

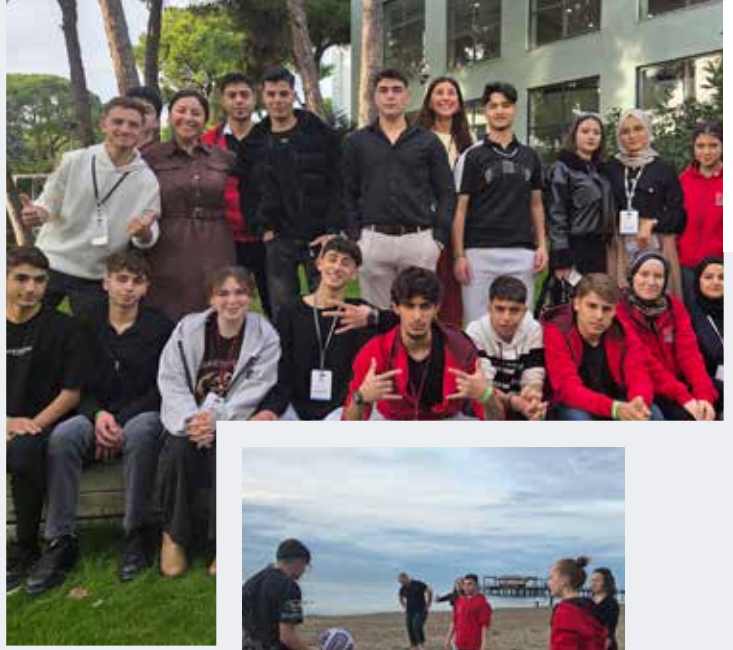


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مُمُول من الاتحاد الأوروبي

**VET4JOB** 2  
Vocational Education and Training Programme for Employment

# HIDDEN GEM

VET4JOB-II  
NEWSLETTER



ISSUE 8  
2026

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NEWSLETTER

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## GELECEĞİN USTALARINI yetiştirmeye davet! İŞLETMENİN GELECEĞİ ÇIRAK ÖĞRENCİLERLE GÜVENDE!

Sektörünüzün  
ihtiyaç duyduğu  
nitelikli  
işgücü için  
ustalarınızı  
yetiştirin.



Çırak öğrenciler haftada bir gün mesleki eğitim merkezlerinde teorik, dört gün iş yerlerinde uygulamalı eğitim alırlar. Siz de geleceğin ustalarının yetiştirilmesine destek olun.

### DEVLETİN SUNDUĞU DESTEKLERDEN VARARLANIN!

- İş yerinizde uygulamalı eğitim gören çırak öğrencilerin iş kazası, meslek hastalığı ve diğer hastalık sigortası primleri devlet tarafından karşılanır.
- Çırak öğrenciyse 9-10-11. sınıflarda net asgari ücretin en az %30'u, 12. sınıfta ise en az %50'si kadar ödeyeceğiniz ücreti devlet katkısı olarak geri alabilirsiniz.
- Çırak öğrencilere öğrenen ücretler her türlü vergiden muaftr.

Devlet katkısını edinecek öğrenciler için



Yakınızdaki mesleki eğitim merkezine başvurarak uygulanan program hakkında bilgi alabilir ve çırak öğrenci talebinizi iletebilirsiniz.  
Bulduğunuz ildeki mesleki eğitim merkezinin iletişim bilgilerine erişmek için yandaki karekodu ziyaret ediniz.



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Bu poster Avrupa Birliği'nin desteği ile hazırlanmıştır. İşler Bakanlığı Expertise France tarafından desteklenmektedir. Avrupa Birliği'nin geliştirilmesini desteklemek amacıyla hazırlanmıştır.



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## مستمرين في إعداد معلمي المستقبل مستقبل الشركات آمنة مع الطلاب الأجراء!

قوموا بإعداد  
معلميكم من العمال  
من أجل الحصول  
على الأيدي العاملة  
المؤهلة التي  
يحتاجها  
قطاعكم



### استفيدوا من الدعم المقدم من قبل الدولة!

- تغطي الدولة أقساط التأمين ضد حوادث العمل والأمراض المهنية والأمراض الأخرى للطلاب الأجراء الذين يتلقون التدريب العملي في مكان عملكم.
- يمكنك استرداد الأجر الذي ستدفعه للطلاب الأجراء كمساهمة من الدولة بنسبة 3-7% على الأقل من صافي الحد الأدنى للأجور في الصنف 1-9-11-10 و 10-05% على الأقل في الصف الثاني عشر.
- كافة الأجور التي تدفع للطلاب الأجراء معفاة من كافة أنواع الضرائب

يتلقى الطلاب الأجراء تدريباً نظرياً ليوم واحد في الأسبوع في مراكز التدريب المهني، وتدريباً عملياً لمدة أربعة أيام في الأسبوع في أماكن عملهم، وأنتم أيضاً قوموا بدعم أعداد معلمي المستقبل.

الصفحات التي ستشارك  
الدولة في دعمها



يمكنكم الحصول على مزيد من المعلومات حول البرامج المنقذة وتقديم طلبكم كطالب أجير من خلال الاتصال بمركز التدريب المهني القريب منكم. للحصول على معلومات الاتصال بمركز التدريب المهني المتواجد في منطقتكم، يرجى زيارة رمز الاستجابة السريعة الموجود على الجانب.



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تم إعداد هذه النشرة بدعم من الاتحاد الأوروبي، وبمشاركة الفرنسية للتعاون التي الدولي (Expertise France) المسؤولة بشأن نام من محتواها ولا يشترط أن تعكس آراء الاتحاد الأوروبي.

# FOREWORD

**W**e are very pleased to share with you the concrete actions and success stories from the field in this 8th issue of Hidden Gem, the annual bulletin of VET4JOB-II. This issue addresses with a comprehensive perspective, the broad impact of VET4JOB-II extending from apprenticeship training to adult employment, from inclusive approaches to access to vocational fields to social cohesion, and the holistic transformation we are trying to develop in the field.

In the first section of the bulletin, we present in detail the operational processes of the Programme in the field and tangible successes achieved under the heading "VET4JOB-II Achievements in High-Quality Apprenticeship Training." We address the efforts of our teams, who operate in 44 pilot vocational training centres in 14 provinces, to integrate youth in informal employment into the system and to combat child labour. Besides, in this section, you can find our multifaceted risk prevention approach developed to ensure the school attendance of our students, our in-kind support programmes such as food vouchers and stationery, and our infrastructure improvements that enhance the physical capacity of learning environments.

The scope of VET4JOB-II is not limited to the youth; the integration of adults into the labour market is also among the goals of the Programme. Further in the bulletin, you can examine how more than 300 vocational training courses, career counselling services, and work permit support for adults contribute to employment. The fact that over 85% of our trainees have secured permanent

employment proves the success of our holistic model.

The inspiring section in our bulletin, "Professions Have No Gender", documents the power of female students in the workforce against societal prejudices. The determination of our female students, who are active in diverse fields ranging from motor vehicles technology and software to furniture and motorcycle repair, has been challenging negative stereotypes. The journeys of these young people, shaped with "resilience" and "self-confidence", are to be a source of inspiration for our readers.

Another focus of our bulletin is the issues of social cohesion and extracurricular activities. We reflected the energy that was created at our 5th Apprentice Student Forum, held in Antalya, into our bulletin. You will learn directly from our teachers and students how sports and communication-based activities, which enhance our students' sense of belonging, transform the school climate into a more peaceful and productive one.

Ultimately, the success stories of our graduates, who have advanced from apprenticeship to mastership, to becoming employers, and even to attending university, are featured in our bulletin to reflect the wide range of opportunities offered by apprenticeship training.

On every single page of this bulletin, you will find the efforts of our teachers, the guidance of our master trainers, and the dedication of our apprentice students who are building their future. I would like to express my gratitude to all our stakeholders who have supported us through this meaningful journey, and I hope to meet you again in a future illuminated by education.

