



European
Commission

EACEA AND THE EUROPEAN YEAR OF SKILLS

SUPPORTING
UPSKILLING
AND RESKILLING
INITIATIVES IN
EUROPE AND
BEYOND



European Education
and Culture
Executive Agency

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Introduction

The **European Year of Skills (EYS)** takes place from May 2023 to May 2024. The initiative aims to highlight the importance of skills. Its underlying ambition is to help people get the necessary skills for **quality jobs** and to support companies – in particular small and medium enterprises – to **address skills shortages** in Europe.

The purpose of upskilling and reskilling the workforce is to enable access to **better job opportunities**, and ultimately better living conditions. Within the framework of **sustainable growth**, the European Year of Skills aims to boost the economy, as well as green and digital transitions, in a spirit of **social fairness**.

The European Year of Skills has the following objectives:

- Promoting **investment in training and upskilling**, enabling people to keep their job or find a new one.
- Ensuring that workers' **skills match employers' needs**, by closely cooperating with social partners and companies.
- **Matching people's aspirations and skill sets with opportunities on the job market**, particularly within the scope of green and digital transitions, as well as economic recovery.
- **Attracting people from outside the European Union (EU) with relevant skills.**

The European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) contributes vastly to the European Year of Skills. In particular, EACEA's A2 Unit – responsible for skills and innovation – monitors a range of Erasmus+ actions that boost job-related skills in Europe and beyond. Specifically, the Calls for [Centres of Vocational Excellence \(CoVE\)](#), [Alliances for innovation](#) (Blueprint), [Forward-looking projects](#), [Capacity-building in the field of Vocational Education and Training](#) (CB VET), European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training

(EQAVET), Euroguidance, Europass & the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and international VET mobility pilot projects are instrumental to the European Year of Skills.

This brochure aims to provide insight into skills projects coordinated by EACEA and their impact on making the European Union more competitive and resilient. Through examining its actions, we gain a better understanding of the A2 Unit's work and how it contributes to the EYS' goals.

EACEA: skills in a nutshell

The European Education and Culture Executive Agency manages parts of the [Erasmus+ Programme](#) on behalf of the Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (DG EAC) and the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion (DG EMPL).

EACEA's A2 Unit is responsible for the management of a variety of actions related to **skills and innovation as part of Erasmus+**. The unit coordinates projects on policy innovation and social inclusion, targeting education and training providers, policy-makers, NGOs, civil society organisations, youth and adult workers.

The A2 Unit functions as a hub for **actions in the area of Vocational Education and Training (VET)**, cooperating with several parent Directorates-General (DGs), helping to implement the priorities of the Erasmus+ Programme and emphasising the international dimension of its actions. Its aim is to support the modernisation of vocational training and to enhance skills development, by empowering VET providers (in the broad sense of the word).

Concretely, it does so by financially supporting projects that bring about these innovations.

On the one hand, the Erasmus+ Programme offers funding opportunities through '**open calls**', each targeting specific areas and initiatives, aligned with the overarching objectives of the Programme. Any organisation or natural person that matches the eligibility criteria can apply for this type of funding via the [Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal](#).

The open Calls that are particularly relevant within the scope of the European Year of Skills are the ones for **Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVE)**, **Alliances for innovation (Blueprint)**, **Forward-looking projects**, **Capacity-building in the field of Vocational Education and Training (CB VET)**, and **international VET mobility pilot projects** (a pilot action linked to CV BET). The table below presents an overview of the maximum grant amount a single project can apply for. These amounts are defined based on the specificities of each call.

Open Calls	Maximum grant (in EUR)
Centres of Vocational Excellence	4 000 000
Alliances for innovation	4 000 000
Forward-looking projects	1 500 000
Capacity-building in the field of VET	400 000
International VET mobility pilot projects	4 000 000

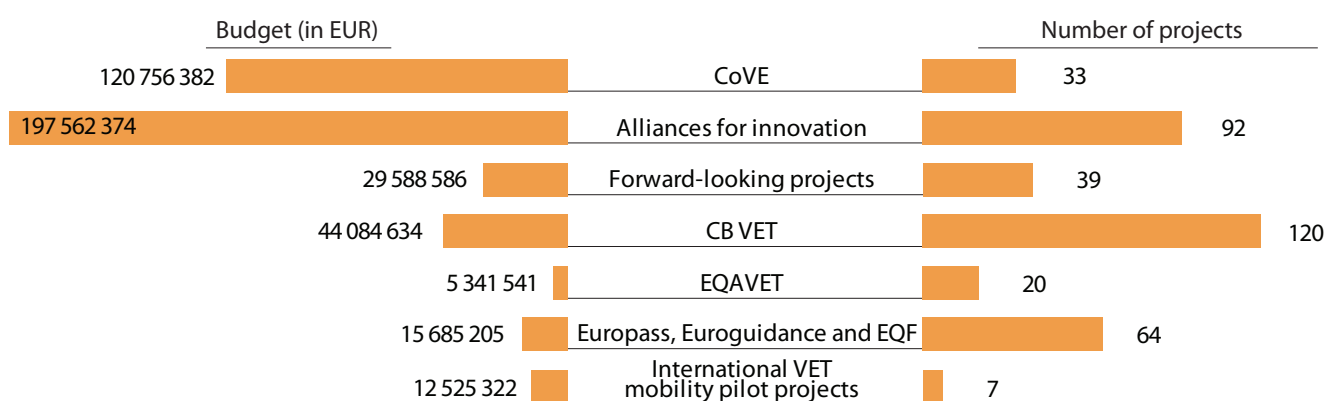
On the other hand, the A2 Unit also coordinates two restricted or **'invitation-based'** calls that are significant in light of the European Year of Skills. The action grants for **European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET)** and **Euroguidance, Europass & the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)** are allocated to designated bodies appointed by the Member States or third countries. These

entities could be part of the national ministries of education, or independent organisations charged with these responsibilities by their respective national authorities. For EQAVET, each designated body can apply for a maximum grant amount of 300 000 EUR. For Euroguidance, Europass & the EQF, a fixed maximum grant amount is allocated for each network at national level.

