



SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSIONS
WORKSHOP ON EUROPEAN E-SKILLS AND CAREER PORTAL
5 June 2008, Brussels

On-going development and state of play

- See the PowerPoint presentation of Alexa Joyce, EUN, in annex

Pilot phase and presentation at the European e-Skills 2008 Conference

- The portal will be presented for the first time publicly at the European e-Skills 2008 Conference in Thessaloniki (9-10 October 2008) and, in the meanwhile, all possible contributions are welcome.
- Stakeholders took the lead for the development of the portal¹. The European Commission is supportive to their efforts, but it cannot take any form of responsibility.
- It's necessary to be open for the participation of new interested organisations, and, therefore, it is important to write clear "membership" principles.
- The portal is initially addressed to two main targets of audience: on one side there are the youngest (late secondary and early university students and young professionals in ICT). On the other side there are the ICT practitioners, and for the European Commission a strong priority is SMEs. The portal has to attract the target audience, and must address successfully different kinds of expectations.
- Young people could be invited in the Thessaloniki event (suggestions should be made to the Commission), so that they can provide their views on the portal.
- At the moment the language of the portal is only in English: at this stage the priority is to focus on basic technical and content issues to establish the pilot. In 2009 and onwards, stakeholders would scale up and promote the portal and finance translations.
- The moderation of the material published on the portal will be made "*ex-post*" (registered users would upload content and then it will be considered by moderators).
- Content of the portal: different kinds of content, expression of a more open approach. In any case, all the content should have European and international dimension and be related to the issue of e-skills, while not being pure marketing material.
- Graphic of the portal: simple and light, based on a white background for ease of reading.
- Branding of the portal: two options were considered: to create a new brand, showing "family" feel with other e-skills initiatives, or to use an existing brand. The first option is preferred, since it has been recognized that using an existing brand would identify the portal to a particular restricted group of stakeholders.

¹ As presented to Gunter Verheugen, Vice-President of the European Commission, at the event organised by the E-Skills Industry Leadership Board on 4 March 2008 in Brussels,

- Visibility will be offered to partners' brands via an animated banner on homepage, plus additional details in the 'about' section.
- The portal will be structured in few main areas ("Careers", "Infobank", which will contain all kind of different e-skills content, and a "Community" platform, aimed at stimulate debate between stakeholders on ICT careers - containing also a networking area) plus one more functional area ("About" section).
- An online self assessment tool for ICT practitioners with a focus on SMEs should be available (relevant existing tools could be indexed and a basis tool may be feasible. This must be further discussed with the e-skills and career portal committee);
- Young professionals or students could upload their CV, and companies that are searching for trainees could easily get in contact with them (only registered persons would have access to the CV uploaded on the website).
- The portal will include a "search facility" (Google search tool) and users will have the opportunity to tag resources. It is important to make the website attractive.
- E-training is taken into consideration for a second stage.
- Articles published in the portal: they could be articles of one page related to e-Skills. Larger reports and documents of five to ten pages related to e-skills will be indexed in the Infobank.
- The e-Skills and Career Portal committee is developing an editorial policy in order to guarantee the credibility of the portal content
- IPR: all the new content produced will be "creative commons" content. Any content coming from outside sources will retain its existing licensing.
- Open source portal server, and new code produced will be licensed under BSD. The aim is to create a portal in which people can collaborate together.
- It has been chosen to give to the portal an open structure, so that new tools can be easily added in the subsequent stages. The discussion on the tools that could be included in the portal is still open. At this stage it is possible to have references only to pre-existing materials. There are different ways in which the portal can be integrated, but details have still to be agreed.
- Sustainability of the portal: regular financing is necessary. Each stakeholder should help supporting it. Several European associations will also be contacted.
- *European e-Competence Framework*: it should be available on the European e-skill portal there is a guarantee of involving more stakeholders.
- *European Qualifications Framework*: it is necessary to work in cooperation with it and it needs to be integrated.
- There is a perception that good progress has already been made.

Further developments in 2008-2009

- It's necessary to provide a roadmap to identify what would be further developed, based on a comparison between the elements pursued in the pilot phase, and the additional activities mentioned in the feasibility study.
- Digital literacy: the linkage between industries and universities should be improved. DG Education and Culture has launched a study on these issues, and it is at the last stage.

Oracle has also launched a digital literacy initiative, in which they want to involve more stakeholders.

- It has been recognized that videogames could be utilized in the education, and that such forms of “informal learning” could play an important role.
- E-skills in education: certificates on ICT competences of teachers and pupils should be increased, and it will be necessary to study more initiatives in order to guarantee a concrete accessibility to these courses. (For example, many people often hesitate in getting ICT certificates because of their costs)
- Promotional activities: 2009 will be the European Year of Creativity & Innovation and more activities will be launched in the second half of 2009 in order to raise the attractiveness of the ICT jobs and careers (“EU e-skills Week”, “IT-night”, etc). Two main target groups: young people and SMEs. For this reason, more and better pooling of funding by other stakeholders is welcome. NGOs, schools and universities should be associated in promoting these activities.
- Preparation of a “Memorandum of Understanding” and further partnership options: Cisco Systems proposed to circulate a draft memorandum based on its experience with Ministries of Education in Europe, to be discussed in September by the core partners as an open “framework for cooperation”.

Conclusions

The next workshop will be on 10 September 2008 in Brussels. For this meeting:

- A draft roadmap and “Memorandum of Understanding” (another name can be proposed) should be prepared. What is important is to give guidelines and governance principles in order to attract stakeholders. In doing this, it is important to be pragmatic and to finalize discussions in October 2008.
- The e-skills and career portal Committee must agree quickly on solutions to provide an e-skills online self assessment tool for SMEs. Proposals for the URL address must be made.
- Progress on the development of the portal will be presented and discussed.