**Fatma ÖZDEMİR ULUÇ**  
VET4JOB-II Team Leader

# VET4JOB-II ACHIEVEMENTS IN HIGH-QUALITY APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING >>>>



## TEAMS STRENGTHENED IN THE FIELD, INCREASED IMPACT

As of 2025, VET4JOB-II outreach activities have gained significant momentum in the field. In the second phase of the Programme, outreach activities are not limited to identifying child labour and potential apprenticeship students; these activities are carried out through a community-based and multi-dimensional approach aimed at strengthening outreach to high-quality and inclusive apprenticeship training.

Within this scope, approximately 1,400 outreach team members who are working within 44 vocational training centres across 14 Programme provinces are actively involved in the field at the local level. Regional coordinators provide technical support to the teams during the implementation process, increasing the effectiveness of the field work.

Building on the experiences gained in the first phase of VET4JOB, outreach teams have been working intensively in the field to reach young people, especially those in informal employment, and to reach children at risk of child labour. By conducting workplace and household visits, the teams assessing the educational levels and needs of young people and referring them to the most suitable vocational training options.



**700+**  
workplace visits



**~ 600**  
household visits



**200**  
community events



**10.000+**  
people

In 2025, outreach teams focused on workplace, household visits, and community-based activities. More than 700 workplace visits, approximately 600 household visits, and 200 community events were organized. Through these activities more than 10,000 people were reached, achieving nearly 25% of the target.

## NEW APPROACHES

Efforts to improve outreach activities began with a comprehensive training programme that brings together 216 personnel from 14 provinces. These trainings aimed at strengthening the operational capacity of outreach teams and establishing a common approach in community-based activities. The trainings prioritized developing protection-sensitive approaches and strengthening inter-institutional coordination.

The outreach strategy developed in collaboration with civil society aims to improve the quality of implementations through new, protection-sensitive

approaches, risk prevention links, localized planning methods, and field monitoring models. Within this framework, efforts to conduct field work in a safer, more protective, and consistent manner are supported.

A supervision process for outreach teams has also been conducted to enhance the sustainability of the Programme. This process has allowed teams to share the challenges they encounter in the field, share best practices, and access necessary technical support in a timely manner, contributing to continuity and consistency in field work.

### WHAT IS "PROTECTION-SENSITIVE" APPROACH?

This approach refers to a rights-based and do-no-harm based framework that anticipates the risks that children and young people may face in their access to education. This approach aims to go beyond simply focusing on increasing enrolment in outreach activities, instead establishing a structure that prioritizes the best interests and protection of children. Within this framework, the aim is to monitor the risks that children may be exposed to at home, on the street, and in the workplace, and to prioritize the best interests of the child in the processes of interview, observation, and referral. It is also aimed to establish a relationship of trust with children and families through an approach that is culturally sensitive, non-judgmental, and empowering communication. Outreach teams are structured to implement consent processes in accordance with the KVKK (Personal Data Protection Law) and to operate the necessary referral mechanisms.



## EXPANDING COLLABORATION WITH LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS

Outreach activities have reached a wide impact thanks to strong collaborations established with local stakeholders. The collaborations carried out with the Provincial Directorates of the Ministry of National Education, TESK (Confederation of Turkish Tradesmen and Craftsmen), women's cooperatives, and job-oriented civil society organizations have enabled the development of localized plans that take into account the social fabric of each province. Especially in provinces such as İstanbul, Hatay, and Şanlıurfa, the strong presence of civil society organizations in the field further enhanced the effectiveness of outreach activities.



**Our guidance counselor (Kübra Yılmaz),** who participated in outreach activities, stated:



First, we organized a briefing seminar for our 8th grade students and their parents. Later, we organized a trip to the Siteler Vocational Training Centre so that the children could see apprenticeship training firsthand. There, the children explored the workshops, met the teachers and master trainers. They had the opportunity to experience the atmosphere firsthand.

We observed that both our parents and students have overcome the prejudices they had when the words "industry" or "apprenticeship" were mentioned. They saw that the VTC was also a school, that it had discipline, that the children were not workers, but were receiving education as students. I would say this situation has greatly empowered and reassured parents, especially in guiding their children.

We observed that our students who were not particularly academically gifted but possessed strong manual skills decided to continue their high school education in VTCs. By this means, we have referred many of our students to vocational training centres. This prevented them from dropping out of school and led them to have a profession at an early age.



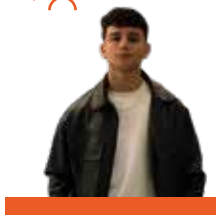
**Our teacher (Hasan Hüseyin PALAZ),** who participated in outreach activities, stated:

We met a Syrian family through aid activities. A mother of 5 children was left alone with her children. The family had two children who were to complete secondary school. After getting to know this family, we explained them that referring their children to vocational training would be very beneficial, both financially and in terms of future planning. We talked with them many times. We encouraged them to enrol their children in the "furniture and interior design technology" field, specifically in the "furniture frame and upholstery" branch. We had language barriers with their mother. A graduate of our school, also a participant to VET4JOB activities, helped us by translating.

Even though years have passed now, some workplaces still do not want to employ Syrian people. We still have that image of "marginalized people" in our community. We also combat against this opinion. Our work primarily for students who finished secondary school or who are in high school. These children are our future. Today's children will be adults of future. They are the people who are to protect our nation. We shape our future. The things we will face tomorrow are a result of what we do today.



**One of our students (Leys El İCİL)** referred to apprenticeship training states:



We have a beloved teacher; his name is Hasan Hüseyin. We already knew him before we started school. He really supported us. He recommended us this school. All is fine. He is also teaching there. I went into this profession as I like the furniture, making the furniture, such as sofas. I would say that furniture making is an excellent profession. I would recommend this profession to everyone.

## FEELING SAFE, RETENTION IN EDUCATION

**VET4JOB-II aims to identify risks such as school dropout and absenteeism at an early stage and refer students to appropriate support mechanisms.**

VET4JOB-II aims to identify risks such as school dropout and absenteeism at an early stage and refer students to appropriate support mechanisms. With the help of guidance counsellors, the Programme aims to ensure early intervention and support for students who are experiencing absenteeism, loss of motivation, or psychosocial difficulties. In cases where intervention of guidance counsellors is not possible, students are referred to relevant institutions for services.

The career counselling and guidance model is being put into practice again, using a much stronger and more inclusive structure. This student-centred approach, which also strengthens school, business, and family relations, not only provides solutions to problems but also acts as a protective shield.

The intervention is not limited to the school; the collaboration established

between family and workplace forms a vital part of the risk prevention process. Household visits that are organized when necessary and referrals of adults to vocational training courses are also among methods used to strengthen families both economically and socially. Besides, master trainers are informed through workplace visits, allowing them to observe students' working conditions firsthand. Risk prevention activities focal points at vocational training centres are responsible for implementing this comprehensive mechanism.

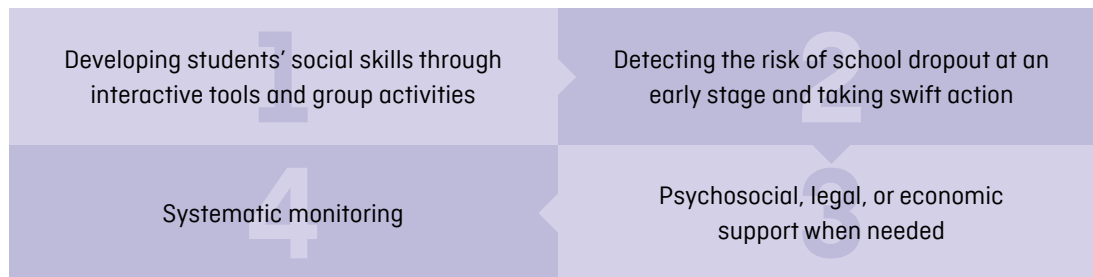
In the first half of 2026, it is planned to prepare risk analysis tools and conduct analyses at schools, followed by initiating comprehensive in-school and out-of-school interventions. This process aims to improve students' well-being and make the transition from school to workplace safer and more sustainable.





