

From Information Literates to Knowledge Workers: Challenges and Endeavours for Romania

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A Paradox of the Information Society

LATE INDUSTRIAL AGE	INFORMATION AGE
Dominant Information Technology: "Paper & Pencil" and mainframe computers	Dominant Information Technology: PCs and digital networks
Focus on the "I" variable	Focus on the "T" variable
Lesson to be learned: re-balancing the "I" and "T" variables <i>"The amount, nature and purpose of the processes aimed at producing, disseminating and using knowledge are the brain, while the ICT are its heart" (Jaarl Bengtsson)</i>	

The present state

- **CHALLENGE:** gap between e-skills and k-skills in the workforce, in both developed countries and developing ones
- **CAUSE:** the implicit assumption that e-skills deserve inclusion in the curricula, while k-skills are emergent
- **CONSEQUENCE:** becoming a knowledge worker appears to be a self-development endeavor

E-skills vs. K-skills

E-skills: enable the sustained use of ICT

- § **ICT practitioner skills**
- § **IC user skills**
- § **e-business skills**

K-skills: enable the use of knowledge for problem solving:

- § **learning**
- § **new idea generating**
- § **goal setting**
- § **choosing among alternatives**

Consequences of the gap between e-skills and k-skills

- **underutilizing the competitive potential of both knowledge and ICT**
- **using Internet mainly as a medium of communication, instead of a problem-solving tool**
- **simplified understanding of the Knowledge Society as just an informatised society**
- **failing to include the use of knowledge tools in the curricula**

Proposed remedies for reducing the gap between e-skills and k-skills

- **coping jointly with digital divide and knowledge divide**
- **upskilling in terms of knowledge work,**
- **increasing funding for skills development**
- **university curricula redesign**
- **diffusing knowledge work within a country's geography**

Questions for further research

- **What are the skills needed of the work force which would qualify them to be knowledge workers ?**
- **How distinct are these knowledge skills (k-skills) from the skills related to ICT use, or e-skills ?**
- **What new kind of learning is required in order to develop the k-skills at individual and organizational level ?**
- **What patterns of curricula and teaching process are hence required in order to get to such kind of learning ?**