

## REFERNET VETNEWS INTERNATIONAL

04/2025

25/03/2025

### Europe

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#### European Commission

In March 2025, the Commission proposed the 'Union of Skills' as the guiding strategy for improving the quality of education, training and lifelong learning. Key strands of the Union of Skills are building basic skills, upskilling and reskilling, circulating skills across the EU and attracting, developing and retaining talent.

A total of 23 initiatives are part of the Union of Skills-strategy like the 'EU strategy for vocational education and training' to make VET more attractive, innovative, and inclusive, a new European VET diploma supporting the free movement of learners and workers and strengthening Centres of Vocational Excellence

[https://commission.europa.eu/topics/eu-competitiveness/union-skills\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/topics/eu-competitiveness/union-skills_en)

Part of the Union of Skills, the STEM Education Strategic Plan also aims to improve STEM in IVET and CVET as VET graduates represent almost half of all STEM graduates. That includes proposing new 2030 EU-level STEM targets also regarding VET, promote future-oriented STEM curricula in VET schools, VET reskilling and upskilling, pilot STEM education centres for VET schools and exchange good practices and foster mutual learning on attracting and supporting girls and women in STEM apprenticeships.

[https://education.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2025-03/STEM\\_Education\\_Strategic\\_Plan\\_COM\\_2025\\_89\\_1\\_EN\\_0.pdf](https://education.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2025-03/STEM_Education_Strategic_Plan_COM_2025_89_1_EN_0.pdf)

Action Plan on Basic Skills: Key areas for action are e.g. prioritise basic skills in vocational education and training (VET)

<https://education.ec.europa.eu/news/basic-skills-and-stem-action-plan-to-support-education-and-training>

16 new Centres of Vocational Excellence are starting their activities in March 2025.

[https://www.eacea.ec.europa.eu/news-events/news/16-new-centres-vocational-excellence-launched-2025-03-07\\_en](https://www.eacea.ec.europa.eu/news-events/news/16-new-centres-vocational-excellence-launched-2025-03-07_en)

Key Takeaways from the VET Winter Camp 2024

[https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/news/strengthening-vocational-excellence-key-takeaways-vet-winter-camp-2024-2025-03-06\\_en](https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/news/strengthening-vocational-excellence-key-takeaways-vet-winter-camp-2024-2025-03-06_en)

### European Parliament

Statement on the Union of Skills by the Employment and Social Affairs Committee Chair

<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20250304IPR27150/statement-on-union-of-skills-by-employment-and-social-affairs-committee-chair>

Labour migration: an EU Talent Pool to facilitate international recruitment

<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20250318IPR27410/labour-migration-an-eu-talent-pool-to-facilitate-international-recruitment>

Reducing unemployment: key facts and EU measures explained

<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/topics/en/article/20190612STO54312/reducing-unemployment-key-facts-and-eu-measures-explained>



### Cedefop

Skills development, labour and skills shortages in Europe – national infographics series

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/data-insights/skills-development-labour-and-skills-shortages-europe-national-infographics-series>

Cedefop skills forecast 2035: the twin transition and the demographic challenge drive demand for high-level skills

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/cedefop-skills-forecast-2035-twin-transition-and-demographic-challenge-drive-demand-high-level>

Closing the gender gap in vocational education and training: a path to inclusive growth

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/closing-gender-gap-vocational-education-and-training-path-inclusive-growth>

Understanding female NEETs needs: Despite progress in education and employment policies, young women across the EU remain disproportionately affected by labour market downturns.

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/breaking-barriers-young-women-not-employment-education-or-training>

National qualifications frameworks: strengthening transparency and mobility in the EU and beyond

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/national-qualifications-frameworks-strengthening-transparency-and-mobility-eu-and-beyond>

### European Forum of Technical and Vocational Education and Training

Magazine for VET Professionals – March 2025

[https://efvet.org/magazines/#flipbook-df\\_38218/1/](https://efvet.org/magazines/#flipbook-df_38218/1/)

### European Training Foundation

Retrospective on the ETF Final Conference: Internationalizing Vocational Excellence

<https://efvet.org/etf-final-conference-internationalizing-vocational-excellence/>

## European Policy Centre

Publication: Research perspectives on the future of work

<https://www.epc.eu/en/publications/Research-perspectives-on-the-future-of-work~612524>

## International

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### OECD

Empowering Young People in the Digital Financial Age: The Role of Financial Literacy