The risk prevention approach focuses not only on academic success but also on the overall well-being of students. The planned extracurricular sessions will cover topics, such as communication, empathy, anger management, and psychosocial support, as well as career guidance themes like writing curriculum vitae, interview techniques, workplace ethics, and 21st century skills. These efforts will be supported with videos, interactive tools and applications.

### Risk Prevention ► in 4 Steps



**Our graduate student (Zinnure Nisa ALIÇ)** shares the support they received from teachers:



Every moment of my apprenticeship training was very special, very precious to me. My teachers really liked me. They were all good. There was Gamze Teacher, our vocational course teacher. Whenever I had a problem, not just about work or school, but even with my family, she was very helpful. We also had Şerife Teacher. I can never repay her for everything she has done for me. She supported me always on my family issues and absenteeism. Even if I called her now, she would listen to me and talk to me. I had very good relations with my teachers. I still text them. I failed the 10th grade. I mean, I repeated the 10th grade twice. I used to string along with my friends at that time. I had the absenteeism problem. My teachers used to invite me to the school. They allocated time for me to talk about my problems. I solved the problem of absenteeism. I started not to listen to others. I attended the school regularly. It really made me feel supported there, at school. I felt safe near my teachers; I also remember crying when they were around.

## VOCATIONAL TRAINING STRENGTHENED THROUGH CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES

Throughout 2025, the Programme of VET4JOB-II conducted comprehensive capacity building activities, aimed at strengthening the knowledge and skills of teachers and administrators, and creating a safer and more inclusive learning environment for apprentice students. A wide range of stakeholders, from teachers to field teams, came together around a common understanding and vision through trainings held all the year round.

The trainings that started in the first half of the year and covered 14 Programme provinces brought together hundreds of teachers and administrators. These trainings, which included both theoretical content and practical field work, focused on the fundamental principles that VET4JOB-II defines as "crucial." Prevention of child labour, gender equality, and a rights-based approach continue to guide all activities of the Programme.

Following the trainings, vocational training centres began the process to evaluate their own school climate. The

outcomes of these efforts will provide an important basis for the capacity-building strategy, which is to be updated at the end of the year.

Capacity-building activities implemented throughout 2025 created a strong learning community, composing of teachers and outreach teams. VET4JOB-II aims to further deepen this transformation with refreshing trainings and supervision system that it plans to implement in 2026. Every step taken further improves the support provided for a high-quality apprenticeship training.



**A More Effective Monitoring Through Digitalization:** Online forms have been made available on the website [imep.meb.gov.tr](http://imep.meb.gov.tr) to enable outreach teams to monitor their activities in a regular and evidence-based manner. This system facilitates the monitoring of household and workplace visits, as well as referrals and records. Users can access data specific to their organizations and track progress on a weekly basis.



**Our guidance counselor (Nalan ÇOKDOLU),** who participated in capacity building trainings, states:



I am very pleased to attend VET4JOB-II capacity building activities. I enjoyed meeting with people from outside the school, from other institutions within the province, sharing experiences with them, realizing that we have common problems, and interacting with them. We discussed the goals of social cohesion, how it should be achieved, and how the content of activities can be presented in a more engaging way. We also carried out and experienced some of the activities.

I am a guidance counsellor; we are already familiar with such activities. But there were also colleagues from other disciplines, such as the teacher of motor vehicles technology, as well as assistant principals and principals. It was great to see them all attending the same activity and enjoying it.

It is not always possible to use the funds allocated to schools for these types of activities. For me, it was important to realize that, within the scope of VET4JOB, I could avoid the cost problem of the activities and offer students different things.

It is not always about the cost; this work has broadened our horizons. For example, teachers of the food and beverage department suggested the following: Let's take a student from the department of motor vehicles and have them make cookies and cakes together with our food and beverage student. This was a very inspiring and applicable idea.

## THE GUARANTEE OF RETENTION IN EDUCATION: IN-KIND SUPPORT

**The efforts carried out under VET4JOB-II goes beyond increasing the enrolment to apprenticeship training, including complementary measures to support students in the education system.**

Various forms of in-kind support are provided to help students, who are enrolled in the apprenticeship programme as a result of outreach activities, to complete their four-year training and obtain their journeyman and mastership certificates.

The primary aim of this support is to mitigate socioeconomic difficulties faced by students, particularly those under international or temporary protection, and to increase retention rates in apprenticeship training. Given the length of the training and the fact that students only spend one day a week at school, such kind of support plays a critical role in terms of students' motivation and retention in education.

Food vouchers and stationery are among the main in-kind support provided.

Food voucher support, one of the most comprehensive supports of VET4JOB-II, reached approximately 3,500 students in 2025. This support covers apprentice students under the age of 23 who are enrolled in the 9th and 10th grades, and who are studying at 44 vocational training centres. Ensuring a balanced number of foreign and Turkish students benefiting from the support will help reach students in need and strengthen equal opportunities in education. Close collaboration is established with teachers to ensure that the support reaches the appropriate students; teachers also guide students on how to use these vouchers.

Experiences obtained during the first phase of the Programme and new regulations suggest that the need for Turkish language support may decrease compared to previous years. With the reintroduction of the secondary school graduation requirement, this support is planned on a demand-driven and needs-based approach. The in-kind support provided by VET4JOB-II not only

makes tangible contributions, it also strengthens students' commitment to education, their connection with the school, and their trust toward the future. Relatively small efforts, such as food vouchers and stationery support, has been becoming one of the most meaningful steps towards "graduating" instead of "dropping out" for thousands of young people.

## BETTER LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

**Within the scope of VET4JOB, efforts to improve learning environments of vocational training centres, with the aim of creating more comfortable, safe and inclusive environments in both theoretical courses and practical training areas, resolutely continue.**

The initiatives launched during VET4JOB-I, which aimed to improve learning environments of apprentice students, are continuing and strengthening with the implementation of VET4JOB-II. All physical areas, from classrooms and workshops to vocational practice and science laboratories and computer labs, as well as occupational health and safety conditions, were examined on-site at the 44 vocational training centres. In addition, the condition of social areas such as canteens, dining halls, sports halls, multipurpose halls, and libraries were also evaluated.

Building on feedback from students and teachers, various improvements have been planned, ranging from classroom equipment and computer labs to workshop equipment and social areas. The intensive nature of educational activities throughout the year has revealed the need for rapid and targeted interventions, especially in theoretical learning environments. Within this scope, in addition to the 17 new vocational training centres that are identified as a priority, the needs of other institutions were also taken into

consideration, and improvements to equipment such as desks and chairs, air conditioning, projectors, computers, and photocopiers were planned. Thus, it would ensure that education and training could be carried out in suitable conditions in the classrooms. The aforementioned improvements are planned to be made available to apprentice students in the second semester of the 2025–2026 academic year. Simultaneously, efforts are ongoing to meet the equipment needs of the new vocational training centres for educational purposes.

Improvement efforts are not only limited to school environments. It is also aimed to improve learning conditions in the workplaces where apprentice students spend most of their time. Within this scope, small-scale renovations focusing specifically on occupational health and safety measures will be carried out in 500 businesses. Through this support, apprentice students will have the opportunity to develop their professional skills in safer, healthier, and more motivating environments.

## NEW STEPS IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND SOCIAL COHESION ACTIVITIES

**VET4JOB-II aims to strengthen not only the technical skills of apprentice students but also the culture of living, working, and learning together. In this respect, extracurricular activities and social cohesion events gained significant momentum in 2025.**

Extracurricular activities are designed to allow apprentice students to explore themselves, develop their areas of interest, and show different aspects of their talent outside of school and the workplace. These activities not only equip students with new skills, but also offer them spaces to socialize, share, and express their creativity. Thus, learning in apprenticeship training programmes is not only limited to technical knowledge; it also supports the development of fundamental skills such as teamwork, communication, problem-solving, and entrepreneurship.

