

EARLALL at the European Vocational Skills Week 2018

"Vocational Education is good for the young people and also for the companies. It's a win/win"

Marianne Thyssen,
European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility

This year, the European Vocational Skills Week took place in Vienna on November 5-9, on the occasion of the Austrian Presidency of the Council of the EU. The event gathered VET providers and networks, businesses and the European institutions. EARLALL was also present, as well as Basque and Catalan representatives belonging to the European Alliance for Apprenticeships (EAfA).

The two main focus areas of the week were VET excellence and the skills agenda, with an enhanced role of VET providers and researchers. Besides, a strong emphasis was given to a more international perspective, supporting the sustainable development goals (SDGs), with the participation of institutions such as UNESCO-UNEVOC, the World Economic Forum and OECD.



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The role of regional policy-makers was highlighted by representatives of the Basque Country and EARLALL on Thursday during the celebration of five years of the EAfA. The session was introduced by Manuela Geleng, Director of European Commission's DG EMPL, and Elke Büdenbender, Ambassador of the European Skills Week and spouse of the President of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Through a video intervention, Jorge Arévalo (Regional Deputy Minister for Vocational Training at the Basque Government) underlined values such as European competitiveness and talent in the sein of the 4th industrial revolution, characterised by disruptive changes. Rikardo Lamadrid (Director General for New Technologies and Advanced Learning at the Basque Vice-Ministry of VET) defended territorial specialisation and the identification of regional priority areas to achieve the [Europe 2020](#) strategy's and [smart specialisation's \(S3\)](#) goals. He also reminded that the Basque Country was the first region to join the EAfA, and expressed the Basque Country's gratitude for five years of successful cooperation.

Parallel workshops followed, with the intervention of Noelia Cantero EARLALL's Business Manager during the social inclusion session. She presented EU-funded projects [FIER](#) and [TALENTS](#) for fast-track integration of third-country nationals into the European labour markets with support for language learning and guidance for inclusion, confidence, empowerment and brain circulation. She also introduced EARLALL Member Regions' best practices for NEETs (Asturias' and Catalonia's youth guarantee schemes) and the Basque Country's Strategy for Inclusive and Intercultural Education and Training 2016-2020, embodied in projects such as [Gazteability](#) (EU-funded under ESF).



On the left, intervention by Noelia Cantero (EARLALL's Business Manager). On the right (from left to right), João Santos, Rikardo Lamadrid, Marianne Thyssen and Dana-Carmen Bachmann.

The week was wrapped-up on Friday by Marianne Thyssen, European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, who encouraged VET students to never stop learning: "If you ask me what our mission should be, I would say to provide a lifetime of quality learning, for everyone!"

Useful links

- 🚩 [European Vocational Skills Week official website](#)
- 🚩 [Session videos and web-streaming recordings](#)
- 🚩 [Keywords by João Santos, European Commission's DG EMPL Deputy Head of Unit for VET, Apprenticeships and Adult Learning](#)