Guide for Transition from Traditional Skills Competitions to Competitions Based on the WorldSkills Format

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Skills competitions for VET development

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Guide for Transition from Traditional Skills Competitions to Competitions Based on the WorldSkills Format
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1 Introduction

Purpose of the guide

This guide is designed to support education and training providers, competition organizers, vocational teachers, and policymakers in transitioning from traditional skills competitions to a modern, pedagogically rich, and industry-relevant format inspired by **WorldSkills**. Drawing on the experience and results of the SkillsComp project and the principles of the **WorldSkills** movement, the guide offers a practical roadmap, tools, and strategies to create meaningful learning and assessment experiences through skills competitions. Whether you are starting from scratch or refining an existing competition model, this guide will help you introduce **competency-based, inclusive, and industry-aligned practices** into your local or national VET ecosystem.

Target audience

This guide is intended for:

- **Vocational teachers and trainers** seeking to integrate competitions into learning
- **VET school leaders and coordinators** responsible for quality and innovation
- **Competition organizers** at school, regional or national levels
- **Public authorities and education bodies** interested in system-level reform
- **Employers and sectoral partners** involved in skills development

No prior experience with WorldSkills is required. The guide includes both introductory and advanced elements.

Context and rationale

Across Europe and globally, vocational education and training is undergoing transformation. Learners, employers, and society increasingly demand education that is:

- **Practical and relevant**
- **Aligned with industry standards**
- **Focused on competence, not just theory**

Traditional skills competitions—while valuable for motivation and recognition—often emphasize **performance for awards** rather than **learning through performance**. They may be disconnected from real job requirements, lack transparent assessment, or be driven by subjective criteria.

In contrast, the **WorldSkills format** transforms competitions into **learning-centered, inclusive, and professionally anchored experiences**. They provide:

- Authentic tasks modeled on workplace scenarios
- Structured assessment based on measurable and observable criteria
- Objective scoring using standardized marking schemes
- Opportunities for feedback, reflection, and growth

This format not only identifies excellence but supports it—making it a powerful tool for **teaching, learning, and curriculum enhancement**.

Goals of the transition

This guide aims to help you:

- Understand the differences between traditional and WS-style competitions
- Build capacity among teachers, assessors, and partners
- Redesign competition tasks and assessment tools
- Run meaningful pilot competitions
- Promote learning, fairness, and transparency
- Lay the groundwork for sustainable, multi-level competition systems
- Strengthen the bridge between **VET institutions and the world of work**

Connection to the SkillsComp Project

This guide was developed as part of the **SkillsComp - Skills Competitions as a Tool for Developing and Recognizing Learning Outcomes in VET** project (KA220-VET). The project brought together partners from Romania, Slovakia, Poland, and the Czech Republic to pilot the integration of WorldSkills principles into national competition systems.

The guide integrates:

- Real-world experiences and lessons from SkillsComp pilots
- Existing WorldSkills documentation and standards
- Practical tools and templates for adaptation
- By blending theory with field-tested practice, the guide serves as both a **framework** and a **hands-on manual** for reforming skills competitions in diverse contexts.

2 Understanding the Difference: Traditional vs WorldSkills Format

Transitioning to a modern competition model requires a clear understanding of how **traditional skills competitions** differ from the **WorldSkills (WS) format.** This section outlines the key contrasts between the two approaches in terms of **purpose, design, assessment, roles, and educational value**.

Key characteristics of traditional skills competitions

While traditional competitions have offered valuable platforms for recognition and student motivation, they often include characteristics such as:

- Tasks that are predefined and familiar to the teacher or host school
- Focus on speed, repetition, or visual appeal rather than real-world applicability
- Assessment based on subjective judgment or informal impressions
- Lack of transparent marking schemes or feedback mechanisms
- Limited involvement of industry representatives
- More emphasis on winning than on **learning through the competition**
- As a result, the educational value may be reduced, and students may struggle to connect the experience with real workplace expectations.

WorldSkills Format: Characteristics

Competitions based on the WorldSkills model are built around **quality teaching and assessment principles**. Their aim is not only to celebrate excellence but to **simulate authentic, high-performance professional environments**.