In line with this approach, the Extracurricular Activities Workshop, held in Bolu in July 2025, became one of the important milestones of the new period. Participants from general

directorates and vocational training centres affiliated with the Ministry of National Education jointly evaluated the proposed content and implementation models within the framework of the main themes determined by experts through preliminary studies.

The workshop included intensive work on issues such as entrepreneurship skills, digital competencies, green transformation, 21st century social competencies, and professional development. Participants reviewed a total of 122 digital content, averaging 20 for each theme, and a roadmap was created for the implementation, which is planned to launch in 2026. Following the implementation of this programme, the goal is to expand these activities to other provinces also participating in the Programme.



### **Social Cohesion Activities: Solidarity at School, Collaboration in Life**

The social cohesion component of VET4JOB-II focuses on supporting students in building trust-based social relationships, strengthening their sense of belonging, and coming together around common goals. The new strategy developed within this framework aims to contribute to the social cohesion climate in schools. In social cohesion efforts, it is important not only which activities are carried out, but also how these activities are implemented. Therefore, a process-oriented approach was adopted.

Considering the limited time apprentice students spend at school, a selection of efficient, short-duration, and easily scalable sports and communication-based activities was prepared and shared with the Programme schools as an implementation guide. Material kits were also delivered to schools to support the implementation of the activities outlined in the guide.

As part of the initiatives launched in the first half of 2025, over 500 events were organized in 44 vocational training centres; nearly 16,000 apprentice students attended these activities. Sports and communication-based activities, which were carried out with materials delivered to schools through the support of VET4JOB, increased interaction among students, and contributed to establishing a warmer and more trusting bond between teachers and students. This process has once again demonstrated that sport is a fun and powerful tool for promoting peace and the culture of living together. Social cohesion is fostered not only through play and sports, but also through environments of dialogue and solidarity that reinforce a sense of belonging.

It is aimed that social cohesion and extracurricular activities become two complementary structures. On one hand, there is next-gen content equipped with digital, green, and innovative skills; on the other hand, there are social activities that reinforce trust-based social relationships, the sense of belonging, and solidarity among students. This holistic approach forms concrete steps towards achieving one of the main goals of VET4JOB-II, that is an inclusive, peaceful, and productive learning environment.





**Our teacher (Seher ULUSOY),** who organized the debate and dialogue-social cohesion activity, stated:

We chose the activity of debate and dialogue because we have a large number of Syrian students at our school. My initial impression of the Syrian students in the classrooms I enter is that they are introverted because they cannot express themselves. There are many factors underlying their inability to express themselves, but the most prominent factor are their weak language skills and the feeling of being a foreigner that they inevitably develop. I can empathize with them; we may also feel like foreigners when we go abroad, even on a touristic trip, and forget to speak English as the result of that feeling.

We began with the debate activity, and later moved on with the dialogue activity. We asked them to describe a recipe from their hometown. For example, we told a student enrolled in the motor vehicles department: "Put the engine aside, you are going to be a lahmacun master. Just describe me the lahmacun!" It was awesome. Even the quiet students in the classroom started talking. In the third week, we played the "5 wrong answers, 1 right answer" game. Believe me we finished the game laughing.

For me a qualified student is the one who also nourishes her/his soul. I believe that we need to improve their skills in the workplace and nourish their soul in schools.

Students may be hesitant at first; that is when the teacher has a great responsibility. If the teacher leading the activity is highly motivated and runs the process as planned, what do the students observe at the end of the day? They say: "Yes, it was fun, it contributed something to me." And the students turn back to school next week even more eager. They feel safe and their way of expressing themselves also changes.

I am fully sure that there are same feelings in different cultures. Feelings are universal. For example, pain is universal, longing is universal, separation is universal, love is universal. A mother's compassion for her child is universal, and so is morality. If we can demonstrate this universality at such a activity, it makes me happy and further increases my motivation.

Other teachers should not see these activities as a burden. Think of the lesson as a delicious meal. But you make an interesting dessert to accompany the main course, so you give flavour to the table, you say "it was interesting, different." That is how I could describe the social cohesion activities. Social cohesion activities resemble matryoshka dolls. A sophisticated piece of work emerges inside it. It changes the climate of the school. It changes in terms of discipline, fun, and social aspects. Everything is bond to each other.



**Our student (Muhammed HANI)** attending social cohesion activities tell:

We met new friends. We had conversations and debates with friends we had not met before. We got to know each other, and also had fun. This activity also created a warmer, more positive climate in the classroom.



**Our student (Barış Selim ÇAMDİBİ)** attending social cohesion activities tell:

This activity was socially enriching. It was very nice to be able to attend it. I have never attended such an activity before. It was fun. Coming together with friends allowed us to discover common interests with them. I got to know my friends. We felt the same feelings. I wish it continues.

## Awareness Rises in Apprenticeship Training

While aligning apprenticeship training with current needs, VET4JOB-II also supports the combat against child labour through its communication and awareness-raising activities. Local promotional activities are increasing visibility in the field, thereby strengthening public awareness of the apprenticeship training programme day by day.

The active involvement of teachers, who are one of the key actors in the system, in the process directly increases the impact of promotional activities in the field. Guidance counsellors play a critical role in ensuring that apprenticeship training is delivered correctly and effectively, and they bear a significant responsibility in this process. During the meetings, guidance counsellors attend practical workshops focusing on the system's operation, the opportunities it offers, and how to guide students correctly, thus experiencing the process firsthand.



Brought into classrooms through teachers, this awareness gains a social dimension through special days and events. Videos and posters prepared for "World Day Against Child Labour" in June bring students' rights and safe working environments to the forefront of the agendas of the schools. These informative efforts are not limited to classrooms; screens and information booths at school entrances make information accessible at all times. The importance of collaboration between school, family, and business is emphasized, and it is aimed that young people participate in the process as individuals who are aware of their rights.

To increase the inclusiveness of promotional activities, field work is being enriched through different channels. In addition to posters distributed to over 350 locations, ranging from industrial zones to chambers of commerce, contents in Arabic were sent to migrant health centres to overcome the language barrier. Social media platforms also serve both as a source of up-to-date information and as a digital guide for students who are about to join apprenticeship training programmes.

As a result of these multifaceted efforts, more than 3,300 people were directly reached through over 100 events. Collaborations established with women's cooperatives, local associations, and Public Education Centres have created an important foundation for encouraging the participation of girls in apprenticeship training.

Through this work implemented throughout 2025, VET4JOB-II contributes to the expansion of apprenticeship training and plays a significant role in combating child labour. In the forthcoming period, the Programme will continue to support high-quality apprenticeship training in collaboration with students, teachers, businesses and local institutions.

# ADULT TRAINING CENTRES AND EFFORTS FOR ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT

The Vocational Training Programme for Employment stands out not only for the direct support it provides to apprentice students, but also for their families, particularly to adults under international or temporary protection living in the provinces where it is implemented. The Programme adopts a holistic approach aimed at strengthening professional skills of adults, facilitating their access to the labour market, and increasing their retention in employment. Within this framework, support mechanisms ranging from education to employment are operated in a coordinated manner, contributing to the economic and social empowerment of both individuals and the community.



By the end of 2024, a comprehensive study was conducted in all provinces where VET4JOB programme was implemented, examining the current dynamics of the local labour market in detail. The study gathered up-to-date data on topics, such as employers' expectations regarding the workforce, sectors and professions with high employment potential, outreach channels for people under international and temporary protection, and potential adult education institutions and other stakeholders with whom cooperation is possible. The findings shed light on the areas in which courses can be offered in the provinces, and on with which stakeholders, especially employers, collaborations can be developed. In addition, the study gained a multi-dimensional perspective by gathering suggestions from all stakeholders on how to facilitate the participation of individuals under international and temporary protection in the labour market. Thanks to the stakeholder network established in the first phase of the Programme and the research process, communication is being maintained regularly. Thus, the rapidly changing labour market needs of the provinces are closely monitored, and training services and other support mechanisms of VET4JOB-II are planned and implemented in line with these current needs.



