

REFERNET VETNEWS INTERNATIONAL

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Europe



European Commission

Boosting EU competitiveness: Commission launches call for evidence for new Vocational Education and Training (VET) strategy. To ensure the strategy reflects the realities on the ground, the Commission is launching a [call for evidence](#) to gather input from all interested parties. The consultation is open until 19 February 2026.

https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/news/boosting-eu-competitiveness-commission-launches-call-evidence-new-vocational-education-and-training-2026-01-26_en

The European Alliance for Apprenticeships (EaFA) has announced its 2026 Action Plan

https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/news/look-back-eafas-2025-achievements-and-preview-eafas-2026-roadmap-2026-01-27_en

Commission appoints Ylva Johansson to lead the European Skills High-Level Board

https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/news/commission-appoints-ylva-johansson-lead-european-skills-high-level-board-2026-01-29_en

Public consultation: Skills portability, action 1 - facilitating worker mobility across the EU through skills transparency and digitalization

https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/15892-Skills-portability-action-1-facilitating-worker-mobility-across-the-EU-through-skills-transparency-and-digitalisation_en

New Social Situation Monitor research notes shed light on ageing and jobs in Europe's technological future: How clustered are disadvantages among older Europeans? and The future employment impact of artificial intelligence and emerging digital technologies in Europe

https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/news/new-social-situation-monitor-research-notes-shed-light-ageing-and-jobs-europes-technological-future-2026-01-21_en

The European Commission has presented a new five-year strategy on migration, which aims, among other things, to attract talent to the EU in order to strengthen the competitiveness of our economies.

https://commission.europa.eu/news-and-media/news/new-strategies-migration-and-eu-visa-make-borders-more-secure-and-encourage-talent-mobility-2026-01-29_en

Cedefop

Under the motto “An Autonomous Union. Open to the World,” the Cypriot Presidency highlights a growing consensus in EU policymaking: Europe’s capacity to act independently and compete globally depends on a skilled, adaptable and resilient workforce.

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/skilled-union-autonomous-union-open-world>

Preparing for 2040: four AI-powered scenarios for the future of continuing skills development

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/preparing-2040-four-ai-powered-scenarios-future-continuing-skills-development>

Building stronger systems: how Lifelong Guidance supports development of resilient careers and societies

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/building-stronger-systems-how-lifelong-guidance-supports-development-resilient-careers-and-societies>

European Higher Education Sector Observatory (EHESO)

From data to direction: EHESO conference explores how the Observatory can support the Union of Skills

<https://national-policies.eacea.ec.europa.eu/eheso/news/from-data-to-direction-eheso-conference-explores-how-the-observatory-can-support-the-union-of-skills>

ETF

Are skills and jobs the missing link in climate strategies?

<https://www.etf.europa.eu/en/news-and-events/news/are-skills-and-jobs-missing-link-climate-strategies>

International



VET research

New publication: The Palgrave Handbook of Policy Transfer in Vocational Education and Beyond

<https://vetnetsite.org/2026/01/26/new-publication-the-palgrave-handbook-of-policy-transfer-in-vocational-education-and-beyond/>

International Journal for Research in Vocational Education and Training (IJRVET): First Issue of 2026 published

<https://vetnetsite.org/2026/01/31/ijrvet-first-issue-in-2026-published/>

WorldSkills

A first look at WorldSkills Conference 2026 programme

<https://worldskillsconference2026.com/news/a-first-look-at-worldskills-conference-2026-programme/>

The unifying language of skill: WorldSkills Members speak an estimated 50 to 60 different languages between them.

<https://worldskills.org/media/news/unifying-language-skill/>

OECD

OECD report: The Theory and Practice of Upper Secondary Certification

https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/the-theory-and-practice-of-upper-secondary-certification_b3fea5ba-en.html

OECD Digital Education Outlook 2026. Exploring Effective Uses of Generative AI in Education

https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/oecd-digital-education-outlook-2026_062a7394-en.html

Our world in data

Updated topic page on global education

https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/share-of-the-world-population-with-at-least-basic-education?utm_source=OWID+Newsletter&utm_campaign=19ad0ab037-owid-brief-2026-01-09&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-0c7f305164-599304701

Countries

Austria

Education reform project: What should schools look like tomorrow? The Ministry of Education's 'Plan for the Future' invites everyone to contribute their ideas for the education of tomorrow.

