

Brussels, 3 July 2009

## **PIN-SME response to synthesis report on “the supply and demand of e-skills in Europe”**

PIN-SME would like to express its appreciation for the Commission’s decision to support the realisation of a study analysing the dynamics of supply and demand of e-skills in Europe. Policy makers will be able to base their future decisions on e-skills on statistical data and sound scientific analysis, whereas so far little numeric evidence has been available.

PIN-SME is fully engaged in supporting the preparation of the study and looks forward to discover its findings.

### **PIN-SME comments to the report**

Despite the efforts of the contractors to collect statistical data from different sources, we remark that the study does not sufficiently address the e-skills market for small enterprises, particularly for those with less than 10 employees, ie micro enterprises. This conclusion is based on the following observations:

- 1) The study focuses exclusively on “core IT practitioners”, ie independent IT professionals and companies’ employees with specific functions related to IT. Indeed, this excludes all personnel that undertake IT-related tasks on a part time or just *ad hoc* basis as demanded by their employers but not as core activities. Even though little statistical data is available about these “less formal” IT practitioners, this category is the most common in the many small and micro enterprises.
- 2) As proposed during the “e-Skills Supply and Demand” workshop of 22 June 2009, the data on IT graduates will be compared and integrated with data on the supply of IT young graduates provided by some national trade associations<sup>1</sup> (NTAs). Although we agree with this proposal as it will contribute to solve some apparent weaknesses of the model<sup>2</sup>, it should be noted that in most cases NTAs do not have comprehensive data about the smallest enterprises as their statistics often do not cover the micro-enterprise size class.
- 3) The data from the Eurostat ICT enterprise survey used to analyse the demand of IT practitioners do not include figures about companies with less than 9 employees.

<sup>1</sup> Examples of NTAs that will provide data are Bitkom (GE), Agoria (BE) and ASSO informatica (IT)

<sup>2</sup> Examples of weakness of the model used to analyze eSkills supply: the German and Italian data display a number of IT graduates equal to approximately half and one fifth of those of countries with similar or less population like Spain and France

Nevertheless, PIN-SME wishes to reinstate that it appreciates the efforts of the European Commission in supporting the analysis of e-skills supply and demand in Europe to serve as scientific basis for future policy decisions.

However, PIN-SME would like to demand that the conclusions of the study are taken with the necessary caution provided that they fail to sufficiently analyse the area of very small enterprises.

Hence, we recommend that a note is added to the introduction of the study, as well as to any summary or other report, in order to explain that the results are not based on data about micro enterprises and that the effectiveness of any recommendations contained in the study should be checked against their suitability to micro enterprises before being implemented.

### About PIN-SME

PIN-SME, the PanEuropean ICT and eBusiness Network for SMEs, is the first European association of the ICT sector exclusively focused of representing the interests of SMEs. PIN-SME Founding Members are seven national sectorial SME associations from different EU countries and one ICT SME network from Germany. PIN-SME represents more than **50.000 enterprises**, which employ around 200.000 people across Europe.

### PIN-SME members

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PIN-SME - Rue Jacques de Lalaing, 4 – B-1040 Brussels -Tel. +32–2 282 05 30 - Fax +32–2 282 05 35-  
[www.pin-sme.eu](http://www.pin-sme.eu)

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