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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Renewing vocational education and training to tackle skill mismatch:
work-based learning and apprenticeship for all? – a Cedefop
conference**

Have you ever wondered why there are so many unfilled vacancies at a time when unemployment hits record highs in many countries? Cedefop will explore ways of tackling skill mismatch through work-based learning and apprenticeships at a conference on 12 and 13 June in Thessaloniki, Greece.

Experts on vocational education and training, policy-makers from the European Commission and Member States as well as social partners' representatives will take part in the debate.

European Union (EU) Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth, Androulla Vassiliou, will deliver the closing statement. Greek Minister for Education and Religious Affairs, Culture and Sports, Konstantinos Arvanitopoulos, German Parliamentary Secretary of State, Federal Ministry of Education and Research, Thomas Rachel, and Thessaloniki Mayor, Yiannis Boutaris, will be among those addressing the event.

To see the full programme, go to: <http://events.cedefop.europa.eu/VET-conference-2013/en/programme>

The conference will debate how vocational education and training can be improved by information on labour-market trends, how various forms of apprenticeship can address youth unemployment and how peer learning and alliances can help develop work-based learning.

Cedefop's Acting Director, Christian Lettmayr, says: 'This event is important because it deals with skill forecasting and the European alliance for apprenticeships. The former questions if better information on future needs of the labour market can help adapt the education system in general and vocational education and training in particular to future needs, thus providing young people with a better chance to find a good job. The latter will help countries who wish to develop their apprenticeship and work-based learning systems. This is a promising measure to decrease youth unemployment as countries with a strong apprenticeship system show.'

EU Member States are reforming their education and training systems as a result of reduced funding, but also to make them more flexible and open to other ways of learning – including work-based learning.

Europe faces challenges such as rapid organisational and technological change and the need for a greener economy, all of which demand new skills from an ageing labour force.

Many of our skills are acquired at work. Work-based learning and apprenticeships provide high-quality training for young people and give access to medium-level qualifications. Research shows that most job opportunities over the next decade will require such qualifications.

Work-based learning is also important in education and training for high-level qualifications, for which demand will continue to rise.

For more on these issues go to: www.cedefop.europa.eu

For the latest conference info: <http://events.cedefop.europa.eu/VET-conference-2013/en/>

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About Cedefop

The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop), an agency of the European Union based in Thessaloniki, Greece, supports European policy-making in the field of vocational education and training. www.cedefop.europa.eu