Features include:

- Tasks based on real-life, industry-relevant scenarios
- Use of standardized documents: **Test Projects**, **Marking Schemes**, **Infrastructure Lists**, and **WSOS (Occupational Standards)**
- Assessment based on **observable performance criteria** and defined scoring rubrics

- Use of both **measurement** (objective, binary) and **judgement** (qualitative, scaled) methods
- Involvement of **industry partners** in task design and evaluation
- Structured roles: Chief Expert, Workshop Manager, Assessment Team, etc.
- Feedback and reflection are part of the process
- Emphasis on **transparency, fairness, and learner growth**

Dimension	Traditional Format	WorldSkills Format
Task Design	Often familiar, repeated tasks	Authentic tasks simulating real-world scenarios
Assessment	Informal or subjective, lacks structure	Structured, based on Marking Schemes and observable criteria
Scoring Method	One overall score or visual judgment	Detailed: measurement + judgement with descriptor scales
Standards Alignment	Rarely linked to curriculum or job standards	Aligned with WSOS, curriculum outcomes, and industry expectations
Feedback	Rarely provided	Structured feedback enables learning and reflection
Industry Involvement	Low to none	Strong: experts, sponsors, assessors, task contributors
Pedagogical Value	Motivation, prestige	Motivation + deep learning + formative assessment
Documentation	No standard structure	Clear templates for TPs, MS, roles, and infrastructure
Roles and Responsibilities	Teacher-driven	Defined roles: Chief Expert, Workshop Manager, Assessors, etc.
Purpose	Showcase skills, reward winners	Develop skills, support growth, benchmark excellence

Why this matters

Understanding the **shift in philosophy and practice** is crucial. The WorldSkills model turns competitions into **vehicles for education**. Instead of being disconnected from school and curriculum, competitions become:

- **Anchored in learning outcomes**
- **Aligned with assessment for learning**
- **Opportunities for feedback and growth**
- **Bridges between education and employment**
- In this new paradigm, **competition is not an end goal** but a **means to enhance teaching, learning, and professional readiness**.

Transition implication

Transitioning means more than rewriting tasks – it means **changing mindsets**:

- From "How fast can they finish this?"➔ to "What do they demonstrate while doing it?"
- From "Who is best?" ➔ to "How can we raise everyone's competence?"
- From "Let's pick a winner" ➔ to "Let's help each student grow"

3 Why make the transition?

From winning for prestige to learning for life

Transitioning from traditional to WorldSkills-style competitions is not only a matter of technical upgrade – it represents a **strategic investment in the quality, relevance, and impact of vocational education and training (VET)**. This section outlines the main reasons why this shift is necessary and beneficial.

Responding to real-world labour market demands

Modern economies demand workers who are not only technically skilled but also adaptable, solution-oriented, and able to apply knowledge in complex contexts.

- WS-style competitions mirror the expectations of employers:
  - Task realism
  - Professional standards
  - Time management
  - Communication and collaboration
- By integrating WS practices, competitions become **bridges to employment**, not just school-level exercises.

Promoting competence-based learning and assessment

- Traditional competitions often reward performance without a clear link to competence. In contrast, WS methods emphasize:
- What the student **can do**

- How the student **performs under real conditions**
- How performance is **measured transparently**

This supports the shift toward **learning outcomes**, **competency frameworks**, and **authentic assessment** – principles central to European VET reforms and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).\

Transforming competitions into learning tools

Rather than functioning as isolated events, WS-style competitions can be used to:

- ✓ Enhance teaching quality
- ✓ Strengthen assessment literacy among teachers
- ✓ Support curriculum reform
- ✓ Provide rich feedback and reflection opportunities for learners

Teachers become assessors and learning designers, not just "supervisors" of contests.

Competitions become an extension of the classroom.

Increasing student engagement and motivation

WS-style competitions provide:

- Clear standards and expectations
- Fairness and transparency in evaluation
- Recognition not just of top students, but of progress and effort
- Real-world relevance

These elements boost student **motivation**, **self-confidence**, and **sense of purpose** in their learning journey.

Building Stronger Partnerships with Industry

Unlike traditional models, the WS format **invites companies and professionals** to co-design and co-assess tasks. This collaboration:

- Increases the credibility of the competition
- Aligns learning with job market needs
- Helps teachers stay current with technology and practice
- Creates talent pipelines for employers

It brings VET schools and companies closer together.

