# WorldSkills: from international to global

Jenny Shackleton
Standards and Assessment Advisor
WorldSkills International
WorldSkills Europe

November 2018

worldskills

# Q1: Europe's cooperative journey with skills competitions

From inception in post-war Europe, for 60 years a growing international movement with skills competitions for young people at its heart.

Biennially moving around Members: growing numbers of developed nations and regions following a broadly European conception of labour markets, employment and VET.

Each competition created and run by "Experts": respected adult practitioners in trades, services or technologies.

worldskills

# 2008: a new WorldSkills Europe Competition

An aspiration to

- create an intermediate competition between national European systems and WorldSkills International

- create competitions closer to broader European conceptions of VET and work.

**However, the conceptual and design capability and tools were at that time lacking to fulfil the second aspiration.**

worldskills

# 2008: European WorldSkills Members

By 2008, two types of system and culture appeared to find VET competitions helpful in rather different ways:

- confident and competitively successful, dual system, German speaking Members, largely seeking and getting confirmation and endorsement from the results

- Nordic Members from cohesive and integrated societies, using the competitions for information and intelligence to bring home.

Collaboration was professionally rewarding for participants, but limited in its wider impact. (The competition artefacts were difficult to transfer to national systems.) There were positive exceptions though.
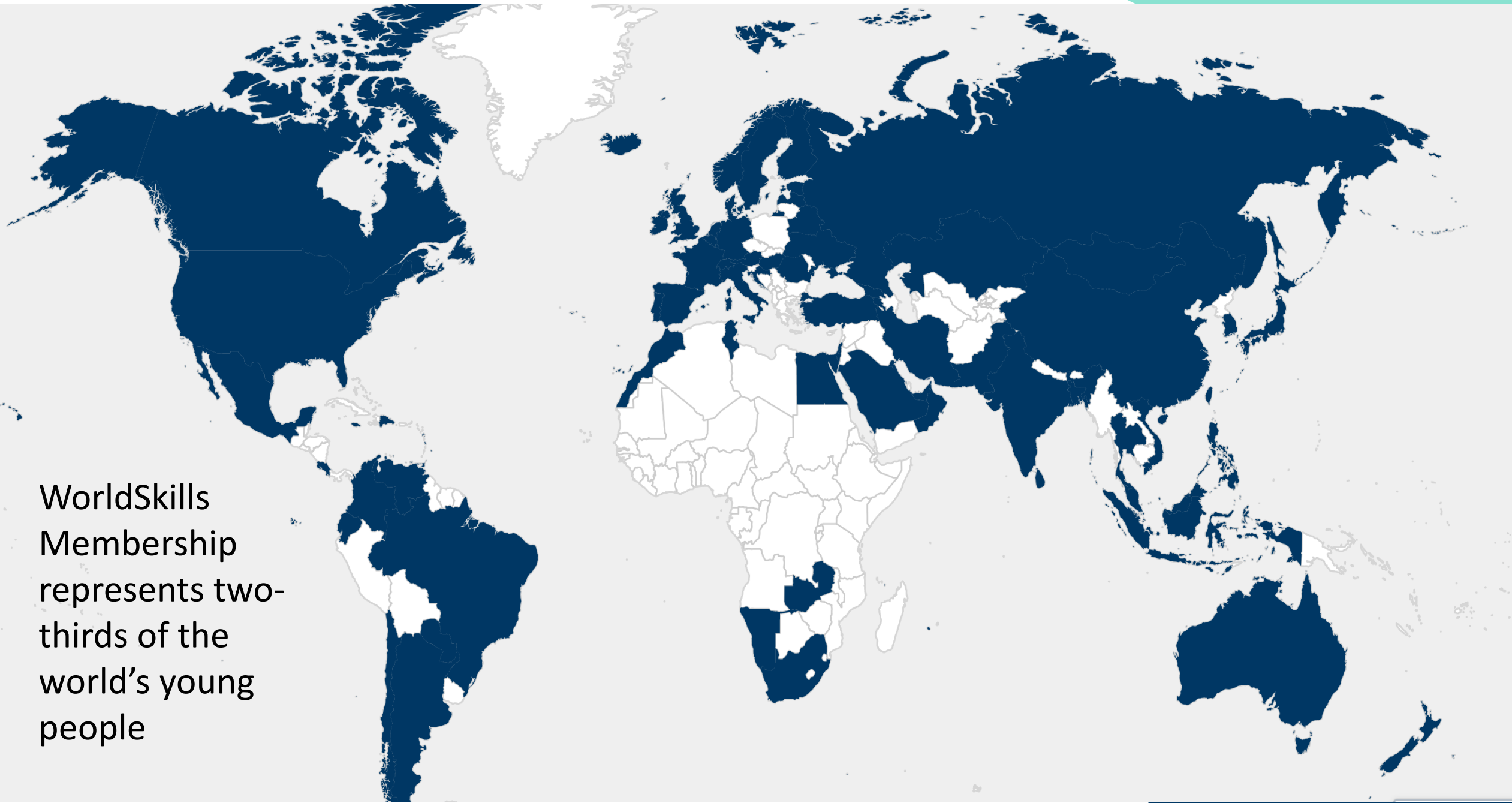
worldskills

