

Skills are the Future
For New Education and Training, For the Next Generation,
For New Economy, For Better Life

September 7, 2023. PGE Atom Hall, Polsat Arena Stadium in Gdańsk.
An accompanying event of EuroSkills Gdańsk 2023.

Organizational assumptions of the Congress:

- The Congress will begin with a solemn inauguration, during which invited guests and representatives of the event organizer will speak. An integral part of the inaugural ceremony will be a debate touching upon the bridge between the involvement of EU funding (European Social Fund, the Recovery and Resilience Facility, the Erasmus+ programme) and skills competitions in fostering a better VET eco-system in Europe.
- The individual sessions of the Congress will develop the key areas mentioned above in the title.
- Each of the thematic panels will include presentations by invited experts lasting no longer than 7 minutes.
- Each session has been designed to allocate at least 10 minutes at the end of each panel for discussion and audience questions.

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

7th September 2023 (Thursday) | Polsat Plus Arena Gdańsk

9:00–9:55	Participant Registration
10:00–11:00	<p>OPENING CEREMONY</p> <p>Part I. Welcome speeches by guests and congress organizers.</p> <p>Part II. Debate. <i>The synergy between EU-policies and funding and WorldSkills/EuroSkills to raise the attractiveness of VET and support reforms.</i></p> <p>The financial opportunities provided by EU-funding (European Social Fund, Recovery and Resilience Facility, Erasmus+ etc.), combined with the outreach of WorldSkills competitions and established WorldSkills educational standards, form a comprehensive set of tools to transform vocational education and training in Europe. Valuable examples can be found in countries that have used EU-funding to support reforms in VET, boost the attractiveness of sectors and fill vacancies for sectors in demand. Some countries have established close collaborations between VET institutions, business partners, and WorldSkills organizations. Other countries have used the power of skills competitions organised by WorldSkills to attract learners to the VET sector and promote VET excellence in Europe, including by EU-funding.</p>



<p>11:00–12:00</p>	<p>II SESSION FOR NEW ECONOMY</p> <p>Digital skills are the foundation of a new innovative economy</p> <p>Digital competencies and keeping up with the rapid development of technology are challenges not only for younger generations but for every generation.</p> <p>Digital skills are crucial for professional development, job freedom, exploration and pursuit of passions, communication, and leisure activities. The increasing use of Artificial Intelligence in education and vocational training - particularly in defining the benefits and risks it brings - is one of the most significant digital challenges of the 21st century. Digital transformation is also one of the European Commission's priorities, as reflected also on EU 2021-2027 funding programmes (RRF, ESF+, Digital Europe, Erasmus+).</p> <p>Key issues in this area include:</p> <p><i>How to design an education and training system transformation considering digitalization and rapid technological changes? In what ways can a digital society and technologies drive new approaches to learning, discovering, and pursuing passions? How does the development of digital competencies support an innovative economy?</i></p>
<p>12:00–12:30</p>	<p>LUNCH</p> <p>During the break, live broadcasts from the ongoing competitions at the stadium will be displayed on the screens, possibly including interviews with athletes, experts, and special guests.</p>
<p>12:30–13:30</p>	<p>III SESSION FOR NEW EDUCATION AND TRAINING</p> <p>European Universities and Centres of Vocational Excellence</p> <p>European Universities and Centres of Vocational excellence, as part of the vision for a new European Education Area by 2025, aim to enhance the collaboration between education and training stakeholders and businesses for the better education of people of all ages. European Universities are currently a crucial topic in the context of a transnational alliance of higher education institutions across the European Union.</p> <p>Centres of Vocational excellence are a flagship of Erasmus+.</p> <p>Key issues in this area include:</p> <p><i>How does the EU funding (ex. Erasmus+, ESF+ etc.) support the implementation of the European University concept and Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs)? What are European Universities and CoVEs, and what benefits do they bring to learners, doctoral candidates, and young researchers? How do European Universities and Centres of Vocational excellence support research excellence and knowledge transfer? How do they facilitate knowledge and experience exchange? Why are European Universities and Centres of Vocational Excellence referred to as the key to innovative teaching, research, and learning?</i></p>
<p>13:30–13:40</p>	<p>SHORT COFFE BREAK</p>



<p>13:40–14:40</p>	<p>IV SESSION FOR THE NEXT GENERATIONS</p> <p>European and global trends in the transformation of climate education and the development of green skills for fair transition in the labour market</p> <p>One of the critical challenges of the 21st century is to address the climate crisis, develop a low-emission economy with the principles of a just transition, promote the renewable energy sector, and achieve ambitious climate policy goals in line with the Paris Agreement and the EU Green Deal. It is worth emphasizing that different EU-funds (Recovery and Resilience Facility, Just Transition Fund, European Social Fund Plus, Erasmus+) provide significant support for the development of green skills. The Communication of 1 February 2023 on the Green Deal Industrial Plan gives new urgency to the development of skills for the green transition with skills being one of its four pillars.</p> <p>Raising awareness about the impacts of climate change and mitigation and adaptation strategies to changing climate realities is also one of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. This commitment is reflected in the Lima Ministerial Declaration on Education and Awareness (COP20) and the Declaration on Children, Youth, and Climate Action (COP25), and European Declaration on Global Education towards 2050, which call on governments to incorporate climate-related topics into school curricula and integrate climate awareness into national development plans and climate change strategies.</p> <p>Key issues in this area include:</p> <p><i>How can we raise climate awareness among the younger generation and develop green competencies and skills? Why is education and training crucial for achieving a net-zero economy and technologies? What are the European and global experiences in implementing green education and training? How can we build climate strategies for teaching and learning in Education and training? What are the principles of a just transition that promote social and intergenerational justice?</i></p>
<p>14:40–15:00</p>	<p>COFFEE BREAK</p>
<p>15:00–16:20</p>	<p>V SESSION FOR A BETTER LIFE</p> <p>Social Inclusion, equal opportunities and solidarity</p> <p>Solidarity and integration in education and training and skills policies as a tool to ensure social inclusion. Promoting excellence is not only about supporting the best, but also ensuring that nobody is left behind, for example those young people who are not in employment, education or training (NEETs) or adults in need of upskilling and reskilling, in line with the objectives of the European Year of Skills. The EU Pillar of social rights sets principles and rights essential for fair and well-functioning labour markets and welfare systems in 21st century Europe. Promoting diversity, integration, and social justice in Education and training Institutions and skills policies. Best practices for creating inclusive Education and training environments. Addressing educational disparities, integrating Ukrainian refugees into education and training and supporting marginalized learners and at risk groups, also through cooperation with businesses.</p> <p>Key issues in this area include:</p> <p><i>What solutions does the European Social Fund and Erasmus+ promote to counteract exclusion and unemployment?</i></p> <p><i>The role of education in shaping empathy, tolerance, and understanding. How do education and training institutions support learners and E&T staff from Ukraine? Global and European support programs for youth from Ukraine. What are the foundations and principles of accessibility policies in European and global education systems? Why does the Erasmus+ program is one of the keys to interdisciplinarity, tolerance, and openness?</i></p>
<p>16:20–17:00</p>	<p>SUMMARY</p> <p>Finale conclusions</p>
<p>17.00</p>	<p>BANQUET</p>