Supporting system-level innovation in VET

Implementing WS-style competitions creates ripple effects:

- Improved teacher capacity in assessment and task design
- More flexible, modular curriculum integration
- Better benchmarking across regions and schools
- Opportunities for peer learning and regional/national scaling

Countries that have embraced WS models use them as **levers for system change** in vocational education.

Shifting the culture: from "Winning" to "Growing"

Traditional competitions often focus on medals, rankings, and prestige. While celebration is important, the WS model emphasizes:

- Learning and feedback
- Personal best, not just podium finishes
- Ethical assessment
- Inclusion and opportunity

This mindset fosters a **healthy competition culture**, focused on **growth, not pressure**.

Area	Improved Through WS Format
Teaching	Real-world content, feedback-rich assessment
Learning	Engagement, motivation, competence focus
Industry Collaboration	Joint task design, validation, talent development
System Impact	Capacity building, curriculum innovation, quality assurance
Student Experience	Clarity, fairness, relevance, and recognition

Step-by-Step Transition Framework

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How to move from traditional to WorldSkills-inspired competitions – one step at a time

Transitioning to the WorldSkills format requires thoughtful planning, capacity building, and piloting. This section provides a practical **four-stage roadmap** to guide schools, regional authorities, or national organizers through the transition process.

Overview of the 4 Stages:

- **Awareness & Capacity Building**
- **Designing WS-style Competitions**
- **Piloting & Implementation**
- **Scaling & Sustainability**

Each stage includes key actions, roles, and examples to support implementation.

4.1. Stage 1: Awareness & capacity building

Objective: Build shared understanding of the WS model and engage key stakeholders.

Key Actions:

- Inform VET teachers, principals, local authorities, and companies about WS principles and benefits
- Organize awareness workshops, webinars, or info sessions
- Translate WorldSkills concepts into national/local educational language
- Identify a core team of "early adopters" (teachers and assessors)

- Provide training on:
  - Competence-based assessment
  - Marking schemes (judgement & measurement)
  - Ethical assessment and feedback
  - Role of industry in competition design

Suggested Tools:

- Adapted training modules (e.g., based on Module 4 from your work)
- Short videos, infographics, and case studies from SkillsComp partners
- Self-assessment tool for teacher readiness

4.2. Stage 2: Designing WS-style Competitions

Objective: Redesign tasks, assessment, and roles based on the WorldSkills approach.

Key Actions:

- Select one or more occupations/skills that lend themselves to real-world tasks
- Develop Test Projects using WorldSkills structure:
  - Realistic scenario
  - Defined competencies
  - Time/material constraints
  - Linked to WSOS or curriculum
- Create Marking Schemes using:
  - Measurement (objective, binary)
  - Judgement (0-3 scale with descriptors)
- Define roles and responsibilities:
  - Chief Expert
  - Competition Manager
  - Jury members (assessors)
  - Technical support

Suggested tools:
- Templates for Test Projects and Marking Schemes
- Role descriptions and assessment guidelines
- WorldSkills Infrastructure List (simplified version)

4.3. Stage 3: Piloting & implementation

Objective: Run a trial competition in a school or region using the new format.

Key Actions:
- Set up a small-scale event (single skill or multiple)
- Prepare infrastructure and materials (aligned with the TP)
- Train all assessors on the MS and code of conduct
- Run the competition with clear rules, timing, and marking procedures
- Ensure feedback is collected from:
  - Participants
  - Teachers
  - Assessors
  - Industry observers

Focus Areas:
- Scoring consistency
- Participant experience
- Role performance
- Logistical feasibility

Suggested Outputs:
- Pilot evaluation report
- Short video or photo story for communication
- Reflection and improvement notes for next edition

4.4 Stage 4: Scaling & Sustainability

Objective: Embed the model into local/regional systems and ensure continuity.

