

EU awareness raising campaigns result in sharp uptake in digital skills jobs

BRUSSELS (18 October 2016) – The European Commission’s e-Skills awareness raising campaigns, launched in 2010, have contributed to reduce the gap in the European Union between demand and supply of digital skills jobs. **The predicted shortfall of IT specialists in 2020 has been reduced from 1m in 2010 to 756,000 in 2015.**

The e-Skills for Jobs 2016 conference took place today in Bratislava, under the patronage of the President of the Slovak Republic, Andrej Kiska. The event took stock of the e-Skills campaigns’ impact on developing the digital skills required to fuel the economy, jobs and growth in Europe. The large-scale campaigns have involved over **5,500 events** in all Member States, attended by **3.4 million people**. Multimedia campaigns targeting the young, professional and policy makers have reached millions of people **and have contributed to promote digital careers.**

Antti Peltomäki, Deputy Director General of the European Commission DG GROW said: ‘This has been a great journey and very good progress has been made but we have not yet reached the destination. There is still a skills gap to be plugged and it is now up to the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition and Member States to play an even more important role to achieve our ambitions by 2020’.

Slovakia has been involved in the campaign since 2010. Mário Lelovský, Vice-President of ITAS said: ‘We have decided to implement serious procedures of digital skills testing in order to mirror our young generation with their estimated and real knowledge and thus motivate them to improve these skills to the level expected by future employers. More than 100,000 students have already past our IT Fitness test’.

On opening the conference, Günter Oettinger, European Commissioner for Digital Economy & Society, announced the launch of the [Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition](#) in December 2016, a key action included in the European Commission’s “[New Skills Agenda for Europe](#)”. Member States will be invited to set-up National Coalitions and develop comprehensive national digital skills strategies by mid-2017.

John Higgins, Director General of DIGITALEUROPE noted that ‘The European Commission has played a key role in bringing this issue of the digital divide to the fore. The national coalitions for digital skills and jobs will provide exceptional platforms to bring the digital landscape to the lives of all citizens’. To help in this process, the ICT Industry, with the support of other stakeholders, is launching today the “[Bratislava Declaration- Digital Skills Making the Difference](#)”, which will guide its continued efforts to unlock the potential of e-skills to fuel growth and jobs creation.

The EU IT Fitness test was launched at the conference. Following the successful uptake of the test in Slovakia over the last six years, the test is now available in English for free across Europe. Mário Lelovský, President of ITAS said: ‘We are extremely proud to offer this digital skills test to everyone in Europe as this is a great tool to help people understand how to improve the digital skills they will need to further their careers and live in the digital Europe of today’.

For more information, please contact:

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Conference website : <http://www.eskills4jobs.sk>