

## Hungary's move towards e-Leadership education for innovation and competitiveness

29/09/2014 - At the event 'New Curricula for e-Leadership - Delivering Skills for an innovative and competitive Europe' the chairperson Zoltan Buzady, Associate Professor of Management and Organization and MBA Program Director of the CEU Business School underlined the importance of an education ecosystem with strong stakeholder interaction to widely spread e-leadership skills. Mel Horwitch, Dean of CEU Business School continued along the same lines when stating that we are being faced with a real challenge in our move to e-leadership which he described as the need for leading and changing teams and organisations in a not so transparent world with ICT increasingly playing a key role. Participating representatives from industry, public administration and NGOs from Hungary but also neighbouring countries like Slovakia and guests from Macedonia sent clear signals that there is a growing and critical lack of e-leaders in the economy, that is, individuals who are at the same time ICT savvy, business savvy and have the ability and skills to lead multi-disciplinary teams across functional and geographical boundaries. CEU Business School – supported by the guidelines for curriculum development which have been developed as part of the European Commission e-leadership initiative ([www.eskills-guide.eu](http://www.eskills-guide.eu)) - demonstrated how they are going to deliver these in the future to improve the quality of e-leadership, covering organisation leadership in ICT innovation to deliver business value.

The conference was organised by the European Commission together with the CEU Central European University Business School, IBM, EuroCIO, the Hungarian CIO association and IVSZ – the Hungarian IT industry association. Around 100 participants registered for the cluster event.

It was opened by **Zoltan Buzady**, CEU Business School. He made the clear point that if organisations cannot adapt/transform their business models, they may not survive and that e-Leaders are needed to make this transformation but that they are hard to find. It was against this background that the agenda for the day focused on developing e-Leaders. The question "Does IT matter" is no longer an issue. He emphasised that digital disruption is not about ICT, it is about whether you have good leadership and especially e-leadership. E-leaders require agility, i.e. the ability to create solutions incorporating latest IT developments quickly and in addition, they need to be able to orchestrate synergies between these multiple solutions / applications. Even CEOs need to be enabled to ask sensible IT-related questions which today very often does not seem to be the case.

**Mel Horwitch**, Dean of Central European University - Business School emphasised that ICT is a key strategy item to leap frog the CEE to a higher value region. These countries can turn challenges to advantages by utilizing the good local talents via a professional management and (e-)leadership strategy.

When speaking about the mission of EIT's (European Institute of Innovation and Technology) ICT Labs Master School, **Anders Flodström**, EIT ICT Labs Education Director described the need for Europe to create more innovative people through the creation of knowledge and innovation communities. He expressed his wish for the European e-Leadership Initiative to establish close cooperation links with the EIT ICT Labs activities since both basically address similar issues around innovation, ICT and skills with different and important focal points: the e-Leadership initiative focussing on e-leadership skills and innovation and EIT ICT Labs on entrepreneurship and innovation. To him working aiming at and achieving synergies between these two European activities is seen as a must.

**Edit Herczog**, former Member of the European Parliament started her presentation with an elaboration on what she described as a new mega trend: scarcity and in particular scarcity of human talent. She presented statistical figures showing that Hungary is facing negative e-skills related developments and decreasing policy activities in this areas which is something to watch out and properly react upon politically.

This was followed by **Werner B. Korte** who put the position of the European Commission, underlining the impact of demographic change in the world, and that the new demands of consumers across the globe put new competitive pressure on Europe. The response must be to accelerate innovation! When referring to the multitude of European Commission activities in this area over the past years he made the strong point that the skills of e-leadership are essential for the Hungarian and European industry in general to maintain their excellent global competitive position and the need for universities and business schools to properly respond to the market demand with offers suitable to educate and train individuals to become e-leaders.

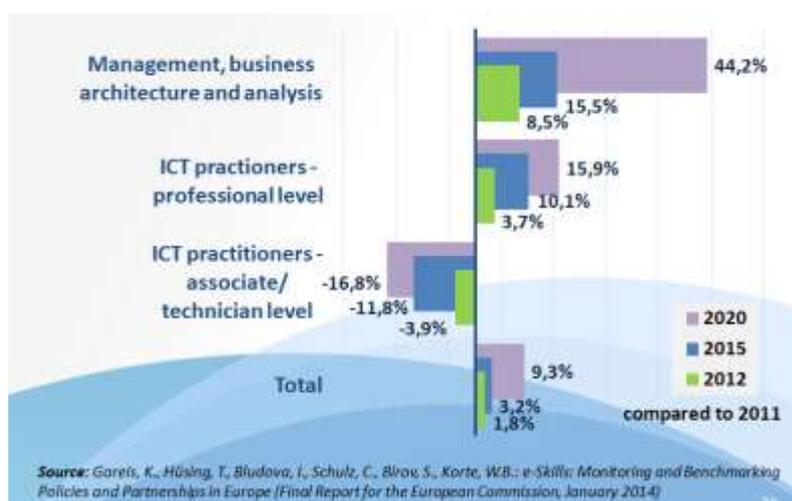
In this context the goal of the European Commission's initiative on e-Leadership which started in 2013 is to increase the talent pool of e-leaders for enterprises (CIOs, professionals, business leaders etc.). It was followed in January 2014 by a complementary initiative on e-leadership targeting start-ups, gazelles, SMEs (entrepreneurs etc.). Both are closely