Invitation-based calls	Maximum grant
European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET)	300 000 EUR
Euroguidance, Europass, and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)	A fixed maximum grant amount is allocated for each network at national level

In 2023, an overall amount of 425 544 044 EUR supports the implementation of an estimated 375 skills-related Erasmus+ projects at EACEA. This amount is allotted between 'open calls' and 'invitation-based

calls'. The chart below presents an overview of the distribution of this budget between those seven actions, based on the situation in September 2023.

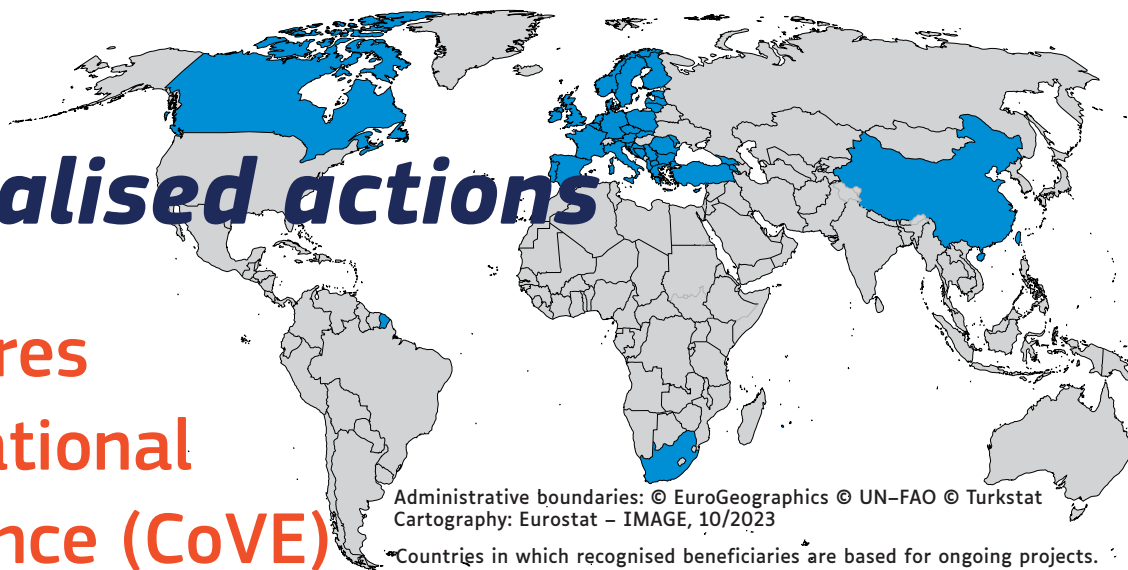


This brochure presents a concise overview of how these seven actions relate to the European Year of Skills, highlighting some "success stories" from ongoing projects and illustrating the concrete impact the Erasmus+ Programme

has on the upskilling and reskilling of people on a day-to-day basis. From here onwards, we will refer to the selected calls as the 'key centralised actions'.

Key centralised actions

1. Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVE)



Administrative boundaries: © EuroGeographics © UN-FAO © Turkstat
Cartography: Eurostat – IMAGE, 10/2023

*Countries in which recognised beneficiaries are based for ongoing projects.

Bringing together key stakeholders to provide high-quality vocational skills to young people and adults, and ensure that workers' skills remain up to date with economic, technological and social changes in each respective region.

Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs) strive for “excellence” in vocational training. Together with research organisations, regional and national authorities, social partners, sector representatives, and other stakeholders, they build networks of Centres of Vocational Excellence in Europe and beyond.

KEY FEATURES:

- regional development
- local innovation
- smart specialisation strategies
- international networks
- green skills
- digital skills
- inclusive approaches

LINK WITH THE EYS:

CoVEs are expected to go far beyond teaching high-quality vocational training. They contribute to the European Year of Skills in several ways. Projects must include activities grouped in three **clusters**: Teaching & Learning, Cooperation and Partnership, and Governance & Funding. For instance, they train young entrepreneurs to upgrade their skills and strengthen their competitiveness in the



3LoE project workshop on the establishment of Centres of Vocational Excellence in Rome – 2022 © David Millet Solves

“Our CoVE will contribute to the provision of high-quality skills and competences needed in innovative, sustainable and inclusive economies.”

Renata Cerneckienė, 3LoE, Lithuania

green economy (3LoE). They develop future-oriented skills in the **health & care sector (EUVECA)**, or train workers in the **wood & furniture industry** to give them the skills needed to reinvent the sector and make it more attractive for newcomers (**ALLVIEW**). CoVEs aim to become world-class reference points for vocational training. As such, they also cooperate with organisations around the world, to bring in specific expertise on innovation.

1. Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVE)

The types of organisations currently implementing CoVE projects range from educational institutions to non-governmental organisations and private companies. The table below presents an overview of all types of organisations involved.

Types of organisations involved in the 2022 CoVE projects

School, institute or educational centre	89
Small or medium-sized enterprise	50
Higher education institution	43
Non-governmental organisation	41
Public body	28
Other type of educational organisation	26
Social partner	20
Large enterprise	20
Research institute	15

SUCCESS STORY:



ePlug: European Platform for Urban Greening

This project aims to increase the knowledge and skills required to address climate adaptation, biodiversity and well-being in an urban, green living environment.

VET providers and enterprises in the field of landscaping and gardening, work together to provide the training required to facilitate the latest advances in **water management, green roofs, living facades and regional plant optimisation.**

For example, in the Czech Republic, the Benešov Agricultural School and ITTEC are creating vertical gardens on the school's facade. They incorporate new practices learned from other CoVE partners in Denmark and the Netherlands, and will also use the school's **new smart irrigation and water retention system.**

More information on the [ePlug website](#).

