

Apprenticeships for future needs: regions and cities have a double role



□□□The European Committee of the Regions and the European Alliance for Apprenticeships organised a joint high-level conference on 3-4 June. At the opening session, the Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights Nicolas Schmit and the chair of the CoR's SEDEC Commission Anne Karjalainen highlighted the pivotal role of regions and cities in providing quality and effective apprenticeships for all.

Commissioner Schmit and SEDEC Chair Anne Karjalainen concluded that local and regional authorities can promote apprenticeships both in their role as employers as well as being catalysers that encourage employers to take on apprentices and build links with all relevant stakeholders. They highlighted there is need for more cooperation and reforms to make vocational and educational training (VET) and apprenticeships more resilient and fit for the future challenges.

Commissioner **Schmit** said: "We need more modern Vocational Education and Training (VET) systems to respond to rapid changes. We need to accelerate the digitalisation of VET and develop modern and innovative learning approaches. We need more investments in skills so that the European workforce is ready for the jobs of today and tomorrow. And to succeed, we need to work closely with local and regional authorities."

"Regions and cities are drivers of growth and innovation, and have a central role in the conduct of employment and education, including VET and apprenticeships. It is therefore imperative to complement European and national efforts by emphasizing the role of local and regional actors and valorising the needs of local contexts", stated the SEDEC Chair Anne Karjalainen, member of Kerava City Council.

CoR members Daniela Ballico (Mayor of Ciampino, IT/ECR), Emil Boc (Mayor of Cluj-Napoca, RO/EPP), Csaba Borboly (President of Harghita County Council, RO/EPP), Mark Weinmeister (Secretary of State for European Affairs of the Land of Hesse, DE/EPP) and Gillian Coughlan (Member of Cork City Council, IE/Renew E.) also took the floor to discuss various topics, which included adult upskilling and reskilling, the international dimension of apprenticeships, mobilising local and regional actors and encouraging cross-border cooperation.

Read the full [event report](#) (PDF).

[Conference recording: Day 1](#) – main event and thematic discussion 'Empowering adults through upskilling and reskilling'.

[Conference recording: Day 1](#) – thematic discussion 'Promoting the international dimension'.

[Conference recording: Day 2](#) – main event and thematic discussion ‘Mobilising local and regional actors’.

[Conference recording: Day 2](#) – thematic discussion ‘Encouraging cross-border cooperation’.

□More information:

In an apprenticeship, people share their time between learning in a school and training in a company. This allows them to gain real work experience to become ready for the world of work. As part of the [Youth Employment Support package](#) of 1 July 2020, the Commission launched a renewed [European Alliance for Apprenticeships](#). □

Before the concluding high-level conference, the CoR’s SEDEC Commission and the European Alliance for Apprenticeships (EAfA) held three online events on the [impact of COVID-19](#), on the [twin transition on apprenticeships](#) and on the [upskilling and reskilling at the health sector](#). All these events have been organised in close cooperation with the European Association of Regional and Local Authorities for Lifelong Learning (EARLALL), the German delegation at the CoR, and the Basque Government.