<https://youngscience.oead.at/de/aktuelles/artikel/2026/01/reformprojekt-fuer-bildung-bevoelkerung-gestaltet-plan-zukunft-mit>

Czech Republic

In 2024, almost half of Czech teachers used artificial intelligence in the workplace. This is significantly higher than the EU average.

https://edurevue.npi.cz/clanky/cesti-ucitele-patri-k-evropske-spicke-v-ai-je-to-skvely-start-ale-jen-zacatek-dl?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=ict&utm_content=digi-9-1-2025

Estonia

The Minister for Education and Research signed a regulation that creates a clear and supportive framework for the implementation of preparatory studies. Preparatory education is aimed at young people who, after completing basic education, do not immediately find a place in upper secondary school or vocational training, or who need support to develop their knowledge and skills before moving on to the next level of education.

<https://hm.ee/uudised/ettevalmistav-ope-taiendav-opitee-pohikoolilopetajatele>

France

Strengthening quality assurance to boost trust in VET

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/france-strengthening-quality-assurance-boost-trust-vet>

New digital tool supports VET programme planning

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/france-new-digital-tool-supports-vet-programme-planning>

Georgia

In an open letter, the German Association for Eastern European Studies has spoken out against plans for a radical overhaul of the Georgian higher education system, which aims to bring universities under complete state control. They fear that this will lead to a disconnect from the European higher education system. Georgia has participated in the Bologna Process to date. In addition to degree programmes, VET programmes are also offered there.

<https://dgo-online.org/informieren/aktuelles/offener-brief-umbau-hochschulen-georgien-dgo/>

https://share.deutschlandradio.de/dlf-audiothek-audio-teilen.html?audio_id=dira_9B0E090CFDFB11F07B4AB883034C2FA0

<https://georgiatoday.ge/georgian-dream-unveils-one-city-one-faculty-higher-education-reform/>

Greece

Improving Learning Outcomes in Greece. Strengthening School Governance, Teacher Professionalism and Digital Education

https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/improving-learning-outcomes-in-greece_6323bd8e-en.html

Hungary

Equal opportunities programme boosts support for vocational students

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/hungary-equal-opportunities-programme-boosts-support-vocational-students>

New steps in external evaluation strengthen VET quality

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/hungary-new-steps-external-evaluation-strengthen-vet-quality>

Ireland

National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) awarded 2025 UNESCO Confucius Prize for Literacy for eLearning programme on International Literacy Day

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/ireland-national-adult-literacy-agency-nala-awarded-2025-unesco-confucius-prize-literacy-elearning>

Italy

Data-driven coordination to strengthen youth training and labour market inclusion

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/italy-data-driven-coordination-strengthen-youth-training-and-labour-market-inclusion>

Lithuania

Model procedure for skills competitions approved

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/lithuania-model-procedure-skills-competitions-approved>

Luxembourg

MegaLab 2025 links vocational training and gender equality

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/luxembourg-megalab-2025-links-vocational-training-and-gender-equality>



Portugal

Women to make up 30% of ICT specialists

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/portugal-women-make-30-ict-specialists>

Sweden

OECD publication: Education in Sweden. A Diagnostic Review with Analysis of PISA 2022 Results

https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/education-in-sweden_9bbbb63d-en.html

The Netherlands

Career opportunities for VET graduates at Dutch central government

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/netherlands-career-opportunities-vet-graduates-dutch-central-government>

<https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/actueel/nieuws/2025/11/06/ocw-en-bzk-vro-starten-traineeprogramma-voor-mboers>

The draft bill 'Requirements for MBOs Standards for MBOs Basic Skills' imposes additional requirements on teachers who offer training in Dutch, arithmetic and citizenship. The planned date of entry into force of the law is 1 August 2027.

https://content.mailplus.nl/m16/docs/user31300659/14263/Inhoud_aanvullende_opleidingseisen_voor_Nederlands.pdf

Save the Date

10/02/2026: EU-ALMPO – Harnessing AI in Supporting Labour Market Policy Making. Online. The EU ALMP Observatory (EU-ALMPO) is a new EU-funded initiative designed to improve the development, implementation, and evaluation of Active Labour Market Policies (ALMPs) across EU member states.

<https://eu-almppo.eu/eu-almppo-harnessing-ai-in-supporting-labour-market-policy-making/>

04/03/2026: the European Learning Platform project (EULEP) will celebrate its final project conference, "VET = Excellence3", in Brussels. Registration will open shortly and more information will be available on the EULEP website.

<https://eulep.eu/>

23-25/09/2026: Registration is open for WorldSkills Conference 2026: Shaping a Skills-Driven Future

<https://api.worldskills.org/resources/download/28713>



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