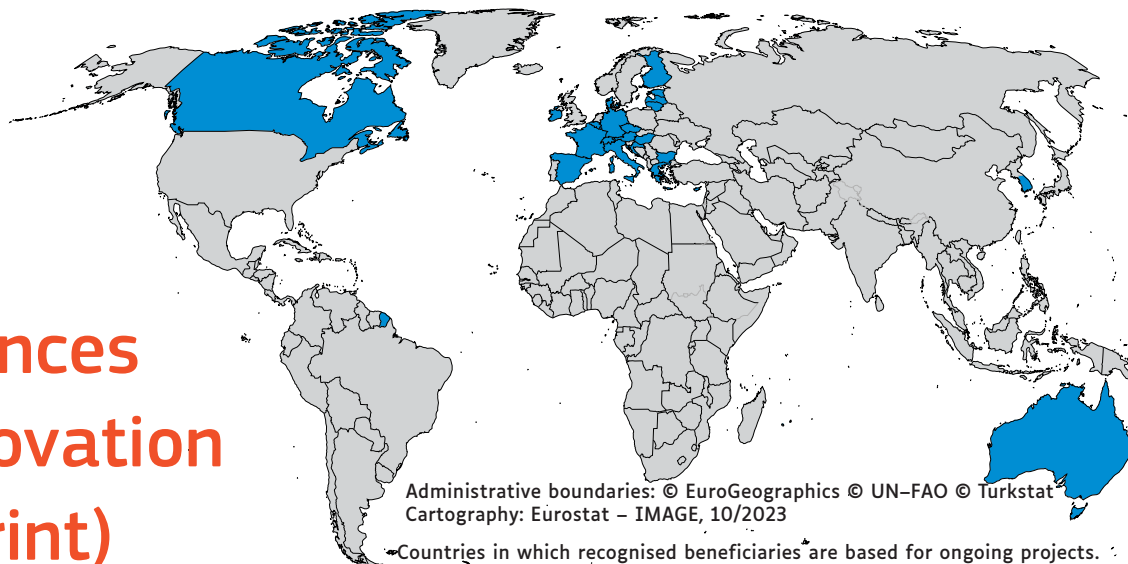


Jan Jeronimus, project leader European Platform for Urban Greening – 2022 © Bart van Rongen

“We can teach future generations to deal with our (urban) living environment in a responsible and sustainable manner. Awareness of CO2 storage in the soil and fixing nitrogen are an important part of this.”

William Peters, ‘Green teacher’ at Yuverta, on a course on high-quality compost, organised with other schools in the project.

2. Alliances for innovation (Blueprint)



Translating sectoral policy into a comprehensive skills strategy, by delivering sector-specific training content, engaging and coordinating key players, stimulating investment and encouraging a more strategic use of European Union (EU) and national funding opportunities.

The Blueprint for sectoral cooperation on skills is one of the ten actions set out in the [New Skills Agenda for Europe](#), which was adopted by the European Commission (EC) in June 2016. This action aims to empower **strategic cooperation in a given economic sector**. It builds upon previous work addressing the issue of skills mismatching at sectoral level, carried out by the EC in partnership with different stakeholders.

Their main focus is upskilling and reskilling profiles of workers and learners in 14 different **industrial eco-systems**, through green and digital transition. In many cases, Blueprint consortia entail a wide range of partner organisations from both the private and public sector.

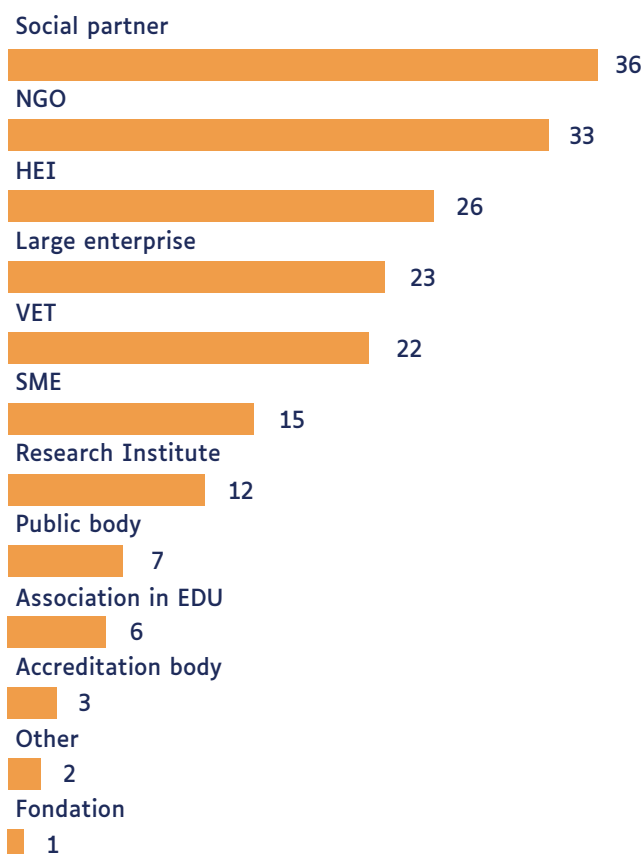
KEY FEATURES:

- directly linked to the Pact for Skills
- green skills
- digital skills
- focus on industrial ecosystems
- international networks
- inclusive approaches

LINK WITH THE EYS:

Blueprint projects contribute to the achievement of **European Year of Skills** objectives by anticipating the skills needed in specific sectors and delivering training content adapted to labour market needs. These projects are based on existing **large-scale partnerships** within the [Pact for Skills](#).

Types of organisations involved in 2022 Blueprint projects



2. Alliances for innovation (Blueprint)

SUCCESS STORY:



Greenskills4H2: Green Skills for Hydrogen

The EU has set as a target for 2030 to produce 10 million tonnes of renewable hydrogen, to import 10 million tonnes more, and to create 1 million high-skilled jobs within the EU hydrogen value chain. Green Skills for Hydrogen will help to meet these targets by fast-tracking the **upskilling and reskilling** of students and members of the workforce all over Europe. Specifically, the project targets profiles in declining sectors and transition regions, through **VET programmes** that will enable them to **access new employment opportunities** within the Hydrogen sector.

