of digital businesses opperating locally	Number of digital businesses accessing support	0	10

Action 2.1.	Cēsis IT meet-up		
Description	An already established local event that attracts community members from all over Vidzeme region. Events are held regularly 4 times per year in RTU CF premises. Events are co-organized by Skola6 as a local business support centre and by RTU CF administration. Eventually, need to find partners to ensure refreshments as a support.		
Target audience	Local community members, youth	**Action owner**	Skola6
Stakeholders	RTU CF Community	**Finance & resources**	Need financing for refreshments and speakers – 4 events, 3 speakers each, 80 participants each - 700 EUR per event = 2800,00 EUR

			Agree upon dates for the year
Dates	23.02.2018.	**Tasks**	Agree upon dates for the year Reserve space Create events on Facebook Communicate event – send out invites by email to community Finding speakers Registration forms

Action 2.2.	Coders get-away Vidzeme		
Description	Inspired by activities in Barnsley borough -the Code Cabin weekend – this event will be organized in Cēsis surroundings twice per year. The aim of the activity is to foster connections among digital community from the whole region, at the same time giving the opportunity for professionals to deepen the knowledge in topics they are interested in, as the other community events might lack the deep technical conversations. The event is also an opportunity to promote flexible working from more liveable places and cities other than the capital.		
Target audience	Digital community from the whole nation	**Action owner**	Skola6
Stakeholders	Local companies RTU CF	**Finance & resources**	The event will be covered entirely by participation fees
Date	August/September 2018	**Tasks**	Create an organizing team Web page and Facebook page Find venue Marketing plan Communication with potential participants

Action 2.3.	VitCon – Vidzeme IT Conference		
Description	The idea is developed together with a Valmiera based enterprise – digital marketing agency "Wunder Latvia", who took the lead this year. Skola6 is an organisational partner. In 2018 the conference will be held in Valmiera, **but in 2019 – in Cēsis,** when Cēsis will take the lead in organizing.		
Target audience	Local companies Digital community from Vidzeme and the whole nation	**Action owner**	"Wunder Latvia" and Valmiera municipality
Stakeholders	Skola6 and RTU CF as partners Vidzeme University of Applied sciences Valmiera municipality	**Finance & resources**	Participation fees Sponsoring from companies Valmiera municipality Valmiera development agency
Date	Autumn 2018	**Tasks**	Create an organizing team Web page and Facebook page/event Find venue Marketing plan

		Communication with potential participants

Action 2.4.	Support program for digital businesses	
Description	Create a marketing strategy and a support mechanism for attracting new digital businesses to Cēsis. Possible tools might include help with office space, start-up grants, grants for business re-location, business support consultations and services, incubation for starting businesses etc.	
Target audience	Possible entrepreneurs Existing businesses outside Cēsis Students	**Action owner**	Cēsis municipality – business support specialist and communications department
Stakeholders	Skola6 RTU CF Vidzeme University of Applied sciences Valmiera business incubator	**Finance & resources**	Municipal budget for grants, consultation fees etc. – up to 3000,00 EUR per business, aiming at 10 new applicants per year – 30 000,00 EUR
Date	2020	**Tasks**	Consult businesses to understand specific support needs Create and approve regulation for receiving support Form a jury Find mentors Open the call Market the call

Improving access to digital learning opportunities for all ages

This priority is aimed at growing digital talent locally. Access to talent is the single most important factor for businesses to favour one place instead of another. Limited employment pool has already discouraged some enterprises to settle in Cēsis, giving us strong enough reason to take bold steps in this priority area.

We wish to improve access to digital learning opportunities to all citizens, despite their age group. TechTown partners (esp., Loop City in Denmark and Basingstoke in the Great Britain) have shown examples of engaging kids in digital education from a really young age, encouraging kindergarteners to play with programmable toy robots, and encouraging young teens in exploring science and technology (e.g., by TeenTech events) as something exciting and inventive. Although there are some learning and training opportunities available in Cēsis, the variety is very limiting.

Age and gender group brakedown for Cēsis municipality in 2017									
Number of inhabitants below working age		Number of inhabitants in working age						Number of senior inhabitants	
0-14		15-24		25-49		50-64		65+	
Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1377	1298	974	820	2490	2797	1385	1943	1175	2369

We have to understand that the generation 25+ might already face some limitations of digital skills as the technology advances faster and faster - 3D printing, robotics and Virtual Reality was not a norm yet in their childhood as it soon will be for the youngest generation. For the average young adult there still are 30+ years of work life ahead of them, and the need for digital skills in the workplace is inevitable. The same goes for senior citizens – as all services become more and more digital, the need for basic skills (like – accessing bank accounts, paying bills online, looking up information etc.) is a part of normal everyday life.

