

3rd Meeting of the Danube Region Platform on Centres of Vocational Excellence

Greening of VET in the Danube Region: Changing skill demands and the role of Centres of Vocational Excellence

Date: 18 April 2024 | 09:00 – 17:00 CET

Venue: [Albert-Schweitzer-Haus](#), Vienna, Austria

FORMAT

International meeting bringing together EU and national policy makers, country experts and VET stakeholders. The meeting will be held in English.

The conference will be hosted within EUSDR Priority Area 9 by the OeAD – Austria’s Agency for Education and Internationalisation and the ETF Network of Excellence (ENE).

BACKGROUND

The Danube Region Platform on Centres of Vocational Excellence serves as a forum for policy and practice exchange on Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs) with a thematic focus on going green and social inclusion. The platform was launched in 2021 by Priority Area 9 (PA9) of the EUSDR (EU Strategy for the Danube Region) in cooperation with the European Training Foundation (ETF) Network for Excellence (ENE)¹. ENE supports vocational excellence development together with 300 so-called Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs) from more than 40 countries. Its green partnership - GRETA - Greening Responses to Excellence through Thematic Actions – supports CoVEs in greening education and training for a green and just transition.

As part of the initiative, a Policy Platform was established, bringing together representatives of responsible national institutions from Danube Region countries and experts from the European Commission, PA9 and ETF. The Platform was awarded as Danube Strategy Flagship in 2022 for its contribution to the implementation of the EUSDR.

The objective of the third platform meeting jointly organised by the Danube Region Platform on CoVEs and the European Training Foundation (ETF) is to contribute to the policy developments and discussions on the emerging topic of the green transition resulting in changing skill demands and the role of VET and VET Excellence. Besides giving room to good practices and key developments in the field, a particular focus of the meeting will be on the sectors of Green Energy and Green Construction, identified as key areas of interest in the survey conducted among policy platform members in 2023. Taking these two sectors as example the meeting will spotlight key issues of how to answer to the increased importance of greening economic sectors and meeting the arising green skills demands.

Green Energy prominently features in the recent EU policy agenda since the launch of the Green Deal in 2019, including the EU's binding renewable target for 2030 to a minimum of 42.5%, and the indicative target for innovative renewable energy technology². Since Russia’s attack on Ukraine the discourse and policy objectives also include a geopolitical component. The EU has set up a large-scale skills

¹ <https://www.etf.europa.eu/en/what-we-do/vocational-excellence>

² Directive (EU) 2023/2413 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 October 2023 amending Directive (EU) 2018/2001, Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 and Directive 98/70/EC as regards the promotion of energy from renewable sources, and repealing Council Directive (EU) 2015/652
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2023/2413/oj>

partnership for the renewable energy industrial ecosystem, in response to the estimate that REPowerEU targets will require the creation of over 3.5 million jobs by 2030.

The construction sector is one of the major contributors to climate change due to its resource-intensive nature. Buildings are the single largest source of energy consumption in the EU, responsible for around 40% of energy consumption and 36% of the energy-related greenhouse gas emissions.³ Given these environmental concerns, the importance of enhancing the sector's resource efficiency and environmental sustainability has grown significantly.⁴ Eurofound research recently revealed that construction is where the Fit for 55 climate policy package will generate the most net new employment as Europe looks to improve its energy efficiency and sustainability credentials.

Both sectors call for the emerging need and demand of re- and upskilling and new green skills. The focus of the EU policy agenda, such as the above-mentioned Pact for Skills, the work on the anticipation of skill demands, and cooperation are essential factors to respond to the (green) skills demands. VET and VET Excellence will play a prominent role to avoid a green skills gap.

PROGRAMME

In the first part of the meeting, the focus will be on the construction and energy sectors. Two keynotes will look at key sectoral developments in light of the green transition, the resulting changing (green) skill demands and the response at EU policy level. The panel discussion will shed light on the response that VET Excellence and CoVEs can give to meet the changing skill needs, inviting a wide spectrum of discussants (policy makers at EU and national level, CoVE/VET providers, company representatives and project managers).

Enabling mutual learning is among the key objectives of the meeting. In the interactive session participants are invited to contribute to the discussion, sharing their expert opinion and view in response to the key issues raised in the keynotes and the panel discussion, and to work on the identification of common interests for cooperation (and potential spin-off projects).