The **Greenskills4H2** project will:

- Design and implement a hydrogen skills strategy
- Develop, test and roll out VET programmes across Europe
- Establish a partnership between industry and education providers

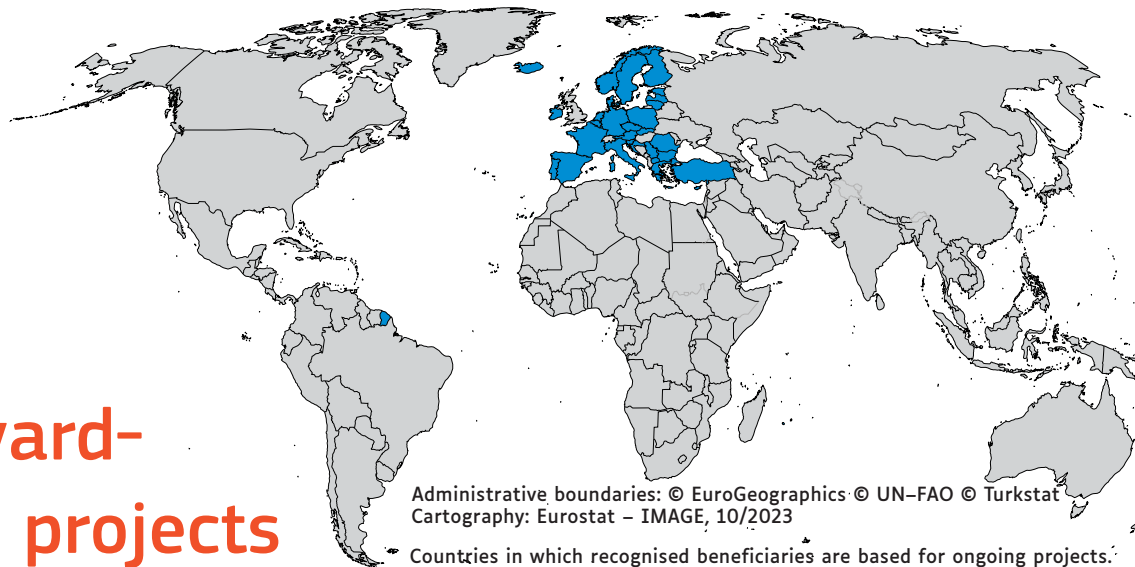


Partner reading project brochure during a session organised by Greenskills4H2 – 2022 ©Patricia Rodriguez Fortun

The European Year of Skills is an auspicious setting for the launch of the European Hydrogen Skills Alliance and its ambitious VET programmes. Through Green Skills for Hydrogen, the Alliance – coordinated by **KIT, Hydrogen Europe Research and Hydrogen Europe** – will harness the momentum of the European Year of Skills, to help strengthen European competitiveness and meet Green Transition targets, matching the industry's need for new skills with workers' aspirations.

More info on the GreenSkillsforH2 [website](#) and [LinkedIn page](#).

3. Forward-looking projects



Fostering innovation, creativity and participation in different fields of education and training, within and across sectors and disciplines.

Forward-Looking Projects are large-scale projects supporting innovative ideas that respond to key EU priorities. This Call supports projects that provide today's and tomorrow's workers with the appropriate skills for rapidly changing labour markets, and the creativity to confront the growing complexity of societal challenges.

KEY FEATURES:

- bottom-up approach
- transnational co-operation projects within one educational sector or cross-sectoral policy development
- innovation

LINK WITH THE EYS:

The innovative projects within the scope of this action target education in different strategic policy areas, among which **strengthening skills in education and the labour force**, to help confront the growing complexity of current and future societal challenges. There are three priorities of the 2022 Call, with a focus on Vocational Education and Training for adults, that are particularly relevant to the Year of Skills.

The first one, related to the Pact for Skills, supports cooperation between large companies and SMEs. **Cooperation tools and structures** aim to improve the quality, efficiency and equity of upskilling and reskilling opportunities, for people of working age. They also aim to keep these opportunities up to date with the ever-developing skillsets needed in micro, small or medium-sized enterprises.

The second priority relevant to the European Year of Skills, namely **structures and mechanisms for applied research in VET**, is quite innovative in terms of EU policy relevance. The projects supported under this priority contribute to the modernisation of VET systems and engage in applied research and experimental development, while providing learners with opportunities for project-based learning.

In terms of the third relevant priority, **green skills in the VET sector**, there is a project that aims to develop innovative policy approaches for greener VET education. It has the ambition for these approaches to become mainstream in systems, countries and different contexts. In doing so, the project aims to improve VET education and training systems, as well as the effectiveness of policies and practices in the field of education and training across six industrial sectors.

3. Forward-looking projects

SUCCESS STORIES:



CitizensXelerator

The CitizensXelerator project aims to strengthen **democratic and civic literacy**, as well as the social empathy of adult learners. It aspires to stimulate a systemic change on a regional, national and even European level. To do so, CitizensXelerator develops strategies to foster adults' participation in democratic life. These strategies are based on civic engagement and on embracing common values.

The expected final output includes:

- **Micro-lessons** on financial, entrepreneurial, social and digital literacy skills for adults lacking in certain skills, based on like-minded and inspiring projects.
- The development of a set of 'LifeComp' cards to facilitate **skills improvement**

More info on the [CitizensXelerator project website](#).

sessions, as well as to support the assessment of vocational and social skills.

- The so-called CitizensXelerator kit with guidelines on creating and promoting **'Action Labs'** in partner countries. These entail idea labs and micro-learning sessions, to facilitate the implementation of civic and democratic initiatives.