<https://www.oecd.org/en/blogs/2025/03/the-role-of-financial-literacy.html>

## Countries

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### Austria

Research report: Indicators for dual vocational training  
Vocational Training 2024 (Germany - Austria - Switzerland)

[https://www.bmaw.gv.at/dam/jcr:a613fafc-20b4-4ad6-8c42-c823a9e4e730/D-A-CH-Monitoring\\_Endbericht\\_finale%20Version.cleaned.pdf](https://www.bmaw.gv.at/dam/jcr:a613fafc-20b4-4ad6-8c42-c823a9e4e730/D-A-CH-Monitoring_Endbericht_finale%20Version.cleaned.pdf)

Austrian Federal Economic Chamber on the federal government's skilled labour strategy: „Austria must actively shape growth opportunities by focus on qualification and upgrading of dual training as apprenticeships are the most cost-effective option for the public sector.“ The federal government's skilled labour strategy should be based on three pillars – a qualification offensive, the upgrading of apprenticeships and vocational training, and better conditions for international skilled workers.

<https://www.wko.at/oe/news/wkoe-kuehnel--fachkraeftestrategie-hat-hoechste-prioritaet>



### Belgium

The focus in the Aurora project is on recruitment and training of Indian nurses for Belgian healthcare.

<https://chinta-aurora.be/news>

### Croatia

Since its launch in 2022, Croatia's voucher scheme has supported over 29 000 learners, boosting digital, green, and labour-market-relevant skills while fostering lifelong learning but the participation of disadvantaged groups remains a challenge.

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/croatia-vouchers-adults-boost-interest-lifelong-learning>

## Denmark

Reform of upper secondary education: organisation of apprentices publishes proposal for academic content from EPX

<https://via.ritzau.dk/pressemeddelelse/14294119/eeo-lancerer-udspil-til-epx-faglige-indhold?publisherId=13561702&lang=da>

Study: Young people choose vocational training to make a difference, but some are put off by working conditions.

<https://eva.dk/videregaaende-uddannelse/studievalg/valg-og-fravalg-af-professionsbacheloruddannelser/unge-vaelger-professionsuddannelser-for-at-goere-en-forskel-men-nogle-fravaelger-dem-paa-grund-af-arbejdsvilkaar>

Fewer dropouts from vocational education and training: Large investments to increase costs per skilled worker by up to 50 percent

<https://www.uvm.dk/aktuelt/nyheder/uvm/2025/marts/250305-faerre-skal-falde-fra-paa-erhvervsuddannelserne>

The Youth Lift - a national partnership: The 43,000 young people without education and work must be helped to find work. Municipalities can apply for more than half a billion kroner to help young people into work or education.

<https://bm.dk/arbejdsmraader/aktuelle-fokusomraader/ungeloftet>

Efforts to improve well-being helped more SOSU students complete their education

<https://companyoung.com/artikler/markant-lavere-fracald-blandt-sosu-elever-efter-trivselsindsats>

## Estonia

Estonia Receives High International Recognition for Educational Innovation: The development and implementation of these programs take place in close cooperation with Harno's partners, including kindergartens, general education, vocational, and higher education institutions, education associations, employers, and government agencies.

<https://hm.ee/en/news/estonia-receives-high-international-recognition-educational-innovation>

AI-Leap 2025 - AI initiative for schools: The initiative, planned to be launched on 1 September 2025, will provide students and teachers with free access to the world's leading AI applications and the necessary skills to use them effectively in learning.

<https://hm.ee/en/news/estonia-announces-groundbreaking-national-initiative-ai-leap-programme-bring-ai-tools-all>

Study: Estonian Adults Among the Best in the World in Skills, Especially in Younger Generations

<https://hm.ee/en/news/study-estonian-adults-among-best-world-skills-especially-younger-generations>

## France

Latest findings highlight regional initiatives in career guidance in public schools

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/france-growing-role-regions-unlocking-career-guidance-vocational-education-and-training>

## Greece

Transforming vocational education – new training guides and educational materials for SAEK schools

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/greece-transforming-vocational-education-new-training-guides-and-educational-materials-saek-schools>

## Ireland

€26 million Advanced Manufacturing Training Centre of Excellence (AMTCE) in Dundalk officially opened: This state-of-the-art facility represents the largest single capital investment in the Further Education and Training sector to date. It will provide cutting edge training in Advanced Manufacturing including Robotics, Construction Technologies, 3D Printing including Concrete Printing, Cyber Security and ICT Innovations.