linked to the promotion of digital entrepreneurship and integrated within the EU long-term e-skills strategy and the efforts made to mobilise Member States and stakeholders (Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs) and raise awareness (e-Skills for Jobs 2014 campaign, <http://eskills-week.ec.europa.eu/>).

Important milestones at European level in 2014 include the closing event of the "e-Skills for Jobs campaign" on 30 October 2014 in Rome with the Italian Presidency (<http://conference.eskillsforjobs.it/>). The European e-Skills 2014 Conference will take place on 2-3 December in Brussels ([www.eskills2014conference.eu](http://www.eskills2014conference.eu)). A major European conference on e-Leadership will be held in Brussels in June 2015.

**Werner B. Korte**, Director of empirica provided the definition of what e-leadership skills are and used the metaphor of a 'three-legged beast' to describe it vividly. He described an a-leader as a person comfortable with regularly fulfilling tasks in the board room but also in what was described at a recent regional cluster event in Munich as 'engine room' and at the same time feeling at ease in both environments. He also provided latest statistical forecasts from the work of empirica for the European Commission on the ICT workforce development showing that management, architecture and analysis jobs which include a significant portion of e-leaders, are expected to grow by 2020 compared to 2011.

### ICT Workforce Development in Europe 2012 – 2015 - 2020



A presentation on ICT trends and their implications for e-leadership skills followed by **Martin Canning**, Group Vice President from IDC, one of the most prestigious market intelligence providers in the world. According to his experience industry is afraid of not having the right skills (incl. e-leadership skills) in-house but even more importantly not being able to keep them.

**Paul Costelloe**, Director Executive Education at EuroCIO articulated the view of Europe's CIOs and emphasised the importance of e-leadership skills and the activities which EuroCIO had started to compensate for the apparent lack of suitable higher and executive education offers in the market.

This presentation was followed by two speeches from Hungarian CIOs and CEOs on industry demand for e-leaders also seen in high demand by both, **Ferenc Alföldi**, CIO, Takarekbank and **Viktor Lénárt**, CEO, GROW. Ferenc Alföldi described the situation of the Hungarian banking sector which has grown 'fat, no more agile, inflexible and in urgent need of losing weight'. In the past and up until now banks did not manage to acquire the right skills. He urges them to stop putting 'lipstick on pigs' and develop appropriate e-skills and e-leadership strategies.

All introductory speakers welcome the European Commission e-Leadership initiative which will help to improve Europe's competitiveness. On support and developments in the e-leadership area they highly appreciated that Brussels had taken leadership here, to provide the necessary guidance and orientation and the initiation of first demonstrations of e-leadership higher and executive education programmes and courses.

**Birgit Hanny**, Deputy Director of ASIIN asked for the establishment of a continuous dialogue between industry demanding e-leadership type individuals and universities and business schools expected to supply these to the market is needed to get out of the 'jungle' of the so far mostly unsuitable higher and executive education programmes for teaching e-leadership skills. This would help develop appropriate e-leadership higher and executive education programmes and help close the gap between demand and supply.

The European Commission e-leadership initiative has addressed this gap; dialogue is continuing and the curricula approach is intended to be implemented on an ongoing and continuous base.

CEU Business School had used the e-leadership curriculum development guidelines and successfully applied the Curriculum Profile approach to their IT in Management course.

**Sharm Manwani**, Professor at Henley Business School in the UK, reported about the results of a mapping of a European Business Enterprise Architecture Executive Programme to the corresponding e-leadership curriculum profile developed in the initiative. There was a close match but it helped the three business schools to identify areas of improvement to become an even stronger e-leadership programme. These – including a stronger focus on emerging technology trends - have been incorporated in the next teaching round starting with a new cohort of participants in October 2014. In conclusion, he recommended that all stakeholders review the existing e-leadership curriculum profiles as a starting point either for their education needs or in scoping their programmes.

**Achilles Georgiu**, Ass. Professor and Programme Director at CEU Business School reported using the Initiative curriculum profile to map his IT in Management programme. He found this a very useful tool was impressed about the assessment process and expressed support for its wider use but would also welcome improvements to ensure assessment judgements are not just easy to make but also unambiguous.

They concluded that the e-Leadership Curriculum Profile approach looks like an interesting one to carry out the mappings of existing courses and programmes in order to further develop and adapt them in a way to help satisfy the demand for these types of skills in industry and provide promising career opportunities to students.