Informal learning session on improving democratic and civic literacy of adult learners – 2023 © Giuliana Pena



AIRinVET: Applied innovation and Research in Vocational Education and Training

AIRinVET aims to boost economic competitiveness in Europe. It intends to support the green and digital transition through the promotion of applied innovation and research (AIR) in Vocational Education and Training (VET) for SMEs and industry stakeholders. The project will **identify VET centres involved in applied research (AR)**, conduct **case studies**, and **develop tools** that will help SMEs engage in applied research. By collaborating with regional innovation agents, they are working towards building a brighter future for research and development.

The expected final output includes:

- A **glossary**: a living document with comparative data on how applied research is classified, communicated, explained, and understood across international borders.

More info on the [AIRinVET project website](#).

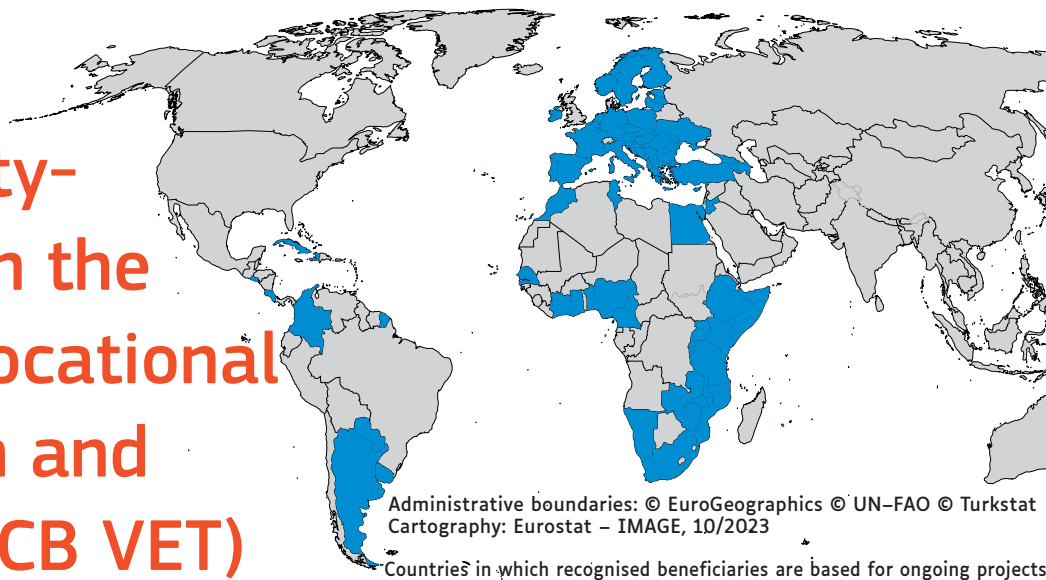
- A **publication** containing case studies from around the world on AR in VET.
- A **proposal for a European reference framework** for AR in VET, to help European countries and regions build more competitive innovation systems.



Presentation of the AIRinVET project at the congress of the WFCP Secretariat – 2023 © Susana Espilla



4. Capacity-building in the field of Vocational Education and Training (CB VET)



Driving socio-economic development in third countries not associated to the Erasmus+ Programme, by supporting relevance, accessibility and responsiveness of VET institutions and systems.

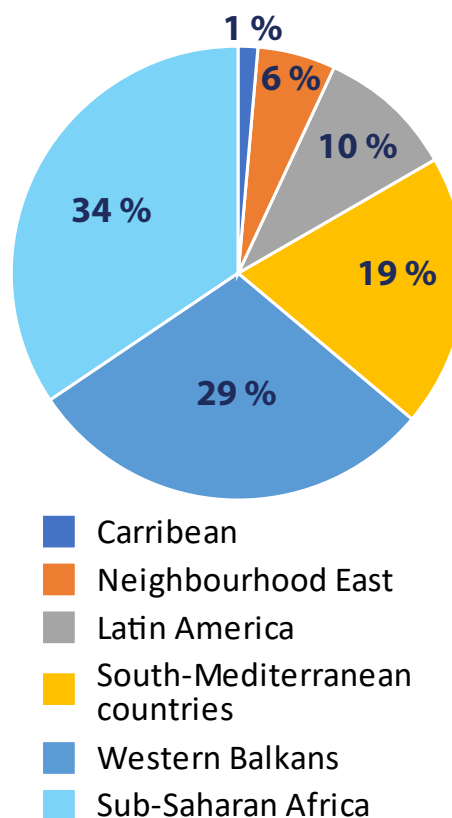
KEY FEATURES:

- matching skills with current and future job opportunities
- learning mobility
- inclusion and equity
- non-formal and informal learning
- work-based learning
- public-private partnerships

LINK WITH THE EYS:

The CB VET Call launched in 2022 aims to encourage professional **development of VET teachers** by **including public-private partnerships**, strengthening key competences and green and digital skills. The selected projects support the development of **job-specific skills** needed in the current labour market, as well as in the future one. The Call is relevant for the European Year of Skills as it contributes to enhanced **cooperation between EU Member States and third countries** (both associated and non-associated to the Erasmus+ programme). It does so by fostering the quality, transparency and recognition of learning outcomes, making use of European tools and instruments. The projects also promote mindset of lifelong learning and boosting competitiveness, by combining VET

Budget requested for selected CB VET projects per region in 2022



qualifications and upskilling and reskilling training, informed by the most up-to-date information on skills needs. Finally, CB VET projects improve the quality of VET in third countries not associated to the programme, by **reinforcing the capacities and skills of VET staff and teachers, as well as strengthening the link between VET providers and the labour market.**

SUCCESS STORY:

GVET – Grow-in VET: Capacity-building for Western Balkans VET schools and learners

This project aims to **increase the capacity of VET** providers in the fields of management, governance, inclusion, quality assurance, innovation and internationalisation, while improving the **employability opportunities of VET graduates** by focusing on work-based learning and mobility.

