

REFERNET VETNEWS INTERNATIONAL

09/2026

15/07/2026

Europe

European Commission

On 1 July 2026, Ireland assumed the Presidency of the Council of the European Union: VET is primarily addressed in the context of skills for the AI age, lifelong learning and European competitiveness. Other topics relevant to VET include youth policy, high-quality employment and fair labour mobility.

<https://irish-presidency.consilium.europa.eu/en/programme/programme-of-the-irish-presidency/>



Focusing on skills and fair labour mobility, the European Commission plans to put forward a new Fair labour mobility package in 2026. It should consist of three elements: a proposal for a European Social Security Pass, strengthening of the European Labour Authority, and a skills portability initiative.

<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/legislative-train/theme-supporting-people-strengthening-our-societies-and-our-social-model/file-skills-portability-initiative>

Comparative Reports. Youth access to affordable and quality housing - a comparative analysis of national policies

<https://national-policies.eacea.ec.europa.eu/youthwiki/publications/youth-access-to-affordable-and-quality-housing-a-comparative-analysis-of-national-policies>

German Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB)

New priorities from the European Commission for vocational training and securing a skilled workforce: “By linking vocational training initiatives to economic policy, the European Commission is expanding its scope for action.”

[bing.com/ck/a?!&p=34517dc54696fc6f14db429044276c4d35dd2d2fa50a616b6417c6a556b06dddJmltdHM9MTc4NDA3MzYwMA&ptn=3&ver=2&hsh=4&fclid=1a3ebcaa-3e8e-667d-141a-a8313f326771&psq=»Durch+die+Anbindung+von+Initiativen+der+Berufsbildung+an+die+Wirtschafts politik+erreicht+die+EU-Kommission+eine+Ausweitung+ihres+Gestaltungsspielraums.«&u=a1aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuYmliYi5kZS9kaWVuc3QvcHVibGlrYXRpb25lbi9kZS9kb3dubG9hZC8yMDM2MA&ntb=1](https://www.bing.com/ck/a?!&p=34517dc54696fc6f14db429044276c4d35dd2d2fa50a616b6417c6a556b06dddJmltdHM9MTc4NDA3MzYwMA&ptn=3&ver=2&hsh=4&fclid=1a3ebcaa-3e8e-667d-141a-a8313f326771&psq=»Durch+die+Anbindung+von+Initiativen+der+Berufsbildung+an+die+Wirtschafts politik+erreicht+die+EU-Kommission+eine+Ausweitung+ihres+Gestaltungsspielraums.«&u=a1aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuYmliYi5kZS9kaWVuc3QvcHVibGlrYXRpb25lbi9kZS9kb3dubG9hZC8yMDM2MA&ntb=1)

Cedefop

Celebrating European youth: building lifelong pathways between learning and working

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/celebrating-european-youth-building-lifelong-pathways-between-learning-and-working>

Europe's competitiveness depends as much on developing people's skills as on creating workplaces where those skills can be fully used and continue to grow. That was the central message emerging from a Cedefop conference held in Thessaloniki on 29–30 June 2026, where researchers, policymakers, employers, trade unions and practitioners explored new evidence on how workplace practices shape skills development, productivity and job quality.

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/skills-productivity-and-job-quality-why-europes-competitiveness-runs-through-workplace>

Insights from a ReferNet survey Digital tools for the portability of learning outcomes

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications/7103>

Paper: Digital skills integration in IVET curricula remains uneven in scope, depth and consistency. These differences reflect structural features of IVET systems, including governance arrangements, curriculum update processes, stakeholder involvement and implementation capacity.

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/digital-skills-initial-vet-curricula-governance-matters-much-content>

Publication: Recognition and validation of foreign VET qualifications in Europe. Comparative insights for skills portability

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications/7104>

Paper: The impact of learning-outcomes-based curricula on work- and practice based IVET

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications/5622>

Policy brief: New careers in the green transition. Using online job advertisements to track emerging jobs and skills

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications/9210>

Eurydice

Teachers' and school heads' salaries and allowances in Europe

<https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/data-and-visuals/teachers-heads-salaries>

ETUC

Europe's skills system needs the social partners: new joint report and recommendations on skills mismatches

<https://www.etuc.org/en/publication/europes-skills-system-needs-social-partners-new-joint-report-and-recommendations-skills>

ETUC views on Skills Portability Initiative

<https://www.etuc.org/sites/default/files/publication/file/2026-03/FINAL%20ETUC%20views%20on%20Skills%20Portability%20Initiative.pdf>

ETUC views on "Skills first approach"

<https://www.etuc.org/en/document/etuc-views-skills-first-approach>

International

VET research

This paper examines whether climate finance contributes to reducing youth inactivity, measured by the share of young people not in education, employment, or training (NEET). The findings suggest that climate finance functions as a developmental tool, promoting youth engagement through human capital formation and skill development. Policy-wise,



aligning climate-finance frameworks with national education, training, and employment systems can potentially transform external funds into effective catalysts for reducing NEET rates.

