



REFERNET VETNEWS INTERNATIONAL

12/2026

17/09/2026

Europe

European Commission

A new joint study by Cedefop and the ETF takes stock of the implementation of European vocational education and training priorities in EU, EEA and candidate countries. In particular, it examines how vocational education and training systems can be made more flexible, more innovative and better aligned with changing skills requirements.

https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/future-proofing-vet-europe-progress-challenges-and-policy-directions_en

Fair Labour Mobility Package / Skills Portability Initiative: The European Commission has presented a comprehensive package on fair labour mobility, designed to significantly simplify the cross-border recognition and comparability of qualifications. Among other things, it provides for digital qualifications certificates, faster recognition procedures and common rules for qualifications from third countries.

https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/news/commission-proposes-ambitious-measures-strengthen-fair-labour-mobility-2026-09-15_en

European Parliament

Skills portability initiative – Key findings on the implementation

[https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2026/774743/EPRS_BRI\(2026\)774743_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2026/774743/EPRS_BRI(2026)774743_EN.pdf)

Cedefop

Publication: Citizenship education in initial vocational education and training: enabling and hindering factors. The literature review examines how citizenship education is integrated into initial vocational education and training (IVET) across Europe and identifies four key dimensions of citizenship competence: knowledge and application of democratic principles and political literacy; political and civic self-efficacy and civic engagement; critical thinking and media literacy; and knowledge of EU history and common European values.

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications/5624>



Spotting labour shortages before they bite: New Cedefop indicator flags real-time occupational shortage

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/spotting-labour-shortages-they-bite>

Literacy for people, the planet and prosperity. Where Europe's skills agenda begins

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/literacy-people-planet-and-prosperity>

European Alliance for Apprenticeships (EAfA)

The 2026 European Alliance for Apprenticeships (EAfA) Members' Survey is now open, and all EAfA members are invited to take part. The annual survey gives members an opportunity to showcase the progress that they have made in implementing their pledges between September 2025 and August 2026, while helping to shape the Alliance's future priorities and activities.

https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/news/share-your-insights-participate-2025-2026-eafa-members-survey-2026-09-14_en?utm_source=chatgpt.com

International

OECD

PISA 2025: The overall performance of OECD countries declined, with the lowest average levels of performance ever observed in science, reading and mathematics. The PISA 2025 results provide a global snapshot of how well 15-year-olds are prepared for the future across science, reading, math and computational problem solving and go beyond performance to reveal students' mindsets, highlighting attitudes such as curiosity, perseverance and learner agency. New evidence on how students use AI for schoolwork offer insights on the role of AI in teaching and learning.

<https://www.oecd.org/en/about/programmes/pisa.html>

The PISA 2025 results show a further global decline in mathematics, reading and science. The media are discussing the causes and consequences.

https://www.eurotopics.net/de/363780/pisa-studie-verlernt-europa-lesen-schreiben-und-rechnen?pk_campaign=et2026-09-09-de&pk_kwd=363780



VET research

The fact sheet analysed demand for in-depth AI skills across all 27 EU Member States, distinguishing these advanced skills from general AI literacy. While general AI knowledge enables employees to use AI applications effectively, in-depth skills are needed, for example, to develop AI applications. The estimated number of employees working in occupations requiring in-depth AI skills has more than doubled. These figures suggest that in-depth AI skills are becoming increasingly important in the EU labour market. However, whilst demand for in-depth AI skills has risen significantly across the EU as a whole, there are considerable differences between Member States in this regard.

<https://www.iwkoeln.de/studien/jan-buechel-ai-skills-demand-in-the-eu.html>

Countries

Austria

Report on the situation regarding youth employment and apprenticeship training in Austria: Both the number of new apprentices and the number of training companies are at an all-time low, whilst the number of people seeking apprenticeships, youth unemployment and the proportion of young people without a secondary education qualification have risen. The report identifies areas where action is needed to boost the willingness to provide apprenticeships and to improve the integration of young people into apprenticeships and employment.

<https://ibw.at/publikationen/id/618/>

Skilled Workers Radar 2026: A business survey on the demand for and shortage of skilled workers shows that the shortage is at a very high level. The shortage is being felt in a large proportion of the Austrian businesses surveyed (78 per cent) and particularly affects apprenticeship graduates.

