

Fourth European Vocational Skills Week: 'VET for All – Skills for Life'

The 2019 European Vocational Skills Week will take place in Helsinki from 14 to 18 October. Hosted by the European Commission in partnership with the Finnish Presidency of the Council of the EU, this fourth edition will continue to encourage people of all ages to 'discover their talent' through vocational education and training (VET).

"The central theme of our campaign this year is 'VET for All – Skills for Life'," said Marianne Thyssen, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility. "I truly believe that vocational education and training helps people to start and build up fulfilling careers at any age. This is why I want VET to become a valid smart choice for both young people and adults."

"Vocational education and training is an attractive choice in Finland. Almost half of the young apply for vocational education and training immediately after basic education. Our goal is to raise the education level of the entire Finnish population. To achieve this, we need strong investments in education and training. That is also the most effective way to increase employment, equality and well-being", says Li Andersson, Minister of Education of Finland. "Rapid technological change increases the need for continuous learning. In order to ensure that everyone can continue to update their knowledge, skills and competences throughout their lives, we need to develop effective and future-oriented education and training policies."

In addition to the events during the Week in Helsinki, more than 1,000 activities and events have already signed up and will take place throughout the year at local, regional and national level across Europe and beyond. All stakeholders have come together to highlight the benefits of VET, showcase opportunities and promote an educational pathway that has the potential to transform the lives of young and old alike.

Background

VET: A valid smart choice

Almost 80% of young VET graduates find employment soon after graduating. For this reason, the European Vocational Skills Week aims to improve the attractiveness of vocational education and training by highlighting excellence and quality. In addition, it promotes awareness raising about the multiple opportunities vocational education and training can offer.

VET offers a wealth of upskilling and reskilling opportunities, profitable for employees and for employers. These possibilities help people of all ages to adapt to rapid changes in the labour market, enhancing their employment potential to secure high quality jobs. The opportunities support companies in filling skill gaps, providing education and training for existing personnel

to boost competitiveness in our fast-changing economy.

What is the European Vocational Skills Week?

Launched in 2016, the European Vocational Skills Week is an annual campaign designed to promote VET and improve its image. The campaign includes activities and events throughout the year and culminates with the official Week in a designated city.

The Week has received high levels of engagement and stakeholder support from the outset, and this is reflected in the campaign's reach-out with almost 2000 activities and events reaching more than 2.4 million people in 2018.

What is the current state of VET in Europe?

VET participation rates have been growing steadily over the last several years, as more and more people have benefited from this unique educational pathway. As of 2018:

Almost 80% of young VET graduates find employment soon after graduating;

Youth unemployment rates are at a record low of 15.2%;

- 22% of people in Europe are considered 'low-qualified';
- 48% of students participate in VET;
- 11% of Europe's adult population participate in adult learning;
- 72% of companies provide their employees with training opportunities (2015);
- 49% of employees take part in the job-related training offered by their employer (2015).

Awards for VET Excellence 2019

The European Vocational Skills Week reward each year outstanding individuals, organisations and initiatives through the 'Awards for VET Excellence'. The prizes are designed to highlight the quality in vocational education and training (VET), provide visibility to the winners, motivate those taking part and support the development of networks and new career opportunities.

Anyone can vote through this [link](#) and choose what the most inspiring VET story is. The vote is open until the 15 October included. A ceremony is planned to award winners during the Week.

For more information

[European Vocational Skills Week 2019 website](#)

[European Vocational Skills Week 2019 events map](#)

[Facebook Event Page: European Vocational Skills Week 2019](#)

[Finnish Presidency of the Council of the European Union 2019 website](#)

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