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-026-54358-7>

The paper finds that imperfect self-knowledge about one's own skills is an important cause of skill mismatch at the start of working life, leading to a higher likelihood of apprenticeship contract dissolution. It argues that occupational mismatch often begins before labor market entry due to inaccurate self-assessments rather than only search frictions or institutional barriers. The findings suggest that policies providing structured feedback, repeated evaluations, and career guidance could improve self-knowledge and labor market matching.

<https://docs.iza.org/dp18730.pdf>

UNESCO

Integrating AI in TVET: Launch of a practical guide for institutions

<https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/integrating-ai-tvet-launch-practical-guide-institutions>

OECD

Developing Vocational Education and Training with Artificial Intelligence: This report highlights AI as an opportunity to accelerate the development of VET and to support skills development processes through better use of labour market data – without replacing human expertise. This requires clear rules on transparency, accountability, data protection, data quality and quality assurance, as well as the development of relevant skills amongst the stakeholders involved. At the same time, it is emphasised that SMEs, smaller education providers and stakeholders with limited digital capacity must also be involved in the AI-supported further development of VET.

https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/developing-vocational-education-and-training-with-artificial-intelligence_e9f76b4e-en.html

Five principles for the effective use of AI in vocational education and training development: AI should support the development of curricula and qualifications, but should not replace human responsibility. The OECD has set out five guiding principles: a people-centred approach, diversity and inclusion, clear responsibilities, transparency, and high standards of data quality, data security and data protection. In addition, VET-specific AI guidelines, skills development and interoperable data infrastructures are recommended.

https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/five-principles-for-the-effective-use-of-ai-in-vocational-education-and-training-development_ee8c8e8e-en.html

Better Skills Data for Smarter Financing of Education and Training: The OECD identifies the lack of longitudinal links between training programmes and labour market outcomes, as well as the fragmentation of relevant education, labour market and social data across different stakeholders, as a key shortcoming. For VET, it recommends tracking graduates in terms of employment, income and job stability in order to assess the labour market outcomes of training programmes. Funding decisions should be more closely aligned with these findings.

https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/better-skills-data-for-smarter-financing-of-education-and-training_f77b4282-en.html

OECD Employment Outlook 2026: Key findings: Labour Markets continue to be resilient, even as signs of weakening emerge; Where people live has a big impact on their employment opportunities; Real wages are still under pressure in many countries despite recent growth

https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/oecd-employment-outlook-2026_7e710f54-en.html

Countries

Austria

Annual Report 2025: Of particular relevance to VET are the expansion of Erasmus+ in vocational education and training, with rising mobility figures for apprentices and training staff, as well as the promotion of internationalisation and skills development. In addition, the OeAD addresses digital skills and AI as key future themes for education and vocational education and training.

<https://oead.at/de/der-oead/kommunikation-und-publikationen/jahresbericht#c98368>

Apprentices can practise for their exam interviews using the AI training tool from lap.at.

<https://lap.at/ki-training>

How fair is our intergenerational contract? There are teaching resources available for upper secondary schools on this topic.

<https://open.spotify.com/episode/2MniX0vG4wDKgVAN0lvLe3?si=oexly-JzSX6QPbB2hPsNGA&nd=1&dlsi=8c7632faf7fc4460>

The Q-Lehre Forum: The State Prize for Best Apprenticeship Training Organisations is creating a platform for excellence in apprenticeship training

<https://beste-lehrbetriebe.at/>

Podcast: 'How coaching strengthens apprentices and businesses in the long term'

<https://open.spotify.com/episode/4zNNdlzBwhM9OJ2LBsD9Ov?si=uHIDzLfZTJOnifBbknkqwQ&nd=1&dlsi=7b4a936d2ddc4eb0>

Podcast: The challenge when apprentices remain silent.

<https://ausbildungtogo.podigee.io/108-hilfe-mein-auszubildender-stellt-keine-fragen>

Research report: Tomorrow's skilled workers. Prospects for the development of apprenticeship training in Vorarlberg

<https://ibw.at/news/fachkraefte-von-morgen,61.html>

Belgium

Spotlight on jobs and skills

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications/8172>

Czech Republic

Towards a Harmonised Micro-Credential Ecosystem in Czechia: Recommendations: Micro-credentials as a complement to VET; standards for the definition, quality assurance, learning outcomes and recognition of micro-credentials, to ensure that they are trustworthy and transferable within the VET context and offer connectivity to qualifications systems; Labour market orientation; recommends closer coordination between the Ministry of Education, higher education institutions, VET providers, employers and quality assurance bodies in order to establish a coherent micro-credential ecosystem.

https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/towards-a-harmonised-micro-credential-ecosystem-in-czechia_0be96df9-en.html

DACH

Indicators for Dual Vocational Training 2025. Germany – Austria – Switzerland. Research Report

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/408350332_Indikatoren_zur_dualen_Berufsbildung_2025_Deutschland_-_Osterreich_-_Schweiz_Forschungsbericht

Denmark

Strengthening wellbeing in VET

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/denmark-strengthening-wellbeing-vet>

Estonia

The draft Act on Professions and Skills strengthens the link between qualifications and the labour market by bringing together qualifications forecasts, curricula, competence profiles, occupational standards and assessments within an integrated system. In addition, the qualifications framework will be updated, the recognition of informally acquired competences will be strengthened, and the fragmentation of the vocational qualifications system will be reduced. It is scheduled to come into force in early 2027.

