



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Invest in more good quality and innovative jobs – Cedefop Director**

‘Europe’s true problem is not one of a deficit of skills, but primarily a deficit of creation of good quality jobs,’ Cedefop Director James Calleja told the European Parliament of Enterprises on Thursday in Brussels.

In his statement on skills mismatch and youth unemployment, Mr Calleja said that most of Europe’s unemployment is cyclical, not structural in nature: ‘Cedefop studies (2012) indicate a rising tendency towards a higher “over-qualification” or “over-skilling” rate of the employee workforce (i.e. workers have skills that outweigh those needed to perform their job duties).’

He added that ‘skills mismatch is prevalent but it is not the main reason for high youth unemployment rates, nor does it primarily manifest as vacancies that cannot be filled.’

The Cedefop Director proposed six solutions:

- There is a clear need to invest more in lifelong guidance and counselling services relevant to labour market realities and in stronger European vocational education and training (VET) systems, including Higher VET.
- Good apprenticeship programmes will also help bridge the gap between skills of new job applicants and those needed by firms. Companies that support apprenticeships count their benefits; companies that don’t, complain about costs.
- Public-private partnerships will ensure that employers, learning providers and learners do not live in ‘parallel universes’ with regard to the effectiveness of the skill-matching process in their countries (McKinsey, 2012).
- Skills mismatch at domestic or smaller-sized firms may be addressed via the offer of better working conditions and by improving the image of the sector. A better image of jobs secures attractiveness to VET.
- Training consortia involving small and larger-sized firms in a sector or region and closer cooperation between VET institutions and businesses in regional/sectoral innovation clusters are likely to encourage employers to invest in staff training.
- Europe needs to invest in the creation of more and innovative jobs via local or sectoral development investment projects. Compulsory education and

VET have a critical role to play in providing key competences and high-quality VET programmes as a drive for creativity and innovation.

Mr Calleja concluded: 'We may never eradicate unemployment in Europe, but we can certainly cultivate the seeds of employability and employment.'

### Notes to editors

- The European Parliament of Enterprises is a high-profile event organised by EUROCHAMBRES, the Association of European chambers of Commerce and Industry, every two years.
- The concept originated from the consideration that there is a democratic gap between EU institutions and the entrepreneurs: EU legislators do not take sufficiently into account the entrepreneurs' concerns, while the role and functioning of the European Union are insufficiently known to businesses.
- In this year's edition, about 1 000 business representatives from 45 countries gathered in the hemicycle of the European Parliament in Brussels. The event was addressed by the President of the European Parliament Martin Schulz.

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### About Cedefop

The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop), an agency of the European Union based in Thessaloniki, Greece, supports European policy-making in the field of vocational education and training. [www.cedefop.europa.eu](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu)

