



eSCC Announces European Alliance on Skills for Employability

New coalition aims to contribute to bring technology and training on ICT skills for employability to millions of people across Europe by 2010.

Lisbon, Portugal — 31 January 2006 — Today eSCC members (e-Skills Certification Consortium) Microsoft, Cisco, CompTIA, ECDL Foundation, EXIN, along with State Street Corporation and Randstad, announced the formation of the European Alliance on Skills for Employability at Microsoft Government Leader's Forum Europe 2006 (GLF) in Lisbon.

The European Alliance on Skills for Employability is being created to help better coordinate industry and community efforts and enhance the positive impact of ICT literacy and training on employability prospects of young unemployed people, those with disabilities, and older workers. Specifically, the Alliance will work to provide technology access and ICT training with the goal to help train millions of people in Europe with the skills required by employers over the next five years.

European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Mr Vladimir Spidla, warmly welcomed the initiative:

"The most important phase of the European Union's Growth and Jobs Strategy is underway and the spotlight is firmly on delivering results. Partnerships between the Member States and the private sector can also make a major contribution to Europe's competitiveness as a region and for its citizens. I welcome the creation of the European Alliance on Skills for Employability. The Alliance is a leading example of how innovative business to business collaborations, working with different stakeholders, can provide opportunities to the European unemployed. Access to skills training, content provision and certification can help older workers, people with disabilities and the young to face the challenges of unemployment and the changing workplace and so contribute to Europe's prosperity. I commend this initiative as it represents one of the best practices in this field."

Alliance members are committed to invest over 60 million Euro during the next five years to achieve these ambitious goals, offering concrete support to the objectives of the EU Partnership for Growth and Jobs action

plan. The idea at the core of the Alliance is that each partner contributes to the common goal with its core competencies, programmes and resources.

Welcoming the creation of the Alliance, Vice President Günter Verheugen said:

"Raising employment is the most effective way to generate growth and promote social inclusion. The challenges posed by an ageing population make the modernisation of social protection systems and the promotion of a life cycle approach to work all the more important. To enhance access to employment for all ages and raise productivity the EU needs higher and more effective investment in human capital and lifelong learning. High skilled people are the strongest currency of the 21st century. Partnership between businesses and stakeholders for the common goal of raising employability skills is key to success. I welcome the creation of the Employability Alliance as a vehicle to drive employability, competitiveness and growth for the people of Europe."

"The Alliance on Skills for Employability is a specific contribution to support the EU action plans on promoting ICT as a relevant competitiveness factor. It is also intended to have a remarkable social impact by targeting underserved communities with concrete support actions" says Antonio Herrera, President of eSCC.

The Alliance members will contribute through major education, training and certification programmes, such as industry Academic programmes, as well as other curriculum and employment programmes from each of the Alliance founding partners.

The eSCC (e-Skills Certification Consortium) was established in 2002 by Cisco, CompTIA, ECDL Foundation, EXIN and Microsoft. The eSCC works to harmonize industry ICT education and certification programmes with the official EU national education frameworks. One of the main goals of the eSCC is to promote official endorsement and recognition of industry and other non-formal certifications by public sector authorities in the EU and the Member States. This objective brings significant advantages to employers and job applicants, furthering the overarching goal of training millions of people with ICT skills by 2010, as well as increased competitiveness for the EU Member States.

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About eSCC

The eSCC brings together representatives of the commercial, informal (open, distance or adult learning) and formal (state-recognized) ICT training sectors with the aim of securing endorsement for and use of ICT industry and other non-formal certifications within government endorsed education and training frameworks. Members are drawn from across the ICT skills and training industry, with activities coordinated via a secretariat provided by CompTIA. Current members are Microsoft, Cisco, CompTIA, ECDL Foundation, and EXIN .For more information on the eSCC, please go to: <http://www.e-scc.org/about>.

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