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In the second phase of the Programme, vocational courses are offered under three main categories. The first category includes standard courses based on the Ministry of National Education's "E-Yaygın" modules. In the second category there are job-oriented courses that address the urgent needs of the labour market. The third category consists of "development and orientation courses" that help employees advance in their careers.

In the second phase of the Programme, the focus is not limited to developing new skills; supporting trainees in their transition to the workforce and monitoring their retention in employment are also among the key objectives.

In this new phase, VET4JOB-II goes beyond simply providing skills to trainees. Supporting trainees in their transition to business life and monitoring their retention in employment are also among their main objectives.

 > 346

Total Number of Courses

 > 5.021

Number of People Who Completed Vocational Courses

 > 234

Job-Oriented Courses

 > %95

Course completion rate

 > %50

Balance in nationality and gender distribution



A significant number of job-oriented courses were launched in collaboration with businesses and professional organizations. Cooperation protocols have been established with professional organizations such as TESK and TOBB, their subordinate Adult Training Centres (ADU-VET), Vocational Training Centres (VTC) and Public Education Centres (PEC) affiliated with the Ministry of National Education, as well as with relevant civil society organizations and women's cooperatives. This extensive network of collaborations contributes to the creation

of a multi-dimensional and sustainable ecosystem that supports the professional development of adults.

The fact that almost all participants successfully completed the courses stands out as a strong indicator of the Programme's accessibility and needs-based structure. Furthermore, thanks to VET4JOB's inclusivity and accessibility approach, the distribution of nationality and gender among trainees participating in adult training courses is balanced and controlled.



### Sümeyye MERİÇERİ

I attended the automotive periodic maintenance course. My job requires me to know the materials, to know the automobile, and its parts. That is why I attended this course, to learn about automobiles. When working in a male-dominated field, the first thing people think is that "Is she a woman?" However, we show them that women can do it too. A friend of mine was a welder; some are CNC operators, some are welders... There are people that advance in this field. We are proving that women can do it just as well as men. We do it even more meticulously, more carefully, and cleanly. After enrolling in this course, I had company in mind. Thankfully, they arranged a meeting with the company, and contact was established. Since you learn everything during the course, it becomes easier to find a job.

## Career Counselling and Guidance

VET4JOB-II goes beyond being just a programme focused on providing technical skills. It offers a holistic model that supports the transition of trainees into the workforce with career counselling and guidance services. Aiming to reach approximately 9,000 people, this service provides trainees with career counselling at the first stage.

Career counselling includes a one-on-one guidance process aimed at directing individuals who have not yet chosen a profession or lack of vocational skills to the most suitable career path for them, in line with their personal characteristics, interests, abilities, and health status. Career guidance that complements this process supports trainees in entering the business life and adapting more easily to the labour market.

As part of career guidance, participants are offered support and guidance on topics such as job search methods, effective curriculum vitae writing, interview techniques, the dynamics of business life, and employer expectations, as well as communication skills, leadership, and entrepreneurship.

Career counselling and guidance services were launched in September 2025,



following the completion of preparations and training of trainers. As of the end of October 2025, nearly 600 people benefited from career counselling services and another 660 people benefited from career guidance services.



### DİBA Makine



Our collaboration with the MEKSA Foundation within the scope of VET4JOB has significantly contributed to our company's human resources processes. By referring the right candidates to the right positions, our recruitment process has accelerated, employees have adapted quickly, and our overall productivity has increased significantly. The Programme's greatest advantage is that it encourages registered employment while accessing qualified workforce and also managing this process professionally. We have progressed confidently through legal processes and established a sustainable and secure employment structure for our company. Disseminating such kind of support in the sector will significantly contribute to both strengthening businesses and formalizing employment.

## Turkish Language Education

The Turkish language barrier appears to be more common and affecting among older people compared to younger people. It is evident that language proficiency is a critical determinant, especially for women, in accessing many services including vocational courses, in their participation in employment, and in ensuring sustainability in business life. As part of VET4JOB-II, unlike the first phase, Turkish language support serves as a complementary tool to help adults overcome these structural challenges. Therefore, the Programme does not include predetermined quantitative targets for language learning; instead, it adopts a flexible, needs-sensitive approach.

## İŞKUR (Turkish Employment Agency) Registration and Work Permit Support

The process, which begins with Turkish language support and career counselling offered before vocational training, continues with strategic steps such as career guidance, İŞKUR registration, recognition of prior learnings, and work permit support. This exhaustive range of services establishes a holistic support mechanism that facilitates individuals' transition into the labour market.

In the second phase of the Programme, a pilot cooperation model was developed with İŞKUR at both central and local levels to strengthen trainees' access to employment. The General Directorate of İŞKUR supported the coordination of this process by assigning personnel to its provincial organizations in line with the ongoing labour market studies.

VET4JOB-II provincial teams and İŞKUR provincial teams worked closely and



### İbrahim EL MUSA



Not having a work permit was previously an obstacle. In the past, they did not believe me when I said I am a welder. But now I can prove it with my certificate. I got a profession thank to VET4JOB. Thanks to VET4JOB, I found a job and now I can practice my own profession. I recommend everyone to learn a profession and practice it. I am happy to be a welder, but I am not quitting here. Through VET4JOB, I want to continue learning new skills and improving myself.

continuously in the field, making the employment path of trainees more systematic and accessible. During this period, more than 2,000 people registered on the İŞKUR Job Search Portal; this number corresponds to approximately 50% of all trainees. The fact that 53% of those registered on the portal are women stands out as a concrete outcome of efforts that aim at increasing women's access to employment.

In a similar way, a comprehensive work permit support is offered to facilitate the transition of foreigners within the Programme's target group into the workforce. This support offers a holistic structure that includes consultancy provided throughout the process for employees and employers, as well as coverage of the costs associated with work permit applications. As of the end of October 2025, work permit support has been provided to over 700 individuals. The majority of those people benefiting from this support are Syrians under temporary protection. Work permit support stands out as a prominent mechanism, particularly for employers, that encourages the employment of foreign workers.

## Access to Employment and Monitoring

- > People referred to registered employment under the Social Security Institution (SGK): **1,721**
- > People accessed to income-generating jobs: **135**
- > People started their own businesses: **23**
- > Employment retention and continuation rate: **85%**

As a result of all these efforts, the Programme has achieved significant success in terms of employment retention. The key factor behind this success is the holistic and job-oriented approach to providing all services, including vocational courses. Strong collaborations established at every stage of the process, primarily with TESK (Confederation of Turkish Tradesmen and Craftsmen), professional organizations, workplaces, adult training centres, municipalities, and women's cooperatives, significantly increased the Programme's impact.

VET4JOB-II provincial teams have been monitoring individuals' employment processes in line with the determined monitoring approach. Results obtained as of October 2025 show that employment retention and continuation rates are above 85% for women, men, and total participants. Unlike similar projects, although VET4JOB-II does not offer direct financial incentives such as employment insurance or salary,

it is noteworthy that this high success rate was achieved through a demand-driven approach and one-on-one work with employers and trainees.

## Capacity of Professional Organizations Strengthens

In line with VET4JOB-II's fundamental objective of high-quality apprenticeship and vocational training, comprehensive efforts are being undertaken to increase the capacity of vocational organizations to provide sustainable and high-quality practical training to their member workplaces and the apprentice students receiving training there. Within this scope, the aim is to strengthen the workplace-based learning system by having professional organizations provide training and consultancy support to their members.