# Q2: Europe in a global context

WorldSkills International: "The global hub for skills excellence and development"
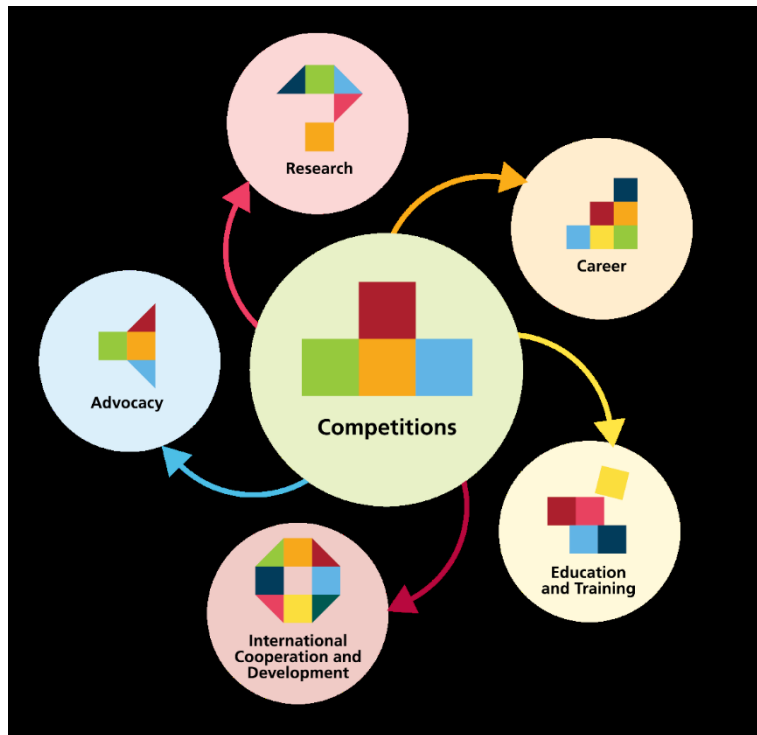


- Membership: strategy for growth
  - 47 nations/regions to 80
  - 850 Competitors to1650
  - Developed + developing economies
- 45 to 56 competitions
- Global Vision, Mission and Position
- Global industry sponsorship

WorldSkills
Membership
represents two-
thirds of the
world's young
people

# Global competition standards
## *The WorldSkills Standards Specification (WSSS)*

A decisive move away from arguing over preferred national standards and training programmes, and over-rehearsed projects.

The introduction of customised "external" global occupational benchmarks for **specialist, technical, and transversal** knowledge, understanding, skills and behaviours.

worldskills

# 2013: the WorldSkills Standards

- A reference point for competitions and occupational mastery

- Reflecting universal good practice in format and language

- Involving Expert practitioners, updated biennially with industry and business worldwide

- Including indicators of relative value to the occupation

- Identifying mastery within distinct intermediate occupations

- Including mandatory (OECD) transversal attributes for
  - work organization and management,
  - communication and interpersonal skills and
  - problem solving, innovation and creativity

worldskills

# "The best performer at work"

"Work" and occupational mastery is understood and recognised very differently across the WorldSkills Membership.