<https://hm.ee/uudised/kutse-ja-oskusseaduse-eelnou-loob-tugevama-sideme-oskuste-kvalifikatsioonide-ja-tooturu-0>

Greece

New framework promotes safe and responsible use of AI in schools

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/greece-new-framework-promotes-safe-and-responsible-use-ai-schools>

Iceland

Hospitality pilot moves from design to implementation

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/iceland-hospitality-pilot-moves-design-implementation>

Latvia

VET excellence award 2026

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/latvia-vet-excellence-award-2026>

Lithuania

Lithuania is continuing to develop its national adult education platform, kursuok.lt, with a growing focus on adult career guidance services and targeted support measures for learners.

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/lithuania-kursuoklt-strengthens-targeted-learning-support-and-adult-career-guidance>

Malta

"Promote vocational education and training (VET) as a rewarding pathway for acquiring high-value digital and green skills.": The National Skills Strategy and Action Plan for Malta proposes, with regard to VET, that future-oriented skills be systematically integrated into VET and that VET be viewed as an integral part of lifelong learning. It also calls for the establishment of a Malta Skills Observatory to ensure that labour market information guides VET planning. Careers guidance is seen as key to VET and employers should be more closely involved in VET. One innovative aspect of the report is the development of a sectoral skills strategy for the maritime sector.

https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/a-national-skills-strategy-and-action-plan-for-malta_d6cb4804-en.html

Portugal

Promoting youth employability among the most vulnerable

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/portugal-promoting-youth-employability-among-most-vulnerable>

Portugal has released its first open-source language model to strengthen digital sovereignty

<https://www.sevenlab.ai/de/ai-news/portugal-veroeffentlicht-sein-erstes-open-source-sprachmodell-zur-starkung-der-digitalen-souveranitat>

Spain

Improving Learning Outcomes in Catalonia, Spain. Catalonia has established several pathways between general and vocational education and training, and regards VET as a key tool for tackling early school leaving and promoting educational equity. Improvement is seen

to be in career guidance and links with the labour market, including through greater integration of work-based learning phases.

https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/improving-learning-outcomes-in-catalonia-spain_238d6264-en.html



Switzerland

The new title suffixes 'Professional Bachelor' and 'Professional Master' are to be introduced. The aim is to position higher vocational education more clearly within the tertiary sector and to raise its profile. The amendment to the Vocational Training Act and the corresponding changes to the Vocational Training Ordinance will come into force on 1 October 2026.

<https://www.admin.ch/de/newsb/AgnyNTEnktUheNCP6FOoj>

Study: Professional pride in a comparison of professions

https://langzeit-pflege.ch/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/Sotomo_MKM_Erfuellung.pdf

The Netherlands

MBO Council pleased with the MBO's enhanced role in a new approach to lifelong development

<https://www.mboraad.nl/nieuws/mbo-raad-blij-met-sterkere-rol-mbo-nieuwe-koers-voor-leven-lang-ontwikkelen>

The government's talent strategy offers opportunities for the skilled trades, innovation and regional cooperation

<https://www.mboraad.nl/nieuws/talentstrategie-kabinet-biedt-kansen-voor-vakmanschap-innovatie-en-regionale-samenwerking>

MBO Council welcomes the Cabinet's plan for MBO funding

<https://www.mboraad.nl/nieuws/mbo-raad-positief-over-kabinetsplan-voor-mbo-bekostiging>

MBO Council welcomes draft bill on mandatory work experience allowance

<https://www.mboraad.nl/nieuws/mbo-raad-verwelkomt-wetsvoorstel-voor-verplichte-stagevergoeding>

"The labour market of the future requires close cooperation between the healthcare sector and the education sector": An ageing population, staff shortages and increasingly complex healthcare issues call for new solutions and close cooperation between the healthcare sector and the education sector.

<https://www.mboraad.nl/nieuws/adnan-tekin-bij-drechtzorg-arbeidsmarkt-van-de-toekomst-vraagt-om-hechte-samenwerking-tussen>

UK

UK leaders warn universities to rethink skills, partnerships and AI

<https://thepienews.com/uk-leaders-warn-unis-to-rethink-skills-partnerships-and-ai/>

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