Efforts to increase the institutional capacity of professional organizations are progressing along three main axes. Firstly, it is aimed at developing a sustainable model that will support the establishment of effective networks in apprenticeship training and strengthen fund-raising processes. In this regard, studies are being carried out in close cooperation with TESK and TOBB. A special working group consisting of representatives from TESK, TOBB, and VET4JOB has been formed to jointly discuss the framework of the model to be developed for professional organizations. At the request of TESK and TOBB, the aforementioned model is planned to focus on providing more systematic and high-quality training, examination, and certification activities for professions that fall outside the scope of the Vocational Education Law No. 3308.

Secondly, the objective is to implement "On-the-Job Training Techniques" to strengthen the competencies of master



trainers in imparting skills and guiding apprentice students. Within this scope, it is planned to train approximately 3,500 master trainers who train apprentice students in businesses operating in the Programme provinces.

Thirdly, comprehensive capacity-building activities are being carried out for adult training centres, primarily those affiliated with professional organizations. These efforts focus on strengthening best practices, increasing the sustainability capacity of organizations, developing self-financing models, and supporting access to diverse funding sources.

### A New Era Begins in Adult Training Centres

VET4JOB-II continues to maintain its experience in the field of adult training through a new approach. Following the work carried out in collaboration with 130 institutions in the first phase of the Programme, partnerships are being established with new Adult Training Centres (ADU-VETs) in the second phase.

In this new period, a management model is being created that will support the long-term sustainability of Adult Training Centres (ADU-VET) based on the principles of mixed financing, local collaborations, service diversity, and data-driven planning.

Besides, 12 institutions that contribute most to the Programme's objectives will be selected, and they will provide small-scale repair and equipment support to improve the learning environments of Adult Training Centres.

Thanks to these efforts, Adult Training Centres are transforming from mere educational institutions into active stakeholders in local development.

### Learning Together, Growing Strong Together



The Vocational Training Programme for Employment prioritizes not only providing vocational skills but also strengthening the culture of living together. In line with this understanding, adult training centres are positioned as learning and sharing spaces where different communities come together. This component of the Programme aims to transform adult training centres from mere course venues into centres where solidarity, trust, and social cohesion are strengthened.

Social cohesion activities that encourage individuals under temporary and international protection to learn and produce together with host communities contribute to viewing differences as a source of richness.

Through trainings of trainers organized within the scope of social cohesion activities for adults that are shaped by the proficiency of academics, a common understanding and methodology was established to enable adult training centres to implement their social cohesion activities in a more systematic, effective, and holistic manner. In a short time, more than 100 adults have attended these newly launched social cohesion activities.

# CURRENT SITUATION IN TERMS OF OBJECTIVES

	TOTAL	OBJECTIVE	PERCENTAGE OF PROGRESS
Enrolled Apprentice Students	34.739	19.200	181%
People Employed Through Programme Support	2.098	2.700	78%
Work Permit/Exemption Obtained with Programme Support	807	1.200	67%
People Reached Through Outreach Activities	10.065	40.000	25%
↳ Workplace Visit	705		
↳ Household Visit	581		
↳ Number of Community-Based Activities	188		
People Who Completed Vocational Courses	5.021	13.500	37%
People Provided with Career Counselling and Guidance	2.087	9.000	23%
People Registered/Activated with İŞKUR	2.340	6.000	39%
VTC Personnel Participated in Trainings	641	1.400	46%
Workplace Personnel Participated in Trainings	144	4.500	3%
People Participated in Social Cohesion Activities	15.710	40.000	39%
↳ Completed Social Cohesion Activities	563		
People Participated in Communication and Awareness Raising Activities	3.386	15.000	23%
↳ Completed Communication and Awareness Raising Activities	109		

# PROFESSIONS HAVE NO GENDER: STORIES OF FEMALE STUDENTS WHO BROKE THE MOLD IN FIELDS CONSIDERED "MEN'S WORK"

Five brave girls embarking on a journey of vocational training are making their own paths in diverse fields, ranging from motor vehicles technology and furniture making to motorcycle repair, information technology, and software. Their struggles to exist in professions labelled as "men's jobs", their journeys driven by curiosity, and their determination inspire us all.



Images were created using Adobe Firefly.

## First Steps Driven by Curiosity

These young people's stories of entering the profession sometimes begin with childhood curiosity, sometimes with familiarity passed down from their families. For Saliha ÇAMLI, (17) a 12th-grade automotive mechanics student at Bornova Vocational Training Centre, it all started with her father spending time with her in industrial areas: *"We had an old automobile. My father used to take it to the industrial zone, and by going there with him, I also got used to there. I realized I had the talent... So I jumped into the profession I wanted, my current profession."*

Gül Sümeyye AYSAN, 18, a 10th-grade motorcycle repair student at Bornova Vocational Training Centre, describes this interest as a passion: *"This is an addiction to me. For example, when I got oil on my hands while cycling, I really liked it... Then I thought, why not learn how to repair it? Instead of just being someone who rides the motorcycle all the time, it would be wonderful for me to be able to help someone when they were stuck on the road. I wanted to find out what was inside the motorcycle. Once we have started, there is no end to it."*

The path to a profession sometimes appears at the most unexpected moments. Sometimes it is just a professional legacy from the family, and sometimes it is the challenges brought about by the pandemic that paved the way for a new passion to blossom, opening doors to these fields. Fatmanur VURAL, an 18-year-old graduate of the Software Development department at Ayşe Baldöktü Vocational Training Centre, says: *"During the pandemic, I spent a lot of time playing games because I was working with software and computers. I was very curious about how these games are created, how they work?"* She also emphasizes that she could not find a school to study the subject she wanted, thus she applied to CİMER (the Presidency's Communication Centre) to have a class opened for her. In short, she underlines that she persisted in her fight to study software engineering.

Rahime Nur ALTIN, 16, a 10th-grade furniture frame department student at Konya Ahi Evran Vocational Training Centre, tells that she has been going to the uncle's shop since she was little because it is her uncle's profession. She also states that her main motivation is the thought *"There is nothing a woman cannot do, so why not?"* Fatma Tüzzehra İNAL, a 9th-grade Informatics student at Meram Vocational Training Centre, summarizes her reason for

choosing this field in a very simple phrase: *"Because I love it."*

### Overcoming Prejudice and Physical Difficulties

Working in male-dominated sectors brings along both physical challenges and social prejudice. However, girls seem to have found ways to overcome these obstacles. Saliha describes the physical difficulty of her job as follows: *"Its being heavy is the difficulty. For example, some of the wheels are very heavy, making them difficult to lift. Sometimes the screws are overtightened, and you have to apply force to them."* Rahime Nur, who makes furniture frames, says *"Rahime Nur, who makes furniture frames, says that the job is difficult because it is woodwork... We lift huge logs during cutting..."* But she also adds that she can overcome these difficulties thanks to machines and equipment. In fact, the possibilities offered by technology can go far beyond overcoming these challenges. In modern world, where even aircraft weighing tons can be taken off with a controller, designing tools and equipment in industry to be ergonomically sound for women and prioritizing innovation in this area could fundamentally change the definition of "physical work."



Image was created using Adobe Firefly.

People's opinions are more challenging physical difficulties. Saliha describes the customers' amazement as follows: *"At first they are surprised. They ask 'How did you start this profession?' How could it happen?"* Gül Sümeyye frequently encounters the prejudices of male customers: *"They say 'Are you a mechanic? This is the first time we see a woman mechanic.' As a rule, customers are not allowed into our workspace, but I notice that some are watching from the doorway, observing what I am doing. There is a constant prejudice."*

Similar attitudes have emerged even in the field of software. Fatmanur describes how she encountered these attitudes and her stance against them with the following words: *"There was a constant scornful attitude, a sense of superiority, saying things like, 'That is a man's job, men can do it, how are you going to do it, how are you going to succeed?' But I never paid attention to them. Because both girls and boys can do any job. I think there should be no distinction based on gender."*

Rahime Nur candidly shares the challenges and initial hesitations she faced as the only girl in her class. She begins by saying, *"Being the only girl studying among 40 boys... You cannot help but feel scared,"* but concludes by explaining that she is far from being alone on this journey. The safe environment provided by the school administration and teachers helped her overcome these anxieties: *"I am really grateful to my teachers. They always supported me."* Thanks to this strong sense of solidarity, Rahime Nur has managed to become a source of pride not only for her family but for everyone around her.



