Skill Match Smile
in an Intelligent Learning Environment

5th Newsletter

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From piloting to the Final Conference: bringing the SMILE results together



Following the 4th Newsletter, which focused on the rollout of the S.M.I.L.E. Model across the partner universities, the project entered its conclusive phase. The piloting enabled lecturers, guidance practitioners and career services professionals to use the S.M.I.L.E. Model, the TaiLENT platform tools and the "Guide to the Future" digital ecosystem with students, connecting self-assessment, competence evidence, career aspirations and labour-market needs.

On 22nd October 2026 the partnership gathered in Naples, at the "TERRANEXT" Hall in the San Giovanni Complex of the Università Federico II, for the **Final S.M.I.L.E. – Skill Match in an Intelligent Learning Environment Conference**. Held only a few days before the formal project end date of 2nd November 2026, the event provided a natural point of synthesis for a 24-month journey.

The Conference was designed not as a conventional showcase of deliverables, but as a forum for dialogue among universities, businesses, competence centres, chambers of commerce and career-guidance stakeholders. Following the presentation of the project and its results – the model, methodologies, educational resources and technological tools – the programme unfolded through two round tables addressing a shared question: **how can dialogue between universities and businesses become more timely, structured and continuous, so that evolving professional needs are translated into relevant competences, meaningful learning experiences and concrete opportunities for students?**

This is the transition that the final phase of S.M.I.L.E. seeks to consolidate: moving from the diagnosis of skills mismatch to an ecosystem in which guidance, education and placement are connected with digital, green and entrepreneurial transitions and with people's real capacity to create value within organisations.



Highlights of the Final Conference: from university–business dialogue to a new approach to career guidance



The S.M.I.L.E. Final Conference provided an important opportunity to share the project's achievements and explore how stronger cooperation between universities and businesses can help reduce skills mismatch and support students in their transition to employment. Through two complementary round tables, discussions addressed both the need to translate evolving labour market requirements into relevant, up-to-date learning experiences and the importance of enabling students and graduates to recognise, demonstrate and communicate their competences through tangible evidence, self-assessment tools and a deeper understanding of business dynamics.

Particular emphasis was placed on the potential of digital technologies and Artificial Intelligence to make career guidance, education and placement more personalised and effective.

The Conference also highlighted S.M.I.L.E.'s main achievements: the development of an AI-supported, competence-based model; the integration of the TaiLENT platform for skills assessment, gap analysis, matching with ESCO occupational profiles and personalised learning recommendations; the “Guide to the Future” digital ecosystem, supporting self-awareness, competence development and career planning; and Open Educational Resources promoting lifelong learning. The project journey, enriched by validation workshops involving 85 participants, further meetings with 60 stakeholders and piloting activities within partner universities, demonstrated the importance of an integrated, evidence-based approach grounded in continuous business engagement and the use of AI to support, rather than replace, human judgement. S.M.I.L.E. has therefore laid the foundations for a transnational cooperation ecosystem capable of building lasting connections between higher education, skills development and employment opportunities.



What’s Next? The Future of S.M.I.L.E. Beyond the Project’s Completion



Following the Final Conference on 22 October 2026, S.M.I.L.E. is approaching its formal conclusion on 2 November, leaving a valuable legacy of methodologies, digital tools and educational resources designed to generate lasting value well beyond the period of European funding. The sustainability of the project’s results will be underpinned by the further strengthening of the transnational Open Network established among universities, training providers, chambers of commerce and businesses, the integration of the S.M.I.L.E. Model into established career guidance, education and placement practices, and continued access to Open Educational Resources (OERs).

The responsible use of Artificial Intelligence will remain a key priority, supporting competence assessment and the personalisation of learning and career development pathways, while recognising and enhancing the essential role of lecturers, career guidance practitioners and businesses.

S.M.I.L.E.'s most significant legacy is, and will continue to be, a sustainable framework for long-term collaboration between higher education institutions and the business community, capable of connecting competences, individual aspirations and evolving labour market needs to make a tangible contribution to reducing the skills mismatch.





STAY UPDATED ON S.M.I.L.E. RESULTS AND LEGACY!

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