

# EuroSkills and WorldSkills challenges

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE

 PORTUGAL

## Timeline

2022 Implementation

2023 Implementation

2024 Implementation

ID number 43510

## Background

WorldSkills rose out of the ruins of the Second World War, which devastated the economies of Europe and created a huge skills shortage that threatened a new economic depression.

Some took this challenge as an opportunity to introduce young people to the world of vocational skills. A skills contest was created for the young in Spain and Portugal, in 1950; since then, Portugal has participated in every competition.

Nowadays, the WorldSkills movement has become much more than an international competition. The organisation is helping young people around the world change their lives through vocational skills.

## Objectives

Portugal's participation objectives are in line with those of these skills competitions:

- (a) reinforcing the value of integrating worldwide standards of excellence in vocational training performance;
- (b) enhancing the social status of vocational training, encouraging the recognition of vocational paths as successful alternatives for insertion into working life;
- (c) promoting new technology-based skills, strategic for the development of the economy, according to European and worldwide evolutionary standards;
- (d) contributing to the development of a competitive training environment, through improving methods and techniques of organisation and execution of work;
- (e) developing the values of quality, creativity, autonomy and teamwork to stimulate scientific and technological, as well as social and cultural, exchange among young training technicians, training operators, companies and other entities involved, at European and worldwide levels;
- (f) evaluating, by comparison with other international training operators, the quality of training;
- (g) stimulating, according to international trends, the adjustment between qualifications and the labour market;
- (h) increasing the notoriety of vocational training developed in Portugal in external markets.

## Description

WorldSkills and EuroSkills are aimed at all young people aged between 17 and 25 who have completed or are attending a qualification programme in vocational education and training. They aim to demonstrate the individual level of skills, rigour and mastery of techniques and tools for the exercise of each profession in the competition, through practical performance tests evaluated according to demanding criteria and in accordance with internationally established technical prescriptions by juries made up of highly qualified experts (trainers, professionals, entrepreneurs).

These competitions, which aim for wide participation, aim to assess the effectiveness of the vocational training given by the different operators and, simultaneously, to induce factors of increasing quality, innovation and creativity in the teaching-learning processes.

The competitions take place every 2 years and bring together those with the best scores in the national selection phase:

- (a) pre-selection (local): aims to identify the best competitor of each entity, by profession;
- (b) regional: includes the candidates selected in the pre-selection phase and aims to identify the regional representative(s) by profession;
- (c) National: aims to select the best national competitors in each profession.

The competitors of the national phase are candidates for participation in the European and world championships of the professions, organised by WorldSkills Europe and WorldSkills International, respectively.

The Institute for Employment and Vocational Training (IEFP) has the responsibility to organise the national phase and to represent Portugal in WorldSkills and EuroSkills.

### **2022 Implementation**

This measure is part of the NIP under the umbrella of package Internationalisation.

Portugal competed in the 2022 international WorldSkills competition in 12 different skills, with 13 competitors and 12 experts, joining more than 1 000 young people from 63 countries, who in total took part in 60 different competitions organised in 26 cities around the world. It achieved the following results: gold medals in Industrial Design - CAD, and Cooking; silver medals in Refrigeration and Air Conditioning and Industrial Control and medals of Excellence in Industrial Mechatronic, Welding, Beauty Therapy and Hairdresser.

### **2023 Implementation**

Portugal's 45th National Championship of Professions, SkillsPortugal 2023, took place from 7 to 12 March 2023 at the Portimão Arena under the theme 'The professions and sustainable development goals'. More than 400 qualified young people participated.

The highest-scoring medallists at the event had the opportunity to represent Portugal at EuroSkills Gdansk 2023 in Poland in September 2023 and classified for WorldSkills, to be held at Lyon (France) in September 2024.

Portugal closed its participation in EuroSkills Gdansk 2023 on a high note, recording a performance of excellence, achieving more than 700 points.

With a team of 18 competitors taking part in 15 professions, the Portuguese team came 7th in the country ranking and brought Portugal 3 silver medals (graphic design; milling; mechatronics), 2 bronze medals (Industrial control; industrial design) and 6 medals of excellence (Automobile mechatronics; hotel reception; refrigeration and air conditioning; restaurant/bar service; welding; fashion technologies).

### **2024 Implementation**

At Worldskills Lyon, Portugal competed in 12 different professions, with 13 competitors and 16 experts, achieving Medals of Excellence in: Mechanical engineering CAD, Welding, Industrial control, Automobile technology, Restaurant service, Refrigeration and air conditioning, Graphic design technology and Hotel reception.

## Bodies responsible

- Institute for Employment and Vocational Training (IEFP)

## Target group

### Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices  
Young people (15-29 years old)  
Learners with migrant background, including refugees  
Learners with disabilities

### Education professionals

Trainers

### Entities providing VET

Companies  
Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)  
VET providers (all kinds)

## Thematic categories

### Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Engaging VET stakeholders and strengthening partnerships in VET

### European and international dimensions of VET

VET internationalisation strategies  
EU and international skills competitions

## European priorities in VET

### VET Recommendation

VET as an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training and skills

### Osnabrück Declaration

European Education and Training Area and international VET

## Subsystem

IVET CVET

## Further reading

## Related policy developments

**2023 Discontinued**

### Raising the attractiveness of apprenticeships

In 2019, IEFP, through the pilot project, Apprenticeship gives employment, carried out a set of training courses in partnership with training providers and business associations, introducing innovations in apprenticeship programmes.

 PORTUGAL

#### Type of development

Strategy/Action  
plan

#### Subsystem

IVET

**2016 Approved/Agreed**

### Network of excellence partners for apprenticeship

IEFP launched the Network of excellence partners for apprenticeship in 2016. Members of the network receive a certification, issued by IEFP, testifying that they deliver high-standard apprenticeships.

 PORTUGAL

#### Type of development

Practical  
measure/Initiative

#### Subsystem

IVET

#### “ ... ” Cite as

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2025). EuroSkills and WorldSkills challenges: Portugal. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2025). *Timeline of VET policies in Europe* (2024 update) [Online tool].

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies->

