

EfVET President. Prof. Joaquim James Calleja, took part in the VideoTalk held  
by the European Commission on A New Skills Agenda for Europe

*EfVET President shares his view on the need of training providers and SMEs to work together to  
upskill and reskill EU citizens*

**Brussels, 14 September 2020:** On Thursday 10 September 2020, EfVET President, **Prof. Joaquim James Calleja**, took part in the VideoTalk “**A NEW SKILLS AGENDA FOR EUROPE. Supporting upskilling and reskilling to enable digitalisation and sustainability**”, which hosted as guest speaker **Ms Despina Spanou**, Head of Cabinet of Vice President for ‘Promoting our European Way of Life’, European Commission.

In the online meeting held by the European Commission, the President of EfVET, Professor Joachim James Calleja spoke about the need for training providers and SMEs to work together to upskill and reskill the millions of European citizens in dire need for employment. The President of EfVET said that according to the New Skills Agenda document, in total, the EC is allocating a provision of over 85 billion Euro for Member States to provide over 540 training activities. However, money needs coordination at EU level and a commitment from member States to ensure that citizens have access to quality Vocational Education and Training, and educators and trainers well versed into their methods of teaching work-based learning.

Due to COVID-19 training providers have had a challenging period during the last academic year and matters have not improved for the re-opening of educational institutions. Notwithstanding, technology can still be the vehicle through which vulnerable workers and learners can have access to further education and training. This would be possible if training providers and SMEs join forces and request funding and technical assistance to reach the millions of Europeans who are not employable in this age of technology. This new relationship requires a culture change in the way we view education, training and

employment. The divide between education and training and working is increasingly blurred due to the many opportunities that technology offers today for online learning including augmented and virtual reality learning. EfVET through its involvement in several EU projects with a wide variety of partners will continue to advocate for stronger relations between the education and training sectors and the real world of employment.

The time to talk about VET should be restrained to concrete intelligence and not *déjà vu* research findings as evidenced in several publications of international governmental organisations. It is time that the EU and other international organisations walk the talking and ensure that the New Skills Agenda for Europe and the revived Copenhagen Process become tangible vehicles for action and not talking epicentres. With its 245 members EfVET will continue to be a strong platform for action reaching out to as many training providers and employers as possible.

**More information:**

- [EfVET - European Forum of Technical and Vocational Education and Training](http://www.efvet.org)