Key Actions:

- Refine materials and procedures based on pilot evaluation
- Share results with education authorities and companies
- Establish a calendar of competitions (school ➔ regional ➔ national)
- Involve more schools and sectors in next editions
- Create a national repository of:
  - Validated Test Projects
  - Marking Schemes
  - Competition guides
- Provide continuous training for new teachers and assessors
- Explore links with curriculum and qualifications systems
- Secure public/private funding or sponsorships

Success Indicators:

- Number of teachers using WS tools in regular teaching
- Number of students participating in updated competitions
- Industry partners involved in task design or assessment
- Positive feedback from learners and parents

Case studies from SkillsComp project

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Defining the purpose and competency focus

- **Objective**: Clearly define the professional competencies to be evaluated, aligning with national occupational standards and relevant curricula.
- **Start with the occupation or qualification** (e.g., "Jonctor fibră optică", "Electronic Technician").
- Identify **key competencies** (technical, organizational, communicative).
- Ensure alignment with **real-world workplace tasks** and **entry-level job expectations**.
- Refer to national COR codes or equivalent occupational standards.

Example from Romania: The Information Network Cabling competition evaluates skills such as optical fiber splicing, structured cabling installation, and adherence to health & safety.

Developing the Test Project

- A test project is a **realistic simulation of a job task**, structured in modules and scored based on clearly defined performance criteria.

Key Components:

- **Scenario**: A workplace-relevant story (e.g., installing a FTTH network or assembling an electronic prototype).
- **Modules**: Split the task into manageable, time-bound sections.
- **Required Deliverables**: What should be completed or demonstrated.
- **Timing**: Indicate total competition time and module breakdown.
- **Resources**: List of materials, tools, software, and workstations.

✓ Best Practice: Ensure a balance between **hands-on performance** and **problem-solving tasks**.

Designing the Marking Scheme

- The marking scheme operationalizes how each element of the test is evaluated, ensuring objectivity and transparency.

Types of Criteria:

- **Measured (objective)**: Quantitative elements like dimensions, attenuation loss, speed of execution.
- **Judged (subjective)**: Quality of workmanship, ergonomics, organization.
- **Critical Error**: Conditions that disqualify the performance of a task or part thereof.
- **Mark Allocation**:
- Assign scores by criteria/module, totaling 100 points.
- Weighting must reflect importance and complexity of the task.

Example:

- Electronics Prototyping – 30 pts for assembly, 40 pts for design, 30 pts for programming.
- Information Network Cabling – 90 pts divided across 9 modules including splicing, labeling, safety, and speed test.

Preparing for assessment

- Prepare clear **evaluation protocols** and forms to be used by judges.
- Define **jury roles and distribution** (each judge evaluates specific modules).
- Conduct a **familiarization session** with judges and competitors.
- Use **rubrics/checklists** and ensure all judges apply the same standards.

Use visual indicators (color-coded cables, labeled diagrams, photo validation) to aid objectivity.

Pilot Testing and Validation

- Before the actual competition:
- Test the task and marking scheme with students and experts.
- Validate clarity, feasibility, time allocation, and safety.

Adjustments may include:
- Reducing complexity,
- Rebalancing scoring,
- Clarifying instructions.

Tip: Validation can include comparing scores from different judges to check consistency.

Implementing the competition

During the competition:
- Ensure smooth logistics: tools distribution, workstation setup, safety checks.
- Run **briefings** before each module.
- Enforce **WorldSkills-style rules**: time limits, tool control, non-intervention.
- Use **live scoring templates**, or digital scoring tools if available.

Optional: Include a documentation station where students submit evidence or photos of work stages.

Post-competition review and feedback

After the event:
- Analyze performance data.
- Organize **debriefing sessions** with judges and trainers.
- Provide **individual feedback** to competitors – highlight strengths and areas for improvement.
- Discuss **curriculum implications** with VET institutions.

Follow-up: Share anonymized best practices or typical errors as teaching materials.

6 Training and capacity building for stakeholders

Empowering teachers, assessors, and partners to implement the WorldSkills format effectively

Transitioning to the WorldSkills format requires more than just updated documents and tasks – it demands a shared understanding of the **assessment philosophy**, **technical standards**, and **operational roles** involved. This section outlines how to systematically train the key actors: **teachers**, **judges**, **students**, and **industry partners**.

Training for VET teachers and trainers

Goal: Develop teachers' capacity to design, facilitate, and evaluate WS-style competitions, and to integrate WS methods into regular teaching.