This diversity challenges WorldSkills' Members' collective aspiration to
- **have accessible competitions while**
- **rewarding excellence.**

As a global occupational standard the WSSS's baseline is competence. **Excellence is achieved through mastery sustained**
- **in authentic settings that require**
- **specialist, technical and transversal knowledge, skills, and behaviours**
- **both in harmony and integrated.**

worldskills

# The impact of globalization on Europe

## Challenge

Engage with difference or miss out

Adjust what has worked well so far

Move from dominance to sharing

Accept that future work will look different from the past

Confront inertia

Confront sectional interests

## Opportunity

The advantages of
- strong VET cultures
- open, progressive systems
- social and economic integration

The European Union
- European Qualification Framework
- ESCO
- Research and development

worldskills

# Q3: reorientation and metacognition for European VET

The future value of WorldSkills (International and Europe) lies in its position as an authentic and useful laboratory and signpost for VET.

Thus the ideal competitions portfolio should:

- **overall: keep in step with social, economic and labour market trends**
- **specifically: incorporate future capabilities for work and life.**

Thanks to regional and global partners, by using their data we can encourage Europe and other regions to understand, recognize and use the growing resources individually and together.

Here are some current examples from WorldSkills.

# (1) The WorldSkills standard as a tool for analysis and development

As an occupational standard the WSSS does not have levels. But assessment design is implicitly and explicitly referenced to level descriptors by differentiating and rewarding performance in terms of

- **autonomy**

- **responsibility**

- **complexity**

excellence = beyond what is required by national qualifications and systems

In these, Europe scores very highly relative to most other regions and cultures. It is likely to be a sustained competitive advantage.