Result	Output indicator	Baseline – year 2017	Target - year 2022
Increase the number of citizens receiving digital skills training	Unique persons participating in events in a year (data from training organizers, schools etc.)	200	1000

Action 3.1.	Digital skills for 50+		
Description	In between 2010 and 2017 Lattelecom (telecommunications company) organized nationwide digital training for elderly people. The training was closed in 2017 with a result of 31 000 involved citizens. Course material is still available for anyone to use. We see the local library as a place where basic digital training would be available at any time, creating a community of enthusiastic senior learners.		
Target audience	Senior citizens	**Action owner**	Cēsis Public Library
Stakeholders/partners	Education department Life Long learning centre	**Finance & resources**	Necessary technology is available at the Library Need for volunteers to help senior citizens learn
Date	Autumn 2018	**Tasks**	Call for volunteers Training for volunteers Call for training group participants

Action 3.2.	Skills development program for educators
Description	One of the most cited reasons why schools are not introducing new extra-curricular activities for students, is that they lack competent educators in digital skills. We suggest solving the issue with the development of a Skills development program for teachers (all kinds), which would go through a semester or a school year of classes at RTU CF and where they would gain the skills they wish to have or need for their next big idea. RTU CF staff and students would help them learn and develop programs for extra-curricular activities, so that they are capable and knowledgeable enough to start new classes in the next school year.

	The activity would also encourage development of new approaches to teaching and learning, and integration of digital tasks in most school subjects.		
Target audience	All teachers and educators	**Action owner**	Education department + RTU CF
Stakeholders/partners	RTU CF students ZINOO science center Cēsis Technology and Design Secondary school	**Finance & resources**	Budget for classes and materials *Need to create a program to calculate costs*
Date	Spring of 2019	**Tasks**	Questionnaire for educators Develop initial aims of the program Work with educational methodologists and experts to create a program Open up the call for educators

Action 3.3.	Digital toddlers program		
Description	Inspired by Loop City's initiative, Cēsis has contacted an enterprise based in Riga, who develop and provide digital learning for kindergarteners. The first programs will be opened for kids in September, 2018		
Target audience	Kindergartens	**Action owner**	Education Department
Stakeholder	Parents Education department	**Finance & resources**	Organizing resources Participation covered by parents
Date	Test during 2018	**Tasks**	Organize meetings for kindergartens – involve educators and parents for a test activity Negotiate possible implementation

Action 3.4.	Code Week Cēsis		
Description	Europe Code Week is a grassroots initiative which aims to bring coding and digital literacy to everybody in a fun and engaging way. This would also help us create promote understanding of digital skills in schools. We aim at bringing Code Week to all schools in in Cēsis by 2020.		
Target audience	Schools	**Action owner**	Education department
Stakeholders/partners	Digital community RTU CF Students Youth Council	**Finance & resources**	By 2020 part of schools will be better equipped than they are now. Teachers could run activities. Need for small budget to cover any organizational or equipment costs – 1000 per school

Date	Yearly, 2 weeks in October when the EU Code Week is happening	Tasks	Organize meeting with school directors, IT teachers and education department Organize an initiatives group Develop ideas for initial activities Choose pilot schools for 2018

Action 3.5.	Garage Engineers		
Description	Community based event targeted at all citizens above the age 18. The aim of Garage Engineers is to gather people who wish to improve any kind of digital and technical skills in an unformal workshop setup.		
Target audience	All adults, despite their skills and knowledge	Action owner	RTU CF
Stakeholders/partners	Cēsis Technology and Design Secondary school Cēsis Life Long learning center	Finance & resources	RTU CF has space, laboratories and equipment Materials and teachers' salary will be covered by participation fees
Date	Planned to start in the Autumn on 2018	Tasks	Create a poll for potential attendants Develop a program of once per month activities

Action 3.6.	Young coder's club		
Description	Robotics and lego robotics become more and more popular among the younger generation. After they grow out of the age, we need to work at keeping them busy and interested in digital skills and digital economy. Young coders club will gather young people in school years 9 to 12, to help them advance their skills and future digital career.		
Target audience		Action owner	RTU CF
Stakeholders/partners	Draugiem Group Accenture Latvia Vides Risinājumu Institūts	Finance & resources	Salary for teaching hours
Date	2020	Tasks	-

Improving digital infrastructure

This priority provides support and enabling activities for all the above-mentioned activities. People and skills are at the centre of this Action Plan, however smart investment in physical infrastructure and technology can enrich and accelerate learning. The strength of Cēsis municipality is its relatively small size, which magnifies the effect of any infrastructural change.