Key competencies:

- Understanding the WorldSkills assessment model (TP + MS)
- Writing realistic, competency-based Test Projects
- Creating Marking Schemes (judgement & measurement)
- Providing meaningful feedback
- Working collaboratively with other assessors
- Using competitions as learning opportunities

Training formats:

- Face-to-face or hybrid workshops (2–3 days)
- Peer mentoring within school or regional networks
- Online self-paced modules (e.g., based on Module 4)

Practical exercises:

- Analyze an existing Test Project
- Draft a mini TP for your subject
- Build a marking scheme with criteria and descriptors
- Practice using a real MS on recorded performances
- Role-play giving feedback

Resources: Use real WS tasks or SkillsComp samples for training simulations.

Training for judges and assessors

Goal: Ensure judges understand their roles, responsibilities, and the standards of fairness and accuracy required in WS-style assessment.

Key topics:

- Difference between judging and measuring
- Use of descriptors for judgment scoring
- Objectivity and consistency in evaluation
- Managing stress and fairness under pressure
- Jury ethics and code of conduct
- Using digital or paper-based score sheets

Training activities:

- Mock judging sessions using pre-recorded student tasks
- Inter-rater reliability exercises
- Calibration exercises: scoring the same task and comparing results
- Reviewing anonymized scoring discrepancies for learning

Tip: Emphasize feedback as part of the judge's role, not just scoring.

Orientation for students

Goal: Help students understand how the new competition format works and how to prepare.

Key messages:

- You are assessed on competence, not tricks or speed alone
- There are clear, fair rules and expectations
- Feedback is part of the process, not just final scores
- Mistakes are learning opportunities

Orientation activities:

- Practice with past modules or demo tasks
- Self-assessment using simplified marking criteria
- Role-playing jury vs. competitor
- Reflective journaling after mock competitions

Outcome: Students feel ownership, fairness, and motivation.

Engagement with industry partners

Goal: Bring companies into the competition process as co-creators, assessors, sponsors, or mentors.

Strategies:

- Invite employers to co-design tasks or validate them
- Offer assessor training to company professionals
- Create visibility for companies supporting VET excellence
- Organize industry open days during competitions

Benefits for companies:

- Access to emerging talent
- Direct input into training relevance
- Employer branding
- Networking with VET institutions

Model: Dual-assessment teams (teacher + employer) build credibility and learning value.

Stakeholder	Training Focus	Format
Teachers/Trainers	Task design, assessment, feedback	Workshops, peer learning, online
Judges/Assessors	Objectivity, scoring accuracy, ethics	Mock judging, calibration
Students	Task structure, criteria, mindset	Orientation sessions
Employers	Task validation, scoring, support roles	Joint design sessions, briefings

7 Common challenges and how to address them

Practical solutions for a smooth transition to the WorldSkills format

While the benefits of adopting the WorldSkills format are clear, the transition often involves **overcoming resistance, rethinking routines, and managing practical constraints**. This section outlines the most common obstacles experienced during the SkillsComp pilots and provides recommended strategies to deal with them.

Challenge 1: Resistance to change from teachers or school leaders

Problem: Teachers may perceive the new format as complicated, time-consuming, or irrelevant. Leaders may fear disrupting tradition or losing control over evaluation.

Solutions:

- Organize **introductory sessions** highlighting educational benefits, fairness, and student motivation
- Emphasize how WS-style competitions support existing goals: curriculum alignment, student success, and innovation
- Start small: pilot one or two modules or skills per school
- Involve respected teachers as local ambassadors or peer trainers

Frame competitions as learning tools — not just as events.

Challenge 2: Lack of experience with competency-based assessment

Problem: Teachers are used to binary grading or informal observation, and may feel unprepared to assess using structured criteria.

Solutions:

- Provide **targeted training** (see Section 6) on judgement vs. measurement
- Offer **rubric samples** and co-create marking schemes in workshops
- Use **video-based calibration exercises** to build confidence
- Pair new assessors with more experienced colleagues in the first competition

Provide user-friendly tools and scaffolded practice opportunities.

Challenge 3: Time constraints in schools

Problem: Teachers and students already face a packed curriculum. Organizing a full competition feels like an additional burden.

Solutions:

- Integrate WS-style tasks into **existing assessments or modules**
- Use a **modular format**: each task can be done in class over multiple sessions
- Position the competition as part of **formative evaluation**
- Focus on **one key skill** or **short version** of the competition for pilots

Use competitions as curriculum tools, not extras.