Image was created using Adobe Firefly.

### The Key to Success: "A Woman's Touch" and Resilience

Despite all the difficulties, these young women are making a difference with the dedication they bring to their work. Gül Sümeyye summarizes women's contribution to the sector as follows: *"I think women do their jobs more meticulously... When I first arrived, [seeing that things were incomplete] I kept asking men, 'Are not you going to do this, are not you going to do that?'"*

Gül Sümeyye argues that the way business operates and work ethics will change with women entering the sector, stating the following: *"Some quote very high prices, others do not do their job properly. That is generally how it is done in our industrial zone. But I think women do their job properly, they do not charge too much labour cost, and they manage things more efficiently. I think so because women do their jobs properly and are fair."*

Also Rahime Nur agrees on this point: *"I think more women will be involved in the sector, leading to more meticulous work. Saliha believes that women's presence in the profession will improve the quality of work: 'The automobiles would come out much more smoothly.'"*

*Because we are being more careful, we are paying more attention to certain things."*

Fatmanur, who also received her certificate, takes the difference brought by women's perspectives a step further: *"Men generally think a bit more straightforwardly and tend to take the shortest route. But women proceed by considering the alternative, thinking, 'If I go down this path, this might be what I encounter.' I think things will become more comprehensive if women get involved."*

The secrets that led these girls to success lay in "resilience," "support," and "self-confidence." Rahime Nur defines the key to success in a single word: "resilience", while Gül Sümeyye describes her sources of motivation as "the pride of her loved ones" and "the desire to prove herself." *"The key to my success is that the people I love are proud of me. This is the main reason why I continue doing this job... I say that when I do this job properly, everyone is happy, everyone is pleased. The important thing is to feel proud. I also have a bit of a need to prove myself. I want to prove myself. I would like to do a thousand times more than I can do now."*

Fatmanur attributes the greatest share of her success to her father: *"I think the key to my success was my father. Because he really supported me. No matter what, he was there for me. I am grateful to my father in this regard."*

### **The Future is Bright**

Saliha's future goal is very clear: "After learning the ropes, I want to open my own shop" she says. Gül Sümeyye continues on her path, saying, "The future is very bright, hopefully I will become a master."



Fatmanur addresses female students who are about to choose a profession with these words: *"Let no one's feelings or dreams remain unfulfilled. Let everyone do what they want to do. They should follow professions they love, not the popular ones."*

The stories of Saliha, Gül Sümeyye, Fatmanur, Rahime Nur, and Fatma Tüzzebra are not only stories of individual success but also forerunner of a societal transformation. The determination of these young girls is further strengthened by their precious families who believe in them and say "we support you" instead of "my daughter cannot do it", and by their progressive teachers who guide them through this path. We wholeheartedly congratulate these brilliant young people who have worked hard and overcome prejudice, as well as their families and teachers who have raised them.

We invite all female students who are just starting out and interested in fields labelled as "men's work" by society to participate in vocational training. Never hesitate to pursue your dreams. Every brave step you take towards the future shapes not only your own life, but also the hopes of your family, the efforts of your teachers, the lives of other girls who will follow in your footsteps, and the societal will that breaks down prejudices.



## THE 5<sup>TH</sup> APPRENTICE STUDENT FORUM

DECEMBER 2-4, 2024  
Antalya



The 5<sup>th</sup> Apprentice Student Forum, organized within the scope of VET4JOB-II, was successfully held in Antalya between December 2-4, 2025. The event, which brought together approximately 200 people including 88 student leaders from 14 different provinces, as well as teachers, ESOB (Union of Chambers of Tradesmen and Craftsmen) representatives, and the Programme's stakeholders, offered a highly inclusive learning environment where current needs in vocational education were shared. This meeting, which aims to support the active participation of young people in vocational training processes and their social cohesion, further strengthened the Forum tradition with a new vision, which has been ongoing since 2021.



This year's event, with its "thematic forums" approach, focused on digital transformation, green transformation, entrepreneurship, and 21st century skills, providing participants with an inspiring experience. Students gained knowledge on a wide range of topics from artificial intelligence to sustainable production in expert panels, and in group work, they developed concrete solutions and scenarios for the future of the sector. The presentations and posters called "Transfer Material", which were prepared on the last day of the forum, aim to ensure that the synergy achieved and the awareness gained in Antalya are carried over by students to their own schools, making it sustainable at the local level.



## THE FEELINGS AND THOUGHTS CONVEYED

by apprentice students who participated in the 5th Apprentice Student Forum:

If I learn, or my friend, it doesn't matter who, if we work together, stand shoulder to shoulder, we will get better at what we do and become the best. If we be successful at our jobs, we will also be beneficial to society.

This forum brings together Turkish and foreign students. This alone shows that this forum is for equality and peace. It allows us to socialize with our peers and share our experiences.

As an apprentice student, I have come up with a solution to a problem that we are highly likely to encounter in the future: As time passes and technology advances, we need to research how new systems and new devices work. I believe that schools need to place more emphasis on technology courses in order to adapt to changes.



We travelled, had fun, ate, drank, and danced, but most importantly: we learned.

Being a part of this forum has reminded me, in this short time, the place and importance of technology in our lives.

We thoroughly enjoyed and benefited greatly from the discussions about cooperation and unity in the workplace. I made friends from different provinces. I hope to attend future meetings. I would like to thank for your efforts.

It was a great experience; I learned how to learn.

I have improved my ability to express my thoughts in a clearer, more understandable, and respectful way.

It was an awesome experience for me. It was a great occasion for learning.

I felt valued. I really liked the event, and I would always like to participate.

First of all, thank you for everything. I made new friends from Ankara, Istanbul, and Kahramanmaraş. Thanks to the things that I have learned, I will prepare a presentation for the other apprentice students at my school as soon as possible.



It motivated me a lot. I realized that I should not stay silent and that I should focus on success no matter what.

It was a fantastic experience, and I travelled alone for the first time.

It was a very fun, informative, and unbiased forum.

It was a very fun experience for me and I am happy to be here. I have made new friends and gained different perspectives.



It was wonderful; I feel refreshed.

Being a part of the forum was very valuable for me; I had the opportunity to interact and communicate with my peers. I was also very proud of attending the discussions.

## OUR GRADUATES



Apprenticeship training is a transformative journey that not only equips individuals with vocational skills but also empowers them to build their own futures and take a strong foothold in society. As part of the VET4JOB-II, implemented with the support of the European Union, we support our young people in entering the labour market as well-equipped individuals through high-quality apprenticeship training. In this section; you will witness the inspiring success stories of our graduates who crowned their journeys starting with apprenticeship with mastery, and added value to both themselves and society by overcoming the challenges they encountered with “resilience” and “perseverance.”

### Hold On to your Dream: A Success Story from Kayseri



Tasnim Shawa starts by telling that she was still very young when she came to Turkey in 2013 and that an uncertain path lay before her. She states that before stepping through the door of the Kayseri Osman Düşüngel Vocational Training Centre, she loved hairdressing but that apprenticeship training was not on her mind.

She adds that it was her mother's intuition that led her down this path:

“ My mother said, 'Go there, give it a try, maybe you will like it.' So, I transferred from the normal school to an apprenticeship programme. I realized that it was fine, so I decided to remain there.

### Growing Through the Profession: Rebuilding Yourself

Tasnim, who is now 21 years old, says that her school years started as "a wonderful adventure" for her. She particularly emphasizes that the support of Aynur Teacher left an indelible mark on her memory:

“ Aynur Teacher was the person who supported me the most; I will never forget her.

