



Mr Janez Janša  
Prime Minister of Slovenia  
President of the Council of the European Union  
175, Rue de la Loi  
B-1048 Brussels, Belgium

Brussels, 4 March 2008

**Re: ILB “Policy Declaration 2008”**

Dear Mr President,

We congratulate the European Presidency and the Competitiveness Council for the conclusions of 23 November 2007 on the EC Communication on “e-Skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Fostering Competitiveness, Growth and Jobs”. These important conclusions are welcomed by the members of the e-skills Industry Leadership Board (ILB).

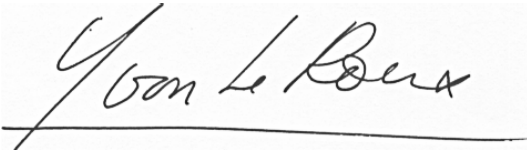
To support implementation and needed actions towards sustainability, it is our pleasure to submit the attached ILB Policy Declaration 2008 to the European Council of Ministers for their Spring meeting of 13-14 March 2008 in Brussels. Recommendations in this Declaration include:

- *Support the development of digital literacy training and employability schemes through the utilisation of Member State and European funding to amplify the impact of existing private investments;*
- *Provide a multitude of easily accessible fiscal and financial incentives, supporting notably individuals and small and medium sized enterprises to invest in e-skills using a strategic and long-term outlook;*
- *Encourage EU Member States to remove barriers for funding education, awareness raising and training to offer ICT curricula and validations in direct connection to market's demand; and*
- *Support flagship European initiatives like the European e-Competence Framework and the e-Skills Career Portal under preparation and contribute to their development in close cooperation with institutional players, industry e-skills providers, NGOs, citizens and other stakeholders concerned to bridge formal and non-formal ICT education and training.*


To foster competitiveness, productivity and mobility of ICT practitioners across Europe, the e-Skills ILB will take an important co-leading role, together with other stakeholders, in the development and pilot implementation of the "European e-Skills Career Portal". Initial outcomes of this project will be featured at the EU e-Skills Forum, 9-10 October 2008 in Thessaloniki. The e-Skills Career Portal aims to foster attractive career paths and help individuals acquire new e-skills to maintain employability and competitiveness.

We would be pleased to work with the EU Presidency and other European Institutions concerned to implement these recommendations and actions in support of the European Union's long-term e-skills agenda.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Yvon Le Roux". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Yvon Le Roux  
e-Skills ILB Co-Chairman  
Cisco European Markets  
Vice President, Public Sector

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jan Muehlfeit". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned to the right of the signature of Yvon Le Roux.

Jan Muehlfeit  
e-Skills ILB Co-Chairman  
Chairman Microsoft Europe

Attachment