Linking VET to emerging local labour market opportunities, GVET facilitated two conferences to which relevant stakeholders were invited to discuss the significance of the green and digital transition.

By **integrating digital and green skills** into students' apprenticeships and learning experiences, the project ensures their readiness for the evolving job market.

Furthermore, **environmental sustainability** is an integral part of the project's implementation plan, aiming to minimise its ecological footprint.

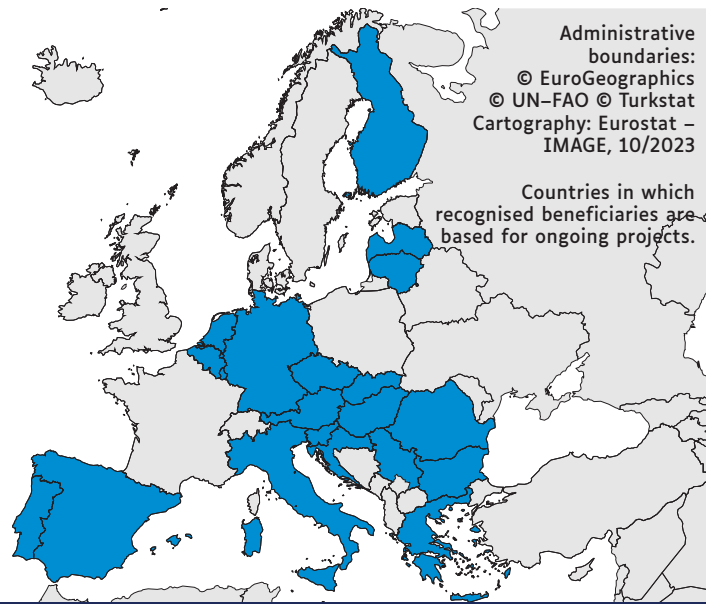
More info on the [Grow-in VET website](#).



Attila, Sándor, project coordinator, founder & president MeOut Group – 2020 © Cristian Birkas

“As the leading organisation behind the pilot project ‘Connected Through Mobility and Grow-in VET,’ we are actively contributing to the education of highly skilled students, professionals, and to the economic development of the Western Balkans.”

5. European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET)



A joint quality framework of common principles to assess and improve the quality of VET systems and VET provision.

The **EQAVET network** (European Qualification Assurance in Vocational Education and Training) consists of national representatives and/or designated bodies, appointed by the respective national authorities (also referred to as National Reference Points or NRPs). The network was put in place to bring together relevant stakeholders at national and regional level, to develop a **common quality assurance framework for vocational training**. The objective of this action is to financially support activities of the EQAVET NRPs that contribute to the implementation of the EQAVET framework and to carry out the tasks assigned by the [EU Council recommendation on VET](#).

KEY FEATURES:

- network
- designated bodies
- VET quality assurance
- Collaboration
- peer learning

LINK WITH THE EYS:

VET can be considered as the field of education closest to the labour market. It provides skills and qualifications, to successfully drive forward digital and green transitions. The EQAVET network focusses on **improving the quality of learning** outcomes, **developing the role of teachers** and trainers, and **boosting the flexibility** of vocational education and training. It does so through assessment-based certification and stakeholder consultations, among others. The EQAVET framework can be used by public and private VET providers, to support the quality assurance of learning environments. Examples of relevant types of education covered by the EQAVET framework include school-based learning, work-based learning, apprenticeships and non-formal education in a digital, hybrid, as well as face-to-face context.

SUCCESS STORY:



EQAVET NRP Netherlands – Student involvement in the quality of education

The Dutch EQAVET National Reference Point set up a pilot project that engages VET students in the entire quality assurance cycle.

In 2010, JOB – MBO (the national youth organisation for professional education) launched its 'You Decide' project, to promote the development of a **participatory culture for student councils**. One of the main achievements of the project was the professionalisation of student councils through workshops and **trainings on the topics of organisation, lobbying, negotiating, representation** of their fellow students and raising awareness of students' rights. Another important accomplishment was a **study on the main obstacles faced by student councils** and alternative ways for students to participate.

The main challenges identified by this project are the establishment of an informal culture of participation, large-scale student participation, additional student infrastructure, and activating the already available networks in the student population.

More info the [projects website](#) and in this [inspirational booklet on student participation](#).



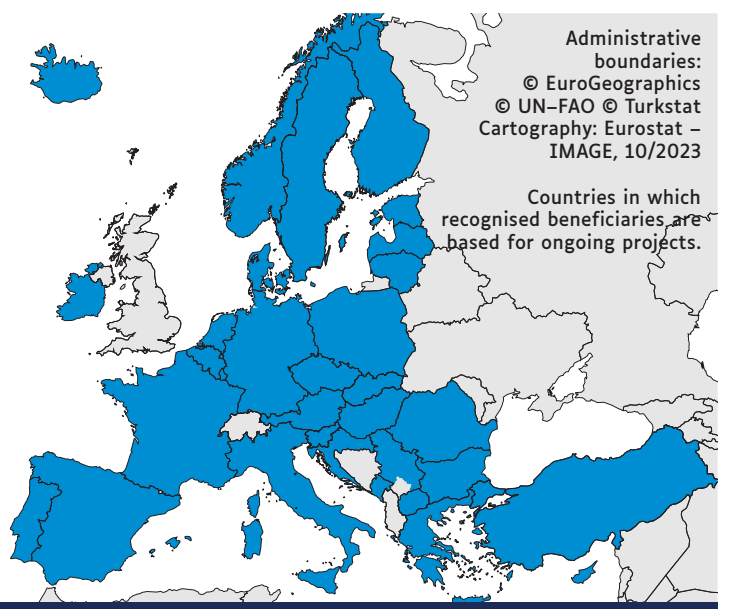
2023 © Daisy Termorshuizen

During a workshop on student participation in quality assurance, VET stakeholders visualised accelerators of student participation.

"Teachers who are actively engaged in the work field are much better placed to convey day-to-day practices to students."