<https://ibw.at/publikationen/id/617/>

Cyprus

The Cypriot post-secondary institutes for vocational education and training (MIEEK) are launching specialised vocational training programmes for adults with disabilities. These

programmes are designed to develop knowledge, skills and competences in an accessible and supportive learning environment, thereby broadening access to vocational qualifications.

<https://www.gov.cy/paideia-athlitismos-neolaia/anoikti-prosklisi-ekdilosis-endiaferontos-gia-ta-eidika-programmata-mieek-gia-enilika-atoma-me-anapiries/>

Denmark

Position statements by Danish directors of education on the EPX reform. EPX is seen as a systemic change that could break down the status hierarchy between general and vocational education and enhance the standing of vocational education pathways.

<https://uddannelsesmonitor.dk/nyheder/debat/article19643699.ece>

Randers HF & VUC will launch a local “HF Craft and Design” programme in 2027, combining general upper secondary education with hands-on learning in crafts, design and technology. With this initiative, an education provider traditionally focused on general education is testing a closer integration of upper secondary general education with practical and vocational orientation. This will serve as a pilot for the 2030 EPX programme, testing how academic education can be more closely integrated with practical learning and vocational pathways.

<https://www.randershfvuc.dk/om-skolen/nyheder/tag-en-hf-med-haandvaerk-og-design-fra-august-2027>

Danish Minister for Employment argues that AI could shift the balance between educational levels and strengthen the labour-market position of skilled workers and VET. She challenges the perception that university education necessarily offers the best route to high earnings and encourages more young people to pursue VET. The full article is behind a paywall.

<https://uddannelsesmonitor.dk/nyheder/politik/article19639028.ece>

The new study on leadership at Danish vocational colleges reveals significant differences in involvement and trust between the various management levels. In particular, head teachers feel less frequently involved in relevant decisions and report lower levels of mutual trust than those at higher management levels. The findings are based on a nationwide survey of 232 managers and 27 in-depth interviews.

<https://www.kp.dk/wp-content/uploads/2026/09/ledelse-i-erhvervsuddannelserne-opsat-final-5.pdf>

Slightly fewer young people between the ages of 15 and 24 are without a job or education. New figures show a slight decrease in 2025 compared to previous years.

<https://uvm.dk/aktuelt/nyheder/2026/september/2609011-lidt-faerre-unge-staar-nu-uden-job-og-uddannelse/>

Estonia

The Ministry of Education has confirmed that the coordinated transition process between basic school, upper secondary general education and VET, introduced in 2026, will continue. The 2026/27 school year marks the first full-scale implementation of the new VET model,

with the reformed curricula applied nationwide and VET provision more systematically linked to labour market forecasts. The reform has strengthened the Ministry's strategic steering of VET provision, with the number and focus of state-funded training places and curricula increasingly aligned with labour market needs, development priorities and input from vocational and industry associations.

<https://hm.ee/uudised/haridus-ja-teadusminister-kinnitas-kutseoppeasutusse-ja-gumnaasiumis-sisseastumise>

Following the reform of the admissions framework, implementation challenges remain in the transition from basic school to upper secondary general education or VET, particularly in matching available places with the preferences and educational profiles of students who have not yet secured a place.

<https://hm.ee/uudised/462-pohikoolilopetajal-ei-ole-veel-oppekohta-omavalitsused-jatkavad-noortele-sobiva>

France

A Céreq-Bref study shows that most young employees find their work fulfilling, yet at the same time many are already considering a change of job or career during their first few years in the workforce. It examines whether this apparent paradox is attributable less to dissatisfaction than to the need to adapt to a changing labour market, a somewhat inflexible education system and, in many cases, deteriorating working conditions.



<https://www.cereq.fr/publications/cereq-bref/des-jeunes-actifs-satisfaits-mais-en-quete-dailleurs-les-ressorts-dun>

Montenegro

Montenegro is launching the 15th cycle of its state programme for the occupational qualification of university graduates, with the aim of facilitating their transition from their qualifications to practical work experience.

<https://www.gov.me/amp/clanak/pocinje-15-ciklus-programa-strucnog-osposobljavanja-lica-sa-stecenim-visokim-obrazovanjem>

Norway

Many young people are worried about choosing the wrong course of study and would like to have earlier and more accessible career guidance, with the option of personalised follow-up support.