Result	Output indicator	Baseline – year 2017	Target - year 2022
Increasing the availability of infrastructure for young people	Number of fully modernized and tech-equipped schools (out of 11)	0	5

Increasing availability of internet access for all citizens	Number of public WiFi access points	9	12

Action 4.1.	Modernization of Cēsis municipality education facilities		
Description	As a project result 5 schools (Cēsis State Gymnasium, Friendly Appeal Cēsis State Gymnasium, Cēsis City Secondary School, Cēsis 2nd Primary School and Līvi Elementary School) will be fully modernized and equipped with modern technology to ensure quality learning processes that are not restricted by available equipment. 3 schools will be equipped with modern 3D modelling and printing classes to foster spatial learning and prototyping. 2 schools will be equipped with a set of 15 Augmented reality glasses, in order to foster new kind of visual learning. All 5 schools will be equipped with mobile/portable computer classes and tablets to be used in various subjects.		
Target audience	Schools Students	Action owner	Cēsis municipality
Stakeholders	Education department Development and building department Schools	Finance & resources	ERDF project + Cēsis municipality financing + National funding Together: 7 414 921,84 EUR including ERDF 4 761 429,00 EUR
Date	16.01.2018.-31.12.2021.	Tasks	Project preparation Project team Procurement procedures for building works and technology

Action 4.2.	Improvement of accessible WiFi network		
Description	Cēsis already has a good network of publicly available WiFi connections, however they are only available in the central part of the town. In order to foster public life in the neighbourhoods of the town, we wish to improve WiFi availability also outside the main parks and squares in the centre. The WiFi4EU program will support Wi-Fi equipment in public spaces (public administrations, libraries, parks, town squares, etc.) to improve connectedness and ability to use public digital services.		
Target audience	Local society	Action owner	Cēsis municipality Development and Building deparment
Stakeholders	Cēsis Technology support department	Finance & resources	Prepare a project for WiFi4EU vouchers
Date	03.2018.-03.2019.	Tasks	Prepare project application Implementation of the project

Action 4.3.	SKOLA 6.2		
Description	Skola6 initially was started as a creative and digital centre which provides a co-working space and business support. What started in the end of 2015, is now 1000 sq.m. of creative workshops and a co-working space with barely any free spot. In order to attract more digital businesses, we need a new and larger space that could accommodate freelancers, businesses and start-ups with up to 10-15 staff members, technology lab for prototyping and an equipped events place – SKOLA 6.2. A place like that could be Raiņa iela – a former light industrial quarter, however it needs large investments, or Vienības laukums 2 – a socialist architecture shopping mall with large empty spaces on its 2nd and 3rd floor.		
Target audience	Local businesses	Action owner	Cēsis municipality Development and Building department
Stakeholders	Skola6 Draugiem Group	Finance & resources	EU Structural funds Possible Est-Lat program 1-3 million EUR
Date	2022	Tasks	Search for funds and partners Prepare project application Implementation of the project

Governance

As mentioned above, different local stakeholders were involved in creating the local action plan, and there were several local actors, who created the core of the Local action group and who are also willing to invest time and resources into putting the plan to action in the upcoming years. This same core will form the governance group, which will be established with municipal order after the approval of the local action plan:

- Development department of the municipality – responsible for business support and new development initiatives (incl. projects) – represented by the head of department or appointed project manager;
- administration of Riga Technical University local branch in Cēsis which is responsible higher education initiatives locally – represented by the director of the branch or appointed staff member;
- Creative and digital industries centre «Skola6» which works as a connection point for SMEs and freelancers – represented by the director of "Skola6";
- Education department of the municipality, which is responsible for implementing education system in the municipal education facilities – represented by head of the department or appointed member of staff;

Additionally, it is recommended to involve other local stakeholders for a more even and bottom-up representation:

- Representatives from local educational facilities which show excelling results in either digital education or school led digital initiatives (e.g. Cēsis Technology and Design Secondary school, Cēsis 2nd Primary school);
- Representatives from the local digital economy sector who are willing to invest time and resources in local community (businesses, freelancers etc.).

Local governance group is to appoint a group coordinator among themselves. Responsibilities of the group coordinator include: organizing meetings, setting the agenda, reporting to the group members and the municipality, coordinate tasks for implementing the local actions, creating annual local action plan monitoring reviews.

Capitalization and monitoring

By the end 2019, Cēsis municipality will have finished work on its new Development program 2019 – 2024, that will conclude the implementation period of Cēsis Development program 2013-2019. Development program is a mid-term local planning document subordinate to the long-term planning document **Cēsis municipal Strategy for long term development 2015-2030**" and includes certain actions and responsibilities in 5 priorities, among which – support actions for economic development.

The situation analyses, actions and result indicators of "Cēsis action plan for digital growth 2022" will be integrated in the Development program 2019 – 2024, which is approved by the Council of deputies and binding in the annual budget planning period, thus securing resourcing for local actions.

In order to monitor the results and long-term effects of the Action plan, a new system will be set up by the governing group, asking to gather data of each event and activity implemented. The data will be gathered in a common online document, available for all governing group members.

Recommendations for the contents of the annual monitoring report (included in Development programs' annual monitoring report):

1. Local situation (changes in digital ecosystem, business support system, educational ecosystem)
2. Review of the problem statement and objective
3. Progress of local priorities, actions and indicators
4. Review of governance
5. Recommendations for necessary adaptations

The monitoring report is to be developed by the end of June each year.