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ZSI-SYMPOSIUM "Fit für das digitale Zeitalter" ("Get ready for working in the digital age")

As media partners of the ZSI-SYMPOSIUM, we encourage you to read the report of the conference held on the 21st of October, 2005 in Vienna .

The Centre for Social Innovation (ZSI) organised a conference on media competences - e-Learning - e-Skills from a pedagogical and economical perspective. This event was held on the 21st of October, 2005 in Vienna in German language. The event was supported by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (bm:bwk) and the European Commission.

Josef Hochgerner, scientific manager of the ZSI and Reinhold Hawle, bm:bwk, opened the event.

The invited key speakers, Tapio Varis, UNESCO Chair in Global e-Learning and Professor for Media Education at the University of Tampere, Finland and Franz Gramlinger from CEDEFOP, the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, Greece, provided an international outreach for this national conference.

Tapio Varis gave an overview on the Finnish experiences regarding media competence and e-Skills. In his speech he outlined basic questions of education and following Renee Hobbs, he spoke about the seven great debates in the media literacy movement. Furthermore, he discussed relevant aspects of communication, knowledge and media and the 21st century literacies in a changed media world. These new competencies and the resulting consequences are also topic of his article: "New Literacies and e-Learning Competences", published at elearningeuropa.info, 2005.

Franz Gramlinger pointed out why e-Skills are the required skills of the future and provided a definition that includes:

1. The ICT practitioner,
2. the ICT user and
3. e-Business.

Additionally, he gave an overview of the priorities of the European e-Skills Forum, which shall create a better understanding about ICT professions and the related competences requested by employers in the European Union. Gramlinger emphasised specifically the importance and usefulness of the European e-Skills Meta-Framework and the CEN/ISS (European Committee for Standardisation) workshop on e-Skills, which together with experts have started to describe standards for e-Skills.

At the experts plenum discussion Peter Bruck (Research Studios Austria), Brigitte Hipfl (ÖFEB-Österreichische Gesellschaft für Forschung und Entwicklung im Bildungswesen), Peter Littig (bvdw-Bundesverband Digitale Wirtschaft, Germany), Friedrich Moshhammer (AMS-Public Employment Service Austria) and Elke Reichel (ver.di-Vereinte Dienstleistungsgewerkschaft, Germany) discussed about the necessary skills and the current and future requirements of the employment market and the economy in general. The speakers outlined the evolving demand for ICT specialists, employability and personnel development, the need of new pedagogical models and networking between media education institutions and professionals as well as the discussion about priority-setting on e-Skills either/or social Skills.

In the afternoon, participants had the opportunity to collaborate by exchanging ideas in two parallel workshops. The outcomes

of the two parallel workshops were ex-changed afterwards in the plenum.

In workshop 1 "Media Literacy in the pedagogical practice", Elke Dall, ZSI, gave an overview of the main results from the "European Centre for Media Literacy" (ecml). It included a definition of media literacy and the goals of media education.

Afterwards, parallel working groups discussed about the challenges and problems in the media pedagogical practice, searched for solutions and ideas on how to improve the recent situation and listed some available supporting facilities. If you are inter-ested in these topics too, please join the ongoing discussion in the [ecml-community!](#).

Giving one concrete example of such a supporting facility, Thomas Maier, manager of the teacher web of the [European Schoolnet](#) introduced the project "Context eLearning with broadband technologies" (CELEBRATE) and reported about the find-ings of the project.

In workshop 2 "e-Skills for the future professions", Barbara Kieslinger, ZSI, intro-duced the main focus of the workshop: the general conditions of e-Skills and ambi-tions to overcome the "standardisation divide" in Europe. Gerald Thiel, [DEKRA-Akademie](#), Germany, gave a more detailed overview about the current developments in Europe and spoke about the strategic goal ([Lisbon-goal](#)) to make the EU "the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-driven economy by 2010" and the instruments for it: The "[Bologna process](#)", the "[Copenhagen process](#)" and the efforts to develop European standards.

At an operational level the Leonardo project "[Embedding Standards](#)" was introduced. It contributes to the European standardisation processes in the ICT and multimedia sector, by delivering better acceptance and possibilities of anchorage of European standards in national environments and tests the applicability of the EQF and ECVET in real-world settings. If you are interested in this subject area, come and join the vir-tual communities available via the project website!