The event ended with a very lively expert panel discussion chaired by Achilles Georgiu and also involving the audience. Articulated by **Pál Kerékfy** and agreed on by the expert panel members large organizations will continue to work in a coordinated (there is a clear need for structure and hierarchy) way but the ‘conductor’ - as the e-leader was described - will have to listen to many people in the ‘orchestra’ which was the term used for the organisation. To some extent and for **Zsolt Veres**, IBM Country General Manager this could be described with operation of and the music made by a jazz band in which parts of the music are constructed but others come from improvisations reflecting the creativity potential of its actors and argument also used by **Sharm Manwani** demanding creativity pools (jazz bands) operating in structured organisations.

Referring to the notion of a T-shaped portfolio of skills needed by e-leaders (or as others described it as ‘dual thinkers’) and as presented in one of the speeches, the discussion went on to develop the notion of a pi-shaped portfolio of skills using the sixth letter from the Greek alphabet to best describe the skills needed by an e-leader. The three elements of this letter would probably even better describe the e-leadership skills required and what any e-Leadership programme needs to generate in terms of learning outcomes that demonstrate three dimensions – business, technology, personal.



The point was made by **Achilles Georgiu** that not only CIOs need to become e-leaders but that in SME the CEO has to take this role. **Sharm Manwani** added that even in large corporations and in cases where the CEO does not delegate business architecture development to the CIO, the CEO has to become the business architect.

Development of an appropriate ‘education ecosystem’ was seen as a key direction for closing the skills gap since interaction with like-minded individuals was seen as essential to keep up with the pace of change.

With the European e-leadership initiative the European Commission now is providing the means for closing the e-leadership skills gap since with the guidelines and Curriculum Profile approach it is enabling a range of educational ecosystem actions to:

- Improve processes of generating educational offers with demand and supply stakeholders
- Encourage programmes based on new course design and content and
- Strengthen communication flows in e-leadership skills development and deployment.

There was unanimous agreement that e-leadership will be a key competence in the future economy and that the European Commission e-leadership initiative has been very timely and started at the right moment (more information: [www.eskills-guide.eu](http://www.eskills-guide.eu)). This European initiative aims to develop and recommend specific curriculum profiles for e-leaders (based on the European e-Competence Framework) and outline the knowledge and skills necessary for business leaders to turn into e-leaders.

## Feedback from the event

- “A mind opening event!”
- “I got comprehensive information about the role and importance of ICT skills and e-Leadership in modern business. The event totally convinced me to be enrolled in CEU Business School MSc in IT Management Programme”.
- “Three-legged-beast to define e-leadership skills – loved the idea and the picture”
- “Looking forward for the next event”
- “Very good ideas, how to utilize educational forces for having better e-skills and more e-leaders”
- “Opening the eyes to the important EU topic”

## Links to European initiatives and reports on e-leadership and e-skills:

- European e-Skills 2014 Conference: e-Leadership and ICT Professionalism: <http://eskills2014conference.eu>
- European Guidelines and Quality Labels for new Curricula Fostering e-Leadership Skills: <http://eskills-guide.eu/home/>
- e-Leadership Skills for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises: <http://eskills-lead.eu/home/>
- European e-leadership skills conference 2013: <http://www.insead.edu/events/e-leadership-conference/>
- [E-Skills for the 21st Century website](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/ict/e-skills/index_en.htm) - DG Enterprise and Industry: [http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/ict/e-skills/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/ict/e-skills/index_en.htm)
- Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs website: <http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/grand-coalition-digital-jobs-0>
- European e-Competence Framework (e-CF) website: <http://www.ecompetences.eu/>
- CEN Workshop on ICT Skills: <http://www.cen.eu/CEN/sectors/sectors/iss/activity/Pages/wsict-skills.aspx>
- e-Skills for Competitiveness and Innovation: Vision, Roadmap and Foresight Scenarios: <http://eskills-vision.eu/home/>
- Towards a European Quality label for ICT industry training and certification: <http://eskills-quality.eu/home/>
- E-Skills: the international dimension and the impact of globalisation: <http://www.eskills-international.com/>
- European guidelines and quality labels for Curricula for e-leadership skills: <http://eskills-guide.eu/home/>
- Monitoring and benchmarking e-skills policies and partnerships in Europe: <http://eskills-monitor2013.eu/home/>
- Fostering the ICT Profession in Europe: <http://cepis.org/index.jsp?p=827&n=940>
- Professional e-Competence in Europe: <http://cepis.org/index.jsp?p=940&n=2406>
- Monitoring e-skills demand and supply in Europe: <http://www.eskills-monitor.eu/>
- Evaluation of the Implementation of the Communication on e-Skills for the 21st Century: <http://eskills21.eu/>

## Photographs

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< Photograph no. 2 >



< Photograph no. 3 >



< Photograph no. 4 >



< Photograph no. 5 >



< Photograph no. 6 >



< Photograph no.7>



< Photograph no. 8 >