Student in this [YouTube video](#)

6. Euroguidance, Europass and the European Qualifications Framework



Tools and services to create conditions for mobility and lifelong learning within and across EU borders, to guide people to job and learning opportunities.

Euroguidance, Europass and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) are networks made up of designated bodies, appointed by the respective national authorities. The Euroguidance network focusses on boosting **guidance practitioner’s competences** and supporting guidance systems and services across Europe. Europass provides multilingual **tools and services for people to effectively communicate their skills**, facilitating their learning and career management. The EQF aims to facilitate the **understanding of qualifications between countries** via a European comparison framework.

KEY FEATURES:

- networks
- lifelong guidance
- guidance practitioners
- career guidance systems
- job opportunities
- learning opportunities
- practical tools

LINK WITH THE EYS:

First of all, the link with the European Year of Skills becomes clear in how Euroguidance focuses on **upskilling** and career guidance, how **Europass provides people insight**

Number of EU countries supported



* For this exercise, the different communities in Belgium have each been counted as a "country".

into skills and relevant job market trends, and in how EQF supports the **harmonisation of qualifications**. Secondly, the close **collaboration** of all three networks with social partners, businesses and other key stakeholders in the field is another testament to their dedication to the EYS objectives. Thirdly, **matching peoples’ skill sets with opportunities** on the job market is an important consideration, especially for national Euroguidance EU centres. The Europass tool also supports individuals to make informed career decisions, such as moving to another EU country where their skills are in demand. Finally, the last main objective of the EYS – attracting people from outside the EU – is covered by this Call in the sense that it is open for applications from third countries associated with the Erasmus+ Programme (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Republic of North Macedonia, Serbia and Türkiye) as well as from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro.

SUCCESS STORY:

The Academia programme

The Academia programme was created within the framework of the Euroguidance Network. The aim of this programme is to provide **learning mobility for guidance professionals** across Europe. It is a short-term mobility exchange programme, whereby national **Euroguidance** centres send guidance counsellors abroad, and – in turn – host practitioners from other countries for a duration of three or four days. The goal is to **train** the professionals and **share knowledge** among practitioners.

This year's theme was: '**multiculturalism**, international learning, and work mobility in the context of career development'.



Exchange of Academia learning mobility practices among career guidance practitioners in Tallinn – 2022 © Anni Sahrur

The 2023 edition in Estonia focused on sharing best practices in career guidance, with a particular emphasis on work, learning mobility, and multiculturalism. Key topics & activities included:

- **Job shadowing** at different organisations in Tallinn and Tartu (in groups of two or three)
- **Sharing** of and reflecting on work methods and learning experiences

Participants left with new ideas and approaches to implement in their professional lives.

"In 23 years of Academia programme in Europe, we are steadily approaching 500 mobility exchanges. I am fully convinced that this is crucial for professional development as it supports personal growth, creates new opportunities for the future, and contributes to the day-to-day work of guidance practitioners. International learning mobility should be included in the training plan of every career specialist – even on a regular basis. Academia is a safe choice for beginners and an innovative source of inspiration for experienced professionals."

Margit Rammo, Euroguidance coordinator, Estonia

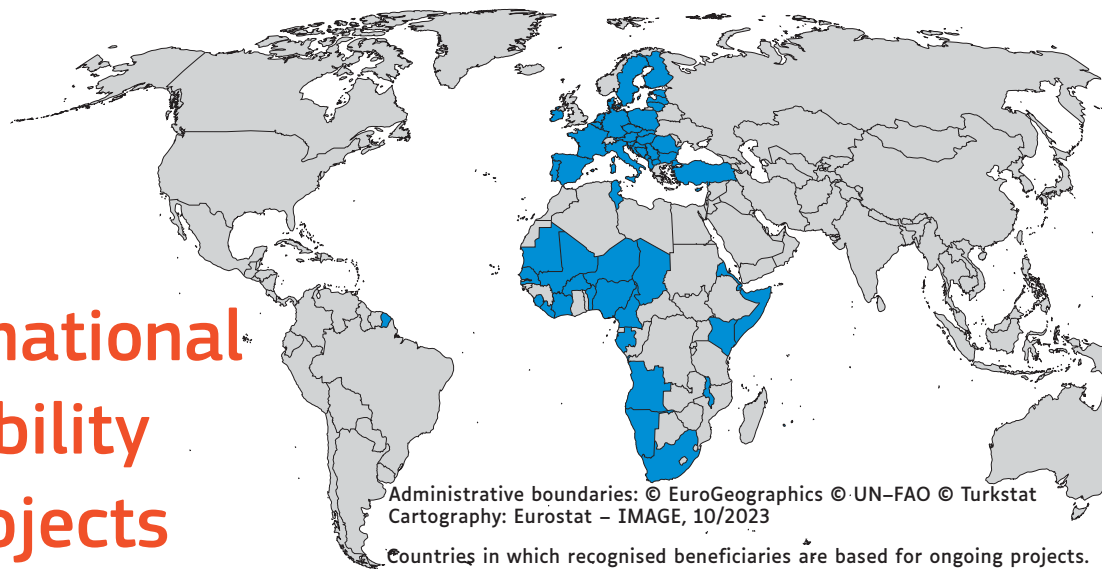
"This experience was truly enriching! I gained valuable insights into lifelong guidance in Estonia, in a multicultural context. I discovered different guidance methods used in eight European countries. I wholeheartedly recommend this opportunity to anyone seeking professional and personal development in an inspiring international environment!"

Austrian Academia programme participant

- **Learning mobility** from the perspective of career practitioners
- **Work mobility** and the various organisations in the field

More info on the Academia network can be found on the [Euroguidance website](#).

7. International VET mobility pilot projects



Capacity building for VET providers in African and Western Balkan countries, with a focus on mobility activities.