Challenge 4: Limited resources (tools, budget, space)

Problem: Not all schools have access to the equipment, infrastructure, or funds needed to simulate industry-standard tasks.

Solutions:

- Start with **low-cost tasks** and gradually scale up
- Partner with **local companies** to sponsor tools or host events
- Share equipment among schools or rotate usage
- Focus on **core competencies** that can be assessed with basic materials
- Simulate tasks using digital tools (e.g. virtual environments, online scoring)

The WS model is scalable – quality matters more than complexity.

Challenge 5: Ensuring fair and consistent evaluation

Problem: Judges may interpret criteria differently, and students may perceive bias or lack of clarity.

Solutions:

- Train assessors on marking schemes using **standardized rubrics**
- Conduct **mock evaluations** and scoring calibration sessions
- Use **dual assessment** where possible (e.g. two judges per task)
- Allow time for **jury discussion** before and after scoring
- Clearly explain the criteria and scoring to students in advance

Assessment quality builds trust in the process.

Challenge 6: Engaging industry partners effectively

Problem: Companies may not see the value of involvement or may be unsure how to contribute.

Solutions:

- Approach companies with **specific roles** (e.g., task validation, co-assessment, mentoring)
- Emphasize the **talent development pipeline** aspect
- Provide visibility (logos, media coverage, testimonials)
- Start with **one committed partner**, then grow the network through their advocacy

Strong industry involvement adds credibility and realism.

Challenge 7: Sustaining momentum after the pilot

Problem: After a successful pilot, there may be no follow-up plan, leading to loss of energy and impact.

Solutions:

- Create a **post-competition evaluation** and improvement plan
- Document the pilot as a case study or model
- Establish an **annual calendar** or roadmap for future competitions
- Set up a **local community of practice** (school clusters, VET networks)
- Engage regional or national authorities for longer-term support

Sustainability requires planning beyond the event.

Challenge	What you can do
Resistance to change	Start small, involve champions, explain the "why"
Lack of assessment experience	Offer practical training, templates, peer mentoring
Time constraints	Integrate tasks into curriculum, use short formats
Limited resources	Simplify tasks, share equipment, involve companies
Assessment fairness	Use rubrics, dual scoring, assessor training
Industry engagement	Offer visibility and meaningful roles
Post-event sustainability	Document success, create follow-up plans

PL Example from Poland - Electronics Prototyping

Challenge: limited familiarity with structured assessment

In the Polish pilot of **Electronics Prototyping**, teachers and assessors were initially unfamiliar with **judgement-based marking schemes** and had difficulty differentiating performance levels consistently.

Response:

- Pre-event workshops focused on **calibration** using example work and guided scoring simulations.
- Assessment tools were redesigned with **clear rubrics** and visual descriptors for each judgement level.
- Peer feedback between assessors helped align interpretations and ensure scoring reliability.

RO Example from Romania - Information Network Cabling

Challenge: inadequate access to industry-standard tools

Romanian VET schools lacked full access to professional equipment (e.g. fusion splicers, testers) required for **fiber optic installation**, limiting the realism of the Information Network Cabling competition.

Response:

- Organizers **partnered with local telecom providers**, who loaned equipment and provided setup support.
- The Test Project was adapted to **prioritize competencies** that could be assessed with partial infrastructure, such as cable preparation, labeling, and logical layout.
- Workstations were rotated in timed sessions to accommodate more competitors with fewer tools.

PL Challenge: Difficulty engaging industry in meaningful roles

Initial industry interest in Poland was high, but **unclear expectations** led to passive involvement from partners during the competition planning phase.

Response:

- Organizers **defined concrete roles** for companies:
  - Validating real-world relevance of tasks
  - Providing technical review of marking schemes
  - Acting as co-assessors during implementation
- One partner from the electronics sector contributed by **reviewing test documentation** and **offering internships** to top-performing students.

RO Challenge: Scheduling constraints and teacher overload

The Romanian team faced challenges in aligning competition schedules with the national VET calendar and ensuring teacher availability for training and assessment.

Response:

- The pilot was aligned with an existing **national VET event**, maximizing participation without overburdening schools.
- The assessment process was simplified by **assigning judges to specific modules** and **using structured feedback forms** to reduce post-event workload.

