

## SED attends WorldSkills Lyon 2024 in France (with photos)

The Secretary for Education, Dr Choi Yuk-lin, began her visit to France on September 10 (France time) and attended WorldSkills Lyon 2024 to cheer for the delegation of Hong Kong, China. She also spoke at a panel discussion of the WorldSkills Conference to promote vocational and professional education and training (VPET) in Hong Kong.

Organised biennially by WorldSkills International, the WorldSkills Competition is the largest skills competition in the world. This year, the event has attracted more than 1 400 participants from nearly 70 countries and regions. Hong Kong has sent a total of 37 skilled elites from various local institutions to participate in 32 skills competitions, the largest on record, in terms of both the numbers of participants and competitions.

On September 10, Dr Choi attended the opening ceremony of WorldSkills Lyon 2024 and met the delegation of Hong Kong, China. She said that Hong Kong has won numerous awards since its participation in the WorldSkills Competition in 1997. Contestants showcased their vocational skills on the international stage, gaining worldwide recognition.

She also said that according to the latest statistics from the Vocational Training Council, the average monthly salary of VPET graduates of the Council has been trending up in recent years, with an increase of about six per cent, reflecting society's recognition of talent with applied knowledge and skills, the keen demand for vocational talent, and the growing importance of VPET for socio-economic development.

On September 11 (France time), Dr Choi attended the WorldSkills Conference and spoke at a panel discussion to share Hong Kong's VPET development and experiences with education representatives from different places and organisations. She said that the Education Bureau has continued to adopt the strategy of fostering industry-institution collaboration and diversified development to encourage the alignment of classroom education with industry needs and collaboration between businesses and education institutions. A series of measures has also been introduced to promote VPET as a pathway parallel to conventional academic education under a multipronged approach.

One of the measures is to press ahead with the establishment of universities of applied sciences (UAS) to encourage institutions to closely collaborate with professional skills sectors, such as incorporating more substantial internship and work-based learning opportunities in their programmes, which will help students develop applied skills and raise the status and attractiveness of VPET in the long run, providing an alternative pathway to success for young people.

The Government has granted a start-up fund to support the formation of the Alliance of UAS to comprehensively take forward the development of UAS through joint promotion and strengthening collaboration with international UAS.

Subsequently, Dr Choi visited the venue of the WorldSkills Competition to watch the delegation of Hong Kong, China, contesting in the competitions and showed her support to the contestants. She encouraged them to do their best and give full play to their strengths, wishing them success in the Competition and bringing glory to Hong Kong.

Dr Choi will depart for Paris on September 12 (France time) to continue her visit.





