

Brussels, 4 September 2008
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Dear President Victor Mihalic,

I am pleased to send my greetings to your Conference. My duties unfortunately do not allow me to be with you in Šibenik.

The relation between education and business, especially in a lifelong-learning perspective, features high on the European agenda; and I am delighted to share some considerations on this topic with you.

Some of the most important challenges European economies and societies are facing have to do with knowledge and skills. With globalisation advancing at relentless pace, skills requirements are changing. There is a growing consensus that education and training are among the main factors of productivity and growth.

Above all, today's modes of production imply that we can never assume we have learned enough. Lifelong learning is the key to ensure Europe's competitiveness and social wellbeing. Education and training should adapt to this new reality. Europe needs workers and citizens that have a greater degree of autonomy, know how to take initiative, and assume responsibility for action. This is also a reason why we want that the year 2009 will be the European Year of Creativity and Innovation.

In the present climate, success goes to those who have the creativity and motivation to create opportunities for themselves and others, whether they set up enterprises or take on leadership positions within a company or an organization. The Commission has reacted to this challenge and—together with the Member States—has sought to promote Key Competences for Lifelong Learning and entrepreneurship education.

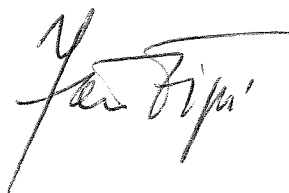
In this context, I am happy to note that the European Business Competence Licence has been developed in a number of EU Member States and beyond.

Mr. Victor MIHALIC
President
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Aichholzgasse 6
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I would like to take this opportunity to thank the International Centre of the European Business Competence* Licence and the Council Business Competence for Europe for their commitment in promoting "intrapreneurship", for bringing key partners together and for fostering crucial skills for the personal and occupational development of Europe's citizens.

I wish you an interesting and enriching debate.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Yas Fipi". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke extending from the top of the first letter.