8 Long-Term Impact and Opportunities

Using WorldSkills-format competitions to drive systemic change in VET

Once piloted and embedded, the WorldSkills competition format offers more than a one-time educational upgrade — it becomes a **lever for long-term transformation** across multiple levels of the VET ecosystem. This section outlines how the transition can lead to **sustained impact**, **policy integration**, and **strategic opportunities**.

For Learners: From participation to empowerment

When competitions are integrated into learning processes, they offer students:

- A **clear understanding of expected competencies**
- **Realistic simulations** of future workplaces
- Fair and detailed **feedback for growth**
- Increased **self-confidence, autonomy, and career motivation**
- Pathways toward **employability and excellence**

Students move from passive learning to active demonstration of competence.

For teachers: Professional development and assessment literacy

VET teachers involved in designing and implementing WS-style competitions report:

- Improved **assessment design skills**
- Better alignment between teaching and **industry expectations**
- Enhanced **collaboration** with peers and external experts
- Greater use of **competency-based approaches** in regular instruction

Teachers evolve into designers, assessors, mentors — not just content deliverers.

For schools and VET providers: innovation and visibility

Schools adopting the WS competition model benefit from:

- Integration of **authentic tasks** into curriculum and exams
- Access to **ready-made test projects** and marking schemes
- Greater student engagement and retention
- Enhanced **institutional profile and attractiveness** to students and families
- Opportunities to **benchmark quality** across institutions

Competitions become tools for both internal improvement and external reputation.

For employers: talent pipeline and partnerships

Involving employers in competitions fosters:

- Stronger **VET-business collaboration**
- A clearer view of student readiness and potential
- Input into **task relevance and innovation**
- Early identification of skilled young workers
- Recognition of **social responsibility** in supporting education

Industry becomes a co-owner of VET quality.

For Policy-Makers: Systemic Leverage

At regional and national levels, WS-style competitions can support:

- Implementation of **competency-based curriculum reform**
- Alignment with **European frameworks** (EQF, ECVET, DigComp, etc.)
- Development of **quality assurance systems** through structured assessment tools

- Talent development and **international mobility opportunities**
- Strategic alignment with initiatives like **Euroskills**, **WorldSkills**, or **green/tech transitions**

Competitions can be institutionalized as part of policy, not isolated events.

Opportunities for expansion and scaling

Once the foundation is laid, stakeholders can:

- Expand to more skills or sectors each year
- Create **progressive competition ladders**: school ➔ local ➔ national
- Establish **inter-school collaboration platforms** for sharing TPs, MSs, judges
- Create **digital repositories** of validated tasks for teacher training
- Link competitions with **dual education, apprenticeships**, or **certification systems**

The WorldSkills format becomes a flexible framework, not a rigid standard.

Vision for the future

The long-term vision is not only to "run better competitions" but to use this model to:

- **Transform vocational education** into a modern, respected, and aspirational pathway
- **Empower students** to demonstrate their potential in meaningful ways
- **Equip teachers** with high-quality tools for assessment and feedback
- **Bridge education and employment** through collaboration, transparency, and excellence

WorldSkills-style competitions are not the end goal – they are the method that brings quality, equity, and relevance to vocational education.

9 Conclusion

From Competition to Transformation: Make the Shift Count

Throughout this guide, we've explored how adopting the **WorldSkills competition format** goes far beyond organizing events – it's about **transforming vocational education** into a dynamic, forward-looking, and learner-centered system.

By transitioning from traditional models to WS-style practices, we shift the focus:

- From **judging performances** to **developing competence**
- From **isolated excellence** to **shared growth**
- From **subjectivity and prestige** to **transparency and progress**

Whether you are a teacher, a school leader, a policy-maker, or a company representative, your role in this transformation matters.

What you do next shapes the future of VET

- If you're a **teacher**: Start using WS-style tasks in your classroom – let your students experience learning through real-world challenges.
- If you're a **school leader**: Support your staff to innovate – give them the tools, time, and trust to pilot this approach.
- If you're a **policy-maker**: Embed the WS model in national frameworks – use it to modernize curricula, assessment, and quality assurance.
- If you're an **employer**: Join the movement – shape the next generation of workers and bring authenticity to education.

Competitions are not just about finding the best – they're about bringing out the best in every learner.

You don't need to be perfect to begin. You just need to begin.
Start small. Start smart. But start – and others will follow.

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