The two pilot Vocational Education and Training (VET) mobility Calls published in 2018 and 2019 aim to promote **mobility activities focused on improving skills and competences** of VET teachers, learners and managers. They intend to do so through staff and student mobility exchanges. The occupational prospects of young students are a key element of this Call. Teachers' and students' best practices are integrated into the curriculum and training reforms in participating schools. While the projects from these two calls are still ongoing, their lessons learnt already provided useful input for other – more recent – VET calls such as CB VET. Specifically, these pilot projects serve as a **catalyst to involve partner countries from across the globe.**

KEY FEATURES:

- mobility for African and Western Balkan countries
- VET teachers' competences
- student's professional development
- best practices integrated into curriculum and training
- skills for development of internationalisation strategies
- sustainable networks
- cooperation with neighbouring and European countries

LINK WITH THE EYS:

Both pilot VET mobility Calls address the pressing need of **African and Western Balkan countries to strengthen their vocational training systems and build sustainable networks for cooperation** with neighboring and European countries. The motivation of staff and students to develop their professional competence received a significant boost through these Calls. And it is bound to continue to do so, through follow-up programs in the future. The 2018 and 2019 pilot projects are a first step towards involving African and Western Balkan VET providers in new European VET actions open to third countries. They showed that **VET graduates with strong entrepreneurial skills are more likely to become job creators in their respective countries.**

SUCCESS STORIES:

Pilot VET mobility scheme for the Enlargement countries and Africa (SAAM)

SAAM (which is Afrikaans for 'together') is a partnership between 32 VET organisations across 24 countries: **8 EU Member States** (Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain) and **16 African countries** (Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Eritrea, Gabon, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Sudan and Tunisia). It gathers a huge network of VET providers, NGOs and European umbrella organisations in the VET and youth sector.



Two VET teachers at a workshop in Douékoué (Côte d'Ivoire) – 2022 © Marina Tarragual

SAAM aims to contribute to improve and modernise Vocational Training in African countries, as well as to strengthen the relationship between VET and the labour market. By promoting the exchange of ideas

More info on the [SAAM project website](#).

and techniques between regions, this alliance intends to improve teachers' and students' skills. Moreover, SAAM aims to improve the quality of management and training – and thus, the curriculum pathway of the VET centres. In doing so, the project will pay plenty of attention to creating and maintaining a sustainable network between participants, to foster future cooperation.

To achieve this goal, the partnership will promote the mobility of VET professionals and students within the fields of **engineering, manufacturing, hospitality and agriculture**. Over the course of forty months, more than 300 young Africans will be able to do internships in European companies. Similarly, more than 200 European and African teachers will visit the centres of their counterparts for a **'job-shadowing' experience**. This will enable them to better understand each other's philosophy, culture and customs, as well as – crucially – their professional training systems.

VET to VET – Capacity Building in Western Balkans (V2V)

V2V is a European pilot project, led by the Italian organisation Apro Formazione, aims to foster the innovation, modernisation and internationalisation of VET schools in Montenegro, Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The project is based on constant **twining**, **coaching** and **mutual support** between the EU partners and the Western Balkan participants. With a **bottom-up approach**, each of the five European vocational training institutes work alongside an institution from the Western Balkans, to **accompany it in a process of developing technical, organisational, educational and managerial skills**.

The project enabled over 200 mobility exchanges in the fields of hospitality, engineering, textiles and social health across Italy, Finland, the Netherlands, Slovenia and Croatia. It involved over 70 staff members from the Western Balkans, and 30 students – for many of which it was their first opportunity to do an internship in a European company.

More info on the [V2V project website](#).



Barbara, a student at the Danilo Kiš Vocational School in Budva (Montenegro), was hosted in Alba (Italy) by Apro Formazione – 2022 © Barbara Leoni Pagnacco

“For four weeks I visited so many beautiful places with charming and unique old stories. There is so much to see in and around Alba, lovely little towns, beautiful scenery and of course the vineyards.”

Barbara, student (photo)

Afterword

This brochure was brought to life to illustrate, in a tangible way, how seven of EACEA's key centralised actions contribute to the European Year of Skills. It goes without saying that the

examples highlighted in this publication are merely the tip of the iceberg of the **incredible work skills-related Erasmus+ projects are delivering on a daily basis.**

To put it in the words of EACEA.A.2's Head of the Skills Sector, Michèle Grombeer, ...

Since 2006, EACEA has been a catalyst of projects fostering innovation in Vocational Education and Training. In close cooperation with the European Commission, the Agency is in charge of the implementation of the Erasmus+ initiatives presented in this brochure.

Rapid technological change, digitalisation, climate change, circular economy, and new forms of work, call for inspiring ideas to ensure that VET not only adapts to such changes, but is also at the forefront of driving them. New ways of collaborating at regional, national and transnational levels are necessary to meet these challenges.

We believe that the projects implemented under the actions presented in this brochure will contribute to ensuring high quality skills and competences that lead to quality employment, thus meeting the needs of an innovative, inclusive and sustainable economy.

Therefore, we are particularly happy to share with you such examples of good practices, underlining the success of key actions of the Erasmus+ Programme.

Michèle Grombeer

Head of the Skills Sector, Skills and Innovation Unit, EACEA

We hope we were able to give the reader a taste of the types of activities the beneficiaries of our actions are implementing, to reskill and upskill workers and students in Europe and beyond – all of this to better adapt them to a continuously changing job market.

In order to deepen your understanding of the projects highlighted above, please refer to the hyperlinks included under each "success story". If you would like to find out more about the Erasmus+ Programme in general, you can do so via the [official website](#). Specific opportunities within the framework of the

programme are laid out on the [opportunities page](#). For an overview of EACEA's work across all programmes, please visit [our Agency's site](#). You will find more information on VET on the ['Skills for today and for the future' webpage](#). And last but not least, we warmly invite you to go and explore the dedicated [European Year of Skills website](#).

In conclusion, we wish you a fruitful European Year of Skills. Here's to **better job opportunities, sustainable growth**, and green and digital transitions in a spirit of **social fairness!**

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