



Brussels/Thessaloniki, 13 October 2008

## **Good progress on the implementation of the EU e-skills strategy**

**The European e-Skills 2008 Conference delivered some very welcome messages of encouragement in today's challenging times. Experts from European governments, industry, trades unions and associations attending the event reported that Europe is increasingly developing its human capital to be globally competitive and is making significant progress towards the important goal of implementing a long-term e-skills strategy. The picture that emerged from their discussions was of Europe as a whole developing a potentially world-leading ability to share and learn from skill-building projects at national and European levels. While global conditions remain highly turbulent, the medium and long-term benefits for Europe of the e-skills strategy are already clear: the emerging cooperation will help European workers, enterprises of all sizes, cities, regions and Member States to be significantly better able to compete and to prosper.**

The conference acknowledged the key steps taken at European level to encourage rapid dissemination of good practices. Good progress was presented by employers who can now specify their staffing requirements more easily because of the availability of a European e-Competence Framework. Job-seekers and their advisers are being helped by the launch of a European e-Skills and Careers portal and the success of multi-stakeholder partnerships seems set to extend to organisations of all sizes, including small and medium-sized enterprises.

Future work, revealed at the conference, includes the development in 2009 of European ICT (information and communication technologies) curriculum guidelines, the promotion of relevant fiscal and financial incentives and support for the widespread use of effective e-learning. Stakeholders also welcomed the intention to organise a major European awareness campaign highlighting the merits of ICT education and of working in the ICT area, to encourage more students to consider careers in that field.

However, much remains to be done to fully implement a long-term e-skills strategy for Europe, for example to help industry and the public sector to capitalise on the breakthroughs emerging from research and innovation projects funded at national and European levels. Nonetheless, the knowledge-base is growing, encouraging the view that Europe's strategy in this area is particularly well-grounded and can be the basis for sustainable economic success thus helping to offset the anxiety of some delegates about the effects of the crisis in the financial markets and of trends in global sourcing on the demand for e-skills.

In conclusion, the conference was an important step towards implementation of a long-term e-skills strategy that is resilient to changes and turbulence in the world economy and meets the needs of all of us in Europe.

## Background

The European Commission adopted in September 2007 a Communication on e-skills for the 21st century that included a long-term e-skills agenda and key action lines at the European level. The Communication was welcomed by Member States at a meeting of the Competitiveness Council in November, and stakeholders established the e-Skills Industry Leadership Board to contribute to implementing the strategy.

## More information:

European e-Skills 2008 Conference

[www.e-skills-conference.org](http://www.e-skills-conference.org)

E-Skills on EUROPA

[http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/ict/policy/ict-skills/ict-skills\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/ict/policy/ict-skills/ict-skills_en.htm)

CEDEFOP

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu>

E-Skills Industry Leadership Board

[www.e-skills-ilb.org](http://www.e-skills-ilb.org)

