**Conclusions - ETF’s Conference of the Year!**

**Skills & Qualifications: Benefits for People**

08 NOV 2019

The closing panel of the ETF conference reflected on the conference proceedings, in particular the success stories and **City of Practice**, showcasing the many inspiring examples from the ETF partner countries in Skills and Qualifications. Drawing conclusions and looking to the future, the role of teachers, blended learning, the use of technology and agile providers are key areas for attention. In addition, career guidance can have greater outreach when deploying user-friendly virtual navigation tools. Fewer qualifications with more individual modules within those qualifications, as presented in an example from Finland can offer a more streamlined, flexible approach to qualifications.

The panel was composed by Koen Nomden, Jean-Paul Heerschap and Jeroen Willems from the European Commission representing the domains of skills and qualifications, migration and employment, and EU external relations respectively, together with the ETF Director, Cesare Onestini, and the Head of Operations, Anastasia Fetsi. The panel projected on the direction skills’ policies will take in the coming years, taking inspiration from the event, which will see the EU’s skills agenda and implementation updated in view of occupational trends, qualifications, lifelong learning and giving more power to the learner.

After 10 years the Eastern Partnership is being reflected upon at the EU’s headquarters, reported Jeroen Willems. Its focus will shift beyond basic policy reforms to implementation, for which teachers will be supported with an emphasis on mobility. Attention to curricula, enhancing flexibility and including green skills, digital innovation, and artificial intelligence will also be needed to respond to labour market needs in the face of global opportunities and challenges.

From an employment perspective, Jean-Paul Heerschap stressed the importance of vocational education and training linking to employment and business, trade and regional cooperation, in particular through national qualification systems. ‘Skills must be co-created from the bottom-up’.

The ETF’s Skills and Qualifications Toolkit presented at the conference was designed to support this bottom-up process. Moreover, the ETF’s new strategy 2021-2027 will focus on the generation of new knowledge to enable skills development by launching three new activities on skills demand, the creation of new learning, and vocational centres of excellence respectively.

*Background*

Policymakers and practitioners from the ETF partner countries met in Turin, at the Lingotto Congress Centre, with representatives from the European Union institutions, international organisations, and international experts from the field of skills and qualifications for the ETF Conference on Skills and Qualifications: Benefits for People.

The first day of the conference focused on learning and teaching, curricula reform, and career guidance and assessment. Successful practices informed discussions together with the recently published ETF Toolkit, an aid for qualifications and skills development.

The City of Practice was the focus of the second day, connecting policy and practice. Stands along the conference centre promenade exhibited success stories and tools in the four areas of information and guidance, the changing role of teachers, blended learning and vocational training and lifelong learning.

A full and varied agenda enabled discussions on how to enhance the benefits for people derived from policies and practices on skills and qualifications.

Proceedings of the event were broadcast throughout the ETF social media channels.

More information about the conference: <https://europa.eu/!mB93gy>

Web streaming: <https://europa.eu/!um84bV>