<https://hkdir.no/aktuelt/unge-vil-ha-mer-veiledning-nar-de-skal-velge-utdanning>

Poland

Since September, new guidelines on career guidance have been in force in Poland, which integrate the Integrated Qualifications System more closely into the advice given to pupils.

The aim is to ensure that information on qualifications and digital ZSK tools is used more systematically to inform educational and career decisions.

<https://kwalifikacje.gov.pl/zmiany-w-doradztwie-zawodowym-od-1-wrzesnia-a-zintegrowany-system-kwalifikacji/>

Romania

Mobility stories inspire future IVET learners

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/romania-mobility-stories-inspire-future-ivet-learners>

Slovakia

Individual learning accounts launch

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/slovakia-individual-learning-accounts-launch>

Slovenia

Final conference highlights VET reform achievements

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/slovenia-final-conference-highlights-vet-reform-achievements>

Spain

New sectoral VET hubs strengthen business–education collaboration

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/spain-new-sectoral-vet-hubs-strengthen-business-education-collaboration>

Sweden

The Swedish Government is examining whether *nationell yrkesutbildning*, which has been piloted since 2024, should be permanently integrated into the education system. This follows an initial evaluation which showed positive labour market outcomes: 78 per cent of graduates were in employment six months after completing the programme. Nine out of ten employers surveyed rated the skills acquired as meeting their needs. *Nationell yrkesutbildning* is a form of vocational education at upper secondary level for adults.

<https://www.regeringen.se/rattsliga-dokument/kommittedirektiv/2026/09/u202601569/>

<https://regeringen.se/pressmeddelanden/2026/09/nationell-yrkesutbildning-ger-resultat--majoriteten-i-arbete-efter-utbildningen/>

Switzerland

Switzerland could be rejoining Erasmus+ by 2027.

<https://movetia.ch/en/latest/new-developments-for-erasmus>

As part of the [VETengage project](#), the EHB study on the internationalisation of Swiss vocational education and training shows that international mobility and cooperation have so far been hampered primarily by limited resources, a high administrative burden and, in some cases, unclear benefits for businesses and vocational schools. In addition, intercultural skills are often given lower priority than technical skills. Switzerland's difficult access to European programmes, networks and funding represents a further key obstacle.

<https://www.ehb.swiss/news/neue-horizonte-fuer-die-internationalisierung-der-schweizer-berufsbildung>

The latest issue of *Skilled* explores how professions are changing: through artificial intelligence, sustainability and the transformation of the world of work. It also examines the opportunities that various higher education qualifications offer in the labour market, career choices and the health of students.

<https://www.ehb.swiss/news/skilled-magazin-zum-thema-berufe>

The Netherlands

The draft bill on the basic skills requirements for MBO teachers has been amended in several respects. The amendments made have taken into account, in various respects, the points for consideration introduced by the MBO Council on behalf of the sector.

<https://www.mбораad.nl/nieuws/wetsvoorstel-vereisten-mbo-docenten-basisvaardigheden>

Vocational training as part of the national talent strategy when the government announced its plans for the coming year

<https://www.government.nl/documents/2026/09/15/speech-from-the-throne-2026>

Save the Date

22–23/09/2026: “Skills for the Future: Education in Times of Change”, organised by the Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills. The event focuses on changing skills requirements, digital skills and vocational education.

https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/events-1/skills-future-education-times-change-2026-09-22_en

29-31/10/2026: The ninth national vocational skills competition, SkillsCyprus 2026, will take place in Nicosia, bringing together young people aged up to 25 to compete in technical and vocational disciplines while promoting VET excellence and European skills standards.

<https://skillscyprus.gov.cy/9os-ethnikos-diagonismos-dexiotiton-skillscyprus-2026-ekei-pou-chtizontai-oi-dexiotites-tou-avrio/>

10/11/2026: EHB-OBS Conference 2026: The Changing Apprenticeship Market

<https://www.ehb.swiss/veranstaltungen/ehb-obs-tagung-2026-lehrstellenmarkt-im-wandel>

03-04/12/2026: AI skills as a competitive advantage for Europe. From AI adoption to effective workplace practice. Cedefop conference in Thessaloniki/Greece.

https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/events-1/ai-skills-competitive-advantage-europe-ai-adoption-effective-workplace-practice-2026-12-03_en



www.bibb.de

www.refernet.de

If you no longer wish to receive the newsletter, please send an email to refernet@bibb.de