

INTERNATIONAL ONLINE CONFERENCE OF SMES VOCATIONAL EDUCATION TRAINING PROVIDERS (VET) **SAVE THE DATE**

“CONTINUING VET: THE KEY FACTOR
FOR SMES SUSTAINABLE GROWTH –
NEW CHALLENGES & STRATEGIES”

THESSALONIKI
GREECE

16 – 17
September 2021





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Craft and SMEs VET NET

International Online Conference of SMEs Vocational Education Training Providers (VET)

2nd INTERMEDIATE Event

**“CONTINUING VET: THE KEY FACTOR FOR SMEs SUSTAINABLE
GROWTH – NEW CHALLENGES & STRATEGIES”**

16-17 September 2021 –Thessaloniki – Greece

The Conference will take place as an **online event at 16- 17 September 2021** during the week that Thessaloniki International Fair will be organized as well.

The official language of the conference will be English.

Register to the Conference

Introduction

New challenges faced by Craft/Micro-Small-to-Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) are increasing as well as uncertainty in the existing business environment, especially after the COVID 19 crisis. Some of them are related to global changes that increase competition or to new skills needs and new Market conditions require adaptability and awareness on the recovery and growth potential of Digital and Ecological transformation.

Moreover, the risk of Internal Market fragmentations, due to not converging and unprecedented market competition conditions for craft and SMEs, will need to be addressed with specific support programs by EU/ National/regional policy makers.

There are also societal issues, like climate change, or fewer opportunities for third countries that increase SMEs concerns.

Taking all the above challenges under consideration, National Recovery and Resilience Plans approved in July 2021 by the European Commission should be geared, exploited,

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and monitored to the emerging sector training and new competences needs of craft and SMEs.

Main Conference objectives

Continuing Craft SMEs VET providers impact on these challenges as a key element for deal and respond with these challenges: a crucial activity for the future of European SMEs that require a deepened analysis on the training needs and a rapid cross sector business process transformation of upskill and reskill in order to deal with the new markets and SMEs global value chains, new products/services, demands and issues of a mutated world.

The Conference will focus on:

- main national and regional obstacles and entrepreneurship models, sector based best practices exchange and SMEs VET solutions and future opportunities for European and not European CRAFT and SMEs providers and will confront on.
- how EU/national/regional third policies on C-VET could facilitate and support new role and meaning that SMEs C-VET providers is going to assume for SMEs and in general for the whole society.
- how to further promote and capitalize the results emerged until now during the exchange of Know-how and experiences took place in the framework of the CRAFT and SMEs VET NET Community Platform.

Main target groups

The main target groups for the Conference are composed of EU and international Craft and SME training bodies offering in adult education, continuous VET national providers and trainers, business and industrial cultural Foundations, specialized media, invited Social Partners (SME United and ETUC), EU/National /sector based Representative Organizations of SMEs (Digital Alliance, UETR, EBC, Coiffeur EU, CEPEC), Chambers, HEI, Cedefop, ETF and EACEA but is as well opened to Schools and Universities, Students, learning, Civil Society Organizations and consumers organizations

Themes & Round Tables

1 Digitalization and SMEs

Specifically, in order to address current challenges, C-VET providers and networks have to follow the Craft and SMEs needs and the incoming request that technology brings. New educational opportunities and digital learning technologies and methods for upskilling and reskilling should be provided to companies and employees. The range and nature of opportunities and the challenges faced by SMEs, in the context of digitalization and technological developments will be discussed in “roundtables”.

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2. Climate Change

Most of SMEs say that their actions cannot influence significantly the environmental outcomes such as climate change. However, this topic remains a significant concern for everyone, and especially, for many businesses, resulting changes which will present both challenges and opportunities. Thus, this is Existing Best practices and future actions will be included in Event's Agenda.

3. SMEs & CVET in third countries

SMEs are a fundamental part of the economy in all countries, and they play a crucial role in furthering growth, innovation and prosperity. However, there is a significant necessary for reforms of the CVET systems in the third countries (e.g., West Balkans, non-EU Mediterranean Countries) in order to support their modernization. Reasons and solution will be discussed during the Event.

4. Recovery and Resilience

A significant topic of the Event will be regarding the National Plans for Recovery and Resilience that aim to mitigate the economic and social impact and make SMEs economies and societies more sustainable, resilient and better prepared for the challenges and opportunities of the green and digital transitions.

Background CVET material

A list of background documents dealing with VET policies at EU level is available in the **Craft VET NET Community Platform Repository**. Please register to the platform to have access to this repository for your better information via the following link <https://www.vet-net.eu/platform/share/search-repositories/>

The Craft and SMEs Community platform

Craft and SMEs VET NET Community platform is dedicated to build the first European Community of Practice (CoP) focused on C-VET. The objective is to create a space for a common European perspective about C-VET. A bottom-up process that involves all the possible interested members: C-VET providers, professional trainees, institutions at regional, national, and European levels. A place to discuss and meet others, to share resources, issues and ideas, a place to attend courses, to improve skills.

In the Community's platform there are tools, contents, information's, debates, new maps of the changing landscapes of Continuous VET: a place to discuss and learn but more than all a place to build with us through your participation.

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More specific, the Conference topics will be anticipated some days before the conference and will continue to be debated on the **Craft VET NET Community Platform Forum** as a follow-up in view of the 3rd project event: FINAL CONFERENCE at 9-10 December 2021 in Brussels. Please register to the platform to participate in the above-mentioned dialogue via the following link: <https://www.vet-net.eu/platform/users/registration/>

The organizer

The Conference is organized by the Small Enterprises Institute of the Hellenic Confederation of Professionals Craftsmen & Merchants (IME GSEVEE) in the framework of Crafts and SMEs vocational and educational training network that is an EU innovative Network supported by the EC ERASMUS + Program.

Five distinct training, research and representative bodies at National and European level (ECIPA CNA, EFQBL, IME GSEVEE, PIMEC, SME Academy Avignon) participate in a European project consortium which aims to establish a network for the development of value added continuous vocational and educational training to support Craft & SMEs in their cross sector digital transition.

Register to the Conference

International Online Conference of SMEs Vocational Education Training Providers (VET): Topics and schedule

First day Thursday 16th September 2021: 10.30 - 17:00 (CEST)

10:30 - 10:40 Welcome open introduction

10:40 - 13:00 Plenary Session: New EU programme period 2021-27 – New Challenges & Opportunstes for Continuing Vet

13:50 - 15:20 Roundtable 1: Digitalization of SMEs & CVET

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15:30 - 17:00 Roundtable 2: Green Skills / Climate Change & CVET

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Second day Friday 17th September: 9.30 – 14.00(CEST)

09:30 - 10:50 Roundtable 3: CVET & SMEs in third Countries

11:00 - 12:20 Roundtable 4: The role of CVET & SMEs in NPRRs

**12:30 - 14:00 Closure Plenary Session: Synthesis of the main Conclusions/
Findings from the roundtables**

Format: Due to COVID 19 and social distance obligations both days **will be organized on line:** people from all parts of Europe could connect and discuss with us during the foreseen Questions time from all over Europe. The speech will be held through a webinar platform.

Organizing Committee:

Giuseppe Vivace, Luca Reitano - Foundation ECIPA CNA; Dimitris Bimpas - SME Academy Avignon; Vasilis Siomadis - IME GSEVEE; M. Àngels Benítez - PIMEC; Peter Mazohl - EFQBL

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