In the second part of the meeting, policy makers will present good practice examples on policy developments in Greening VET contributing to the transformation process and the (potential) role CoVEs can play in this regard. Finally, we see the meeting as an opportunity to further increase the added value of the Danube Platform on Centres of Vocational Excellence. We will invite participants to express their expectations and key areas of interest for the future development of the Platform.

KEY TAKEAWAYS OF THE MEETING

- Understanding of the changing skill demands in the construction and energy sectors in light of the green transition and related key VET policy developments at EU level;
- Awareness of the challenges, opportunities and potentials of VET arising from the changing skill demands in the two sectors;
- Identification of opportunities for cooperation in Greening of VET & VET Excellence in the Danube Region in the two sectors;
- Sharing knowledge of policy initiatives in relation to Greening of VET in the Danube Region countries;
- Shaping the profile and role of the Danube Region Platform on Centres of Vocational Excellence as information point and facilitator of cooperations.

³ <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/en/blog/2023/building-back-better-construction-essential-eu-green-transition>

⁴ <https://www.etf.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2023-11/Skills%20for%20the%20green%20transition.pdf>

AGENDA

Time (CET)	Sessions
Wednesday, 17.4.2024	
19.00	Networking Dinner Stiegl Ambulanz, Alser Strasse 4, 1090 Vienna
Thursday, 18.4.2024	
08.30 – 09.00	Registration
09.00 – 09.05	Introduction by the moderators <i>Monika Mott, OeAD - Austria's Agency for Education and Internationalisation</i> <i>Gordon Purvis, European Training Foundation</i>
09.05 – 09.15	Welcome & Setting the scene <i>Jürgen Schick, Priority Area Coordinator EUSDR Priority Area 9</i> <i>José Manuel Galvin Arribas, European Training Foundation</i>
09.15 – 10.20	Keynotes Green Transition in Construction and the Energy Sector – Priorities, Challenges and Arising Skills Needs <i>Fanny Gruböck, Head of Corporate Sustainability, PORR AG</i> <i>Tim Van Rie, Policy Officer – Digital and green skills, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, European Commission</i>
10.20 – 11.10	Panel discussion on the response of VET (Excellence in VET) to the transformation process /supporting the green transition in Construction and the Energy sectors <i>Fanny Gruböck, PORR AG</i> <i>Wolfgang Kern, Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research, Austria</i> <i>Susanne M. Nielsen, European Training Foundation</i> <i>Marina Papović, Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe/ ERI SEE</i> <i>Iryna Shumik, Ministry of Education and Science, Ukraine</i> <i>Lilia Zestrea, Centre of Excellence in Construction, Republic of Moldova</i>
Coffee break	
11.40 – 13.00	Getting involved Interactive session on key questions and potential areas for cooperation
Lunch break	
14.00 – 14.15	Main takeaways <i>Monika Mott, OeAD - Austria's Agency for Education and Internationalisation</i>
14.15 – 14.35	Keynote The Potential of Centres of Vocational Excellence for VET Policy Implementation: Vocational Excellence and CoVEs role as key international drivers for the future of VET policies and systems worldwide. <i>José Manuel Galvin Arribas, European Training Foundation</i>

<p>14.35 – 15.45</p>	<p>Good practices & key developments in Greening of skills</p> <p>ReBUSk - Reboot BUILD UP Skills Austria <i>Karin Gugitscher, oeibf - Austrian Institute for Research on Vocational Training, Austria</i></p> <p>GREENOVET - European VET Excellence Platform for Green Innovation <i>Bojan Jovanovski, Coordinator of the GREENOVET project, Austria</i> <i>Trajce Velkovski, Head of CoVE in Green Innovation, North Macedonia</i></p> <p>Embedding green competences in Romanian initial VET <i>Carmen Muşat, National Centre for TVET Development, Romania</i></p>
<p>Coffee break</p>	
<p>16.00 – 16.45</p>	<p>The future of the Danube Region Platform <i>Interactive session on the key areas of interest for the future development</i></p>
<p>16.45 – 17.00</p>	<p>Closing session <i>José Manuel Galvin Arribas, ETF</i> <i>Jürgen Schick, Priority Area Coordinator EUSDR Priority Area 9</i></p>