worldskills

# (2) The WSSS and ILO classifications

ARMED FORCES OCCUPATIONS

MANAGERS

6 PROFESSIONALS

16 TECHNICIANS AND ASSOCIATE PROFESSIONALS

1 CLERICAL SUPPORT WORKERS

6 SERVICE AND SALES WORKERS

1 SKILLED AGRICULTURAL, FORESTRY AND FISHERY WORKERS

26 CRAFT AND RELATED TRADES WORKERS

PLANT AND MACHINE OPERATORS AND ASSEMBLERS

ELEMENTARY OCCUPATIONS

*We know that the future will affect each group differently*

worldskills

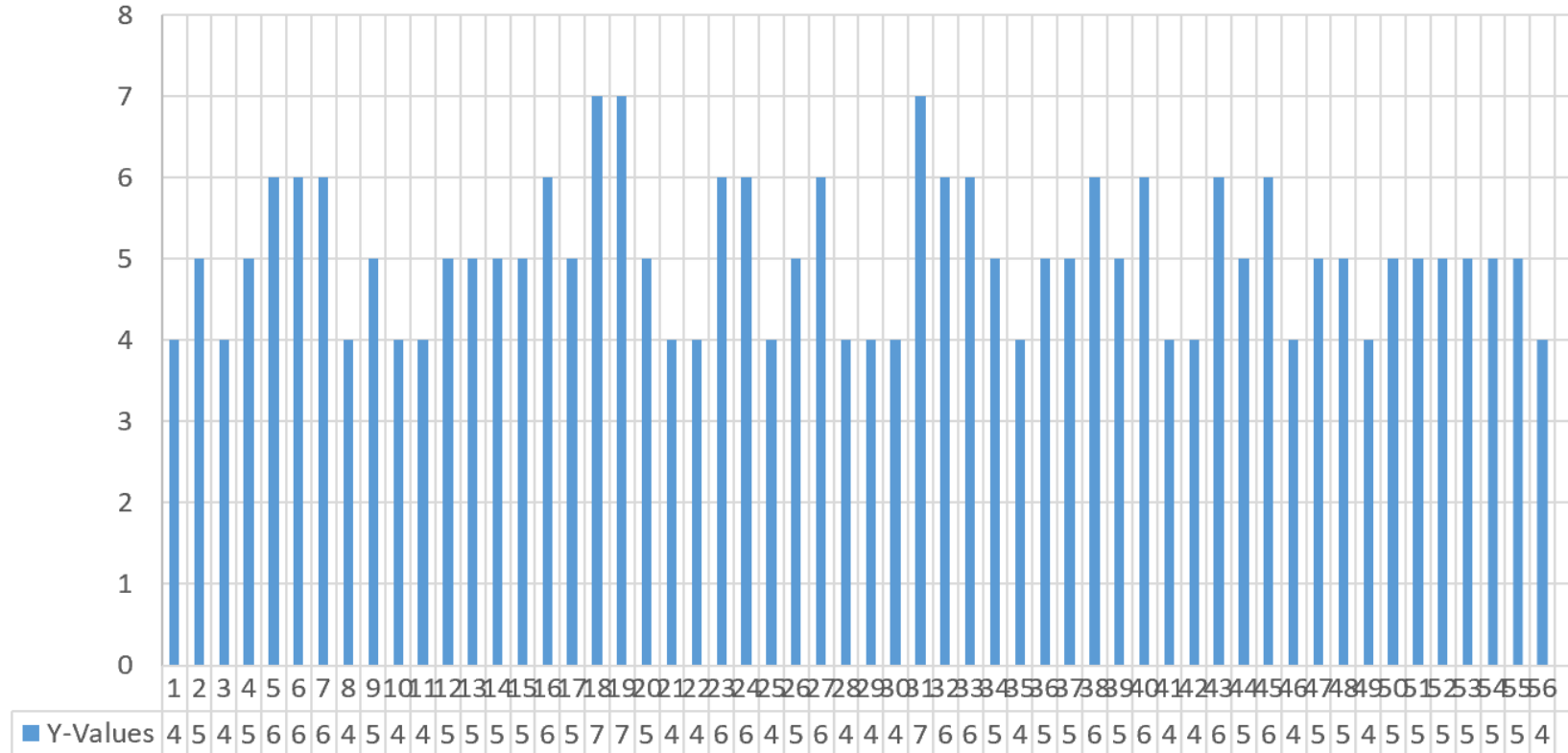# (3) Competitions' breadth or narrowness



**narrow**

**ESCO references ILO and classifies 5-8: broad to narrow occupation**

**ILO classification is 0-4: sector to broad occupation**

**broad**

**Competitions in numerical order**

# (4) Reflecting the trend to digitization

This is a snapshot of the digital content of the newer competitions' WSSSs, referenced to ESCO's transversal digital skills

| | | | 39 | 40 | 41 | 42 | 43 | 44 | 45 | 46 CCW | 47 Bak | 48 IMM | 49 HVM | 50 3D | 51 FF | 52 CLT | 53 CC | 54 CS | 55 WT | 56 HR |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| information and communications technology (ESCO 2017) | content-creation with ICT software | use digital device operating systems | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | use personal organization software | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | use presentation software | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | use spreadsheets software | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | use word processing software | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | digital communication | use e-services | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | use online communication tools | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | use online conventions of netiquette | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | use online tools to collaborate | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | digital data processing | archive digital data and systems | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | manage digital documents | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | search for information online | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | use databases | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | ICT safety | protect ICT devices | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | safeguard online privacy and identity | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | problem-solving with ICT tools and hardware | carry out practical tasks with smart devices | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | make use of personal robots for practical support | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | operate handheld devices | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | solve location and navigation problems by using GPS tools | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | use ICT peripherals | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | computer programming skills | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | ICT-related profession | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | |
|---|---|
| implicit match | |
| explicit match | |

worldskills

# Conclusion:
# strength in breadth and depth

Sahlberg (2015) notes that each VET system is a function of history, circumstance and the larger system within which it sits. It doesn't have an independent transportable life. This is strongly evident when VET systems compete globally.

Europe and all of us must distinguish between short-term special efforts, and the quality of the product that a country can readily and sustainably showcase.

Europe should hold its nerve, preserve its social and economic cohesion, and share and build on its considerable strengths. For this we need to bring together research, policy and practice.

A task for symbolic analysts?

worldskills