<https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/d2d9e-minister-lawless-officially-opens-26-million-advanced-manufacturing-training-centre-of-excellence-in-dundalk/>

Opening of national consultation on post-primary guidance: The process is being undertaken by the Department of Education as part of the National Strategic Framework for Lifelong Guidance: Strategic Action Plan 2024-2030.

<https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/ae936-minister-mcentee-announces-opening-of-national-consultation-on-post-primary-guidance/>

## Italy

Emerging professions in artificial intelligence

<https://excelsiorienta.unioncamere.it/2025/03/04/intelligenza-artificiale-e-machine-learning-le-professioni-del-domani/>

The ITS Academy Moda System offers specialised courses for those who want to work in the textile, clothing, footwear and accessories industry.

<https://excelsiorienta.unioncamere.it/2025/02/04/sistema-moda-formare-i-talenti-delleccellenza-italiana/>

## New Zealand

2025 Work-based learning reforms: The Government will reshape vocational education and training to return decision making to regions and enable greater industry input into work-based learning Tertiary Education and Skills Minister says. That allows institutes of technology and polytechnics (ITPs) to be established as autonomous entities.

<https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/vocational-education-and-training-decisions-support-return-regions>

2025 Work-based learning reforms: Following on from decisions in December 2024, Cabinet agreed to further targeted consultation with industry on the future model of work-based learning.

<https://www.education.govt.nz/have-your-say/2025-work-based-learning-reforms-targeted-consultation/details>

## Switzerland

Four approaches to making VET more attractive

<https://transfer.vet/vier-ansatze-zur-steigerung-der-attraktivitaet-der-berufsbildung/>

Evaluation of the EHB on the mobility of learners in dual VET. Language barriers restrict the choice of apprenticeships.

<https://transfer.vet/sprachgrenzen-schraenken-die-lehrstellenauswahl-ein/>

Digital participation of people with disabilities in VET: Not to be taken for granted

<https://transfer.vet/digitale-teilhabe-keine-selbstverstaendlichkeit/>

Evaluation: Fostering transversal competences is a task for the school as a whole

<https://transfer.vet/die-foerderung-transversaler-kompetenzen-ist-eine-aufgabe-der-ganzen-schule/>

## The Netherlands

The negotiations for a new collective labour agreement for MBO are in full swing. On 10 February, the MBO council and the trade unions (AOB, CNV Education, FvOv and FNV Government) exchanged proposals. Various consultations are planned in the near future to discuss both proposals.

<https://www.mбораad.nl/nieuws/insteek-mbo-raad-cao-mbo-eenvoudiger-en-eigentijdser>

Publication of the book 'But you don't understand that' about the value of apprenticeships, apprentices and vocational school teachers and trainers for society, but also about an educational gap in the Netherlands

<https://www.mбораad.nl/nieuws/interview-karim-amghar-wil-de-kloof-dichten>

The people of the Netherlands are very concerned about the shortage of skilled workers. This is the conclusion of a new study by Ipsos/I&O, which was presented as part of Skilled Trades Week. More than 90 per cent of the country's population considers this shortage to be a major problem, and the same percentage believes that more should be done to encourage young people to pursue VET.

<https://www.mбораad.nl/nieuws/nederland-enorm-bezorgd-over-tekort-aan-vakmensen>

A portal has been developed for the technology and construction sector (TGO) on the initiative of the TGO sector group to make learning materials (openly) accessible. The pilot project will continue until June, but the portal is already open to everyone.

<https://www.mбораad.nl/nieuws/btg-techniek-tgo-gebouwde-omgeving-lanceert-portal-digitale-leermaterialen-mbo>

## Save the Date

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31/03/2025: Submission deadline for a Workshop Proposal for the EfVET Conference 2025 "Wellbeing in a Digitalised World – Crafting the Future of VET 2035" (22-25/10/2025)

<https://efvet.org/call-for-workshops-efvet-annual-conference/>

01-02/04/2025: 2025 joint Cedefop-OECD symposium: New fields for apprenticeship

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events/2025-joint-edefop-oecd-symposium-new-fields-apprenticeship>

01-03/07/2026: The 10th Austrian VET Research Conference (BBFK) will be held in Innsbruck and hosted by the University College of Teacher Education Tyrol.

<https://www.bbfk.at/>



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