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Policy paper on QUALITY VET

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Quality Vocational Education and Training is important for all; students, society and the labour market. A healthy and functioning VET system will take input from all stakeholders; learners, teachers and employers. Students and trainers have the knowledge and experience of the best learning environments, pedagogical methods and educational paths, and therefore should have the loudest say when developing VET systems.

10 **Access**

11 The stigma of VET education as a path of secondary value needs to be actively combated by policy
12 makers and all stakeholders through the provision of more information and guidance during the
13 years of prior schooling. Yet in order to allow more young people to take on VET education, its
14 attractiveness and accessibility needs to be improved. VET learners should be given the
15 opportunity to study subjects in whichever field they choose. The additional costs of materials,
16 food and transport should not be a barrier to studying and getting a qualification. To ensure that
17 every young person have the opportunity to access VET, financial assistance should be provided by
18 the state to cover training and living costs. Learners of all backgrounds, gender and other identities
19 should be encouraged to choose any VET path they desire. Stereotypes and discrimination of any
20 kind should be actively combated by VET schools, communities and all stakeholders.

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22 Therefore, OBESSU demands:

- 23 - More information and guidance for young people on VET during prior schooling
- 24 - No entrance barriers to VET
- 25 - No financial barriers in VET
- 26 - Financial aid for training and living provided by the state to VET learners
- 27 - Active combating of stereotypes and discrimination of diverse identities in VET

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29 **Role of School and Role of Workplace**

30 VET learners should have the opportunity to study in school and also learn in a workplace. The role
31 of the school is to provide the learner with guidance and counselling on both career and personal
32 issues as well as to provide additional support for individual learners' needs. The role of the

33 workplace is to teach the vocational skills required for the specific profession, while also providing
34 practical experience to the learner. A learner-centered approach, where the education is shaped
35 with learners according to their needs, capacities and possibilities, is needed both in school and at
36 the workplace to cater the needs of the learner. The learning outcome of the on-job-learning should
37 be agreed on by both the VET learner, the school and the workplace. Mechanisms to monitor the
38 on-job-learning should be in place to ensure a quality learning outcome.

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40 Therefore, OBESSU demands:

- 41 - Every VET learner should have the possibility to combine on-job-learning with school
- 42 education
- 43 - A learner-centered approach in both school and workplace
- 44 - Learning outcome agreed between learner, school and workplace
- 45 - Mechanisms to monitor on-job-learning

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47 **Labour Market Influence**

48 OBESSU recognises that the labour market plays an important role in VET. However, we believe
49 that the VET system should not be solely oriented towards future skills demands. Labour market
50 skills are difficult to define and foresee, which is why the VET systems should have a considerate
51 focus on transversal skills that give learners flexibility in the labour market. It needs to be
52 emphasized that employers have a responsibility to provide quality on-the-job training on specific
53 skills as well, instead of leaving this only to the education system which has a broader purpose.
54 It is important that the primary aim of VET is to create quality educational opportunities for
55 learners, developing critical and skilled students, and not to solely produce workers.

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57 Therefore, OBESSU demands:

- 58 - VET education to focus on transversal skills
- 59 - VET to not be based on future demands of skills
- 60 - Focus on developing critical and skilled students, not the needs of the labour market

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62 **Curricula and teaching methods**

63 Lifelong learning competences are essential for both personal development and the ever-changing
64 labour market. It is essential that VET does not only focus on technical skills, even though these
65 are the primary focus of the education. VET should also help develop critical and active citizens
66 through quality citizenship education which promotes democratic participation, solidarity and
67 intercultural understanding. Curricula also need to include education on human rights and specific
68 workers rights to ensure their protection in the workplace. The Key Competences Framework lay
69 out many of these competences, which is why the competences mentioned in the framework
70 should be integrated in the VET curricula and reviewed as part of qualification. These
71 competences should be taught and practiced along with the technical skills in the learner's field of

72 study. Furthermore, OBESSU believes that the teaching methods in school and on-job should be
73 centered around the needs, capacities and possibilities of the students as with the learning
74 outcome.

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76 Therefore, OBESSU demands:

- 77 - Training on citizenship education to foster critical and active citizens
- 78 - Training on workers rights to be included in VET curricula
- 79 - Key Competences Framework to be integrated in VET curricula
- 80 - Teaching methods to be shaped around the needs of the learner

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83 **Mobility**

84 Mobility opens up to different perspectives on the world and provides important experience which
85 benefits the learner both personally and professionally. OBESSU believes that all VET learners
86 should be given the opportunity to undertake a mobility experience as part of their studies. VET
87 learners should be supported with language courses and ongoing contact with educational
88 supervisors throughout their exchange. Frameworks need to be in place for companies to easily
89 facilitate mobility programmes, making it easier for learners and businesses to use the
90 opportunity.

91 Through ECVET national authorities should recognise learning from abroad and provide validation
92 for these qualifications. Where VET has commenced in one country or education system, the
93 learner should be able to continue in another country.

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95 Therefore, OBESSU demands:

- 96 - Mobility programmes available for every VET learner
- 97 - Language courses and contact to educational supervisor to be ensured
- 98 - Frameworks for companies to facilitate mobility programmes
- 99 - Recognition and validation of learning periods abroad

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101 **Further Opportunities**

102 After obtaining a VET qualification, the learner should be able to continue their studies on any path
103 chosen. This should include all higher education institutions, another VET degree and CPD. In order
104 for VET learners to make the right decision for themselves, career guidance is needed in VET from
105 an early stage. Furthermore entrance barriers and financial barriers to further education should be
106 abolished to ensure equal opportunities for all VET learners.

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108 Therefore, OBESSU demands:

- 109 - Opportunities for further studies for every VET learner
- 110 - Career guidance in VET

- 111 - Abolishment of every barrier to further education

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113 **Participation of VET learners**

114 Every VET learner has the right to participate in decision-making regarding their education. VET
115 schools need to ensure the active engagement of learners in all decisions ranging from curricula to
116 infrastructure. Representative structures ought to be established to ensure a good representation
117 of VET students towards the school, employer and the national policymaker. Organisations
118 representing VET learners should be recognised and supported by the aforementioned actors.
119 Organisations should be included when discussing reforms on VET and when negotiating with
120 companies. Where such democratic representative organisations are not already in place, schools
121 and policy makers should support their establishment .

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123 Therefore, OBESSU demands:

- 124 - Active participation of VET learners in all decision-making processes
- 125 - Representative organisations to be acknowledged and supported
- 126 - Organisations to be included in policy-making
- 127 - Schools and policy-makers to support establishing representative organisations