However, she points out that apprenticeship training is not just a process learned in school, it also means facing the realities of life and the challenges of the business life. She speaks openly about the difficulties she experienced at work, as well as the ups and downs in the master-apprentice relationship. "There are always problems everywhere," she says, summarizing the secret to her success in one word: "Endurance."

She explains that, even during the difficult times she went through, she managed to stay strong thanks to her love for her profession. She states that she not only rebuilt her profession but also herself during this process. While describing herself as an "adolescent" in her early years of education, she explains the transformation that she has undergone to reach her current position as follows:

“ When I first started school, there were many times when I thought, 'I probably won't be able to continue.' But now, when I make a decision, I do not give up until I realize it.

### The Fruits of the Journey to Mastership: Opening Your Own Shop

She says that this determination bore fruits after graduation. She proudly shares how she first practiced her skills by working as a "master" in a men's barbershop, and then pursued her dream by opening her own business.

She also states that she takes part in events organized as part of VET4JOB. She describes the feeling she experiences in the forums that she attends as "unity and energy," adding:

“ They take us out of our boring lives for a bit; it makes us feel very different.

She also gives some advice to young people considering entering the profession:

“ They should enrol in apprenticeship training to learn a profession, not to earn money.

After a long and challenging journey, she describes where she stands today by saying, "I am a very stubborn person," and explains that her goal is now bigger, that she wants to expand her current shop and continue pursuing her dreams. She states that she now knows that when you hold on to something and persevere, success is inevitable.



## Believing and Continuing: A Story of Mastership Began at a Young Age in İnegöl



**Muhammed Yahya Elkassab**, a graduate of the hairdressing department at Bursa İnegöl Vocational Training Centre, started his professional life much earlier than his peers, at the age of 9. With 10 years of experience, Muhammed, who perfectly embodies the definition of "**self-taught**," looks to the future with hope, empowered by the skills he gained through his vocational training.

### A Journey that Began with Inspiration of the Social Circle

Muhammad's journey as an apprentice was shaped by the guidance of the older people and friends around him. Their goal of receiving vocational training, obtaining certificates, and opening their own shops became an inspiration for Muhammed as well. Listening to advice such as, "You can get your license and become a shop owner," Muhammed embarked on this journey with the support of his family.

Muhammed, who started his career at a very young age, proudly talks about the 10 years of hard work he has put in, even though he is only 20 years old now.

Although he faced various difficulties throughout his life, from childhood to youth, he summarizes his point of view in one sentence:

“ The important thing is to keep going.

”

### Fun Meetings with VET4JOB

VET4JOB activities also take an important place in Muhammed's education process. Stating that he greatly enjoyed the social activities at the forums, the young master expressed that these gatherings left a lasting impression on him:



“ Everything was great, the only problem was that the events were too short. The forums lasted two and a half days, but it was not enough; everyone wanted it to be longer. ”

### Future Goals: "My Own Shop"

Muhammed, who has been working steadily for 5 years at the company where he received his training, has future plans that include practicing his profession abroad or opening his own shop in Türkiye. Muhammed believes that his mastership certificate could open doors for him to work abroad, and he continues his research in this area. He instils hope to young people who are about to start their careers:

“ They should definitely start out. They will definitely come across something that will be beneficial for them in the future. ”

Muhammed Yahya Elkassab, who describes his current position with the words "determination" and "hope," summarizes the secret of his success with a single concept: "To believe."

## Two Golden Tickets: A Young Man from Ankara Who is Both an Employer and a University Student



The story of 20-year-old **Muhammed Haskal**, a graduate of Ankara Sıtelер Vocational Training Centre, is the concrete proof that vocational training not only provides a profession but also opens the doors to academic careers for young people. Muhammed, who graduated from the "Beauty and Hair Care Services - Men's Hairdressing" department, is now both a business owner employing four people and a dedicated student who studies at university.



### **From Cooking to Hairdressing: Inspiration Coming from Older Brother**

Muhammed's journey into professional training took a different turn when, despite having a completely different dream in mind, he received advice from his family. Muhammed, who initially considered becoming a chef, entered the hairdressing profession after his older brother, who graduated from the same school, said, "I finished this school, you should go too, it is a good path." His passion for work and a fast-paced environment allowed him to adapt to the profession quickly.

### **From Financial Difficulties to Being Employer: "Getting Back on Track"**

For Muhammed, who decided to stand on his own feet after graduation, life has not always been smooth sailing. He expresses that he faced financial difficulties in the process of opening his own shop. "Things were not very good, we struggled a lot with debts and loans," he honestly says, describing his difficulties. However, thanks to his never-give-up attitude and disciplined approach to saving money, after about a year and a half he managed to get his business back on track at his shop in Mamak, Ankara. He proudly says that he currently employs four people.

### **Apprenticeship Training together with Academic Career**

What sets Muhammed Haskal apart from others is his ability to take advantage of the "high school diploma" opportunity offered by vocational training. After receiving his mastership certificate and opening his shop, Muhammed continued his education, and is currently a student in the Arabic Translation and Interpreting Department at Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University.

He summarizes these two career goals and the advantage he gained with these striking words:

“ If I had attended a normal school, I would have just had a diploma, I would have just gone to university. But now I am both working and studying at university. "It is much stronger when these two are together.

”

### **Social Network and Vision through VET4JOB**

VET4JOB's activities have contributed to strengthening not only Muhammed's professional skills but also his social aspect. Stating that thanks to the Programme, he made new friends and met valuable teachers, the young entrepreneur, with the vision this collaboration gave him, is moving forward with more confident steps in his business life.

Muhammed, who both manages a business and continues his university education today, describes his current situation with three powerful words despite all the fatigue he experiences:

“ Determination, success, and strength.

”

## Fatigue, Success, Happiness: A Chef's Ambitious Journey



**Abdurrahman Dilli**, who lives in Kayseri and graduated from the Ayşe Baldöktü Vocational Training Centre's Food and Beverage Services department, says that his journey toward mastership is not just a process of learning a profession for him, but also a process of building his identity. Abdurrahman says that everything quickly took shape when he finished secondary school, driven by his desire to acquire a profession, and today, as a certified master chef, he continues to pursue his dreams.

Abdurrahman's decision to pursue this profession is partly a story of meeting the right person at the right time:

“ When I finished the secondary school, I wanted to get a profession. Then I enrolled in school. There I met Teacher Ozan. He motivated me, supported me a lot. That is how I got into this profession, and I loved it very much.

”

His family and friends welcomed his decision with great joy. Stating that being a chef is "a cool thing", Abdurrahman emphasizes that his family's support motivates him even more.

Having overcome economic difficulties at the end of his four-year apprenticeship, Abdurrahman, now a certified master, says that this experience has taught him important personal skills such as patience and empathy:

“ I can empathize with other people now. I can understand employees with less experience better. I can put myself in their place.

”

### **The Ambition: "I Worked Too Hard"**

Abdurrahman describes his desire to be the best in his profession as "ambition," and says that this ambition is the most important quality that sets him apart from

other apprentice students. Despite his normal 8-hour workday, Abdurrahman says he "worked 18 hours to improve himself," and explains that he spent this extra effort exploring and learning about areas he did not know in the culinary world.

### The Leadership Spirit Taught by VET4JOB

VET4JOB activities played a critical role in Abdurrahman's professional development. Abdurrahman stated that his perspective before participating in the forums was "I will just do my job, not interfere with anyone, there is no need for adventure", but he explained that he underwent a major transformation after attending these activities.

“ After getting to know VET4JOB, something about me started to develop, a leadership spirit... I need to be at the forefront. I should lead people. I need to show them the right path. I should be the real leader. ”

He adds that with this leadership spirit, he has now begun to pass on what he has learned to those around him, trying to guide his apprentice students on the right path.

### His Recommendation to Young People and His Biggest Dream

Abdurrahman, who has just turned 21, has some great advice for young people who are about to start their careers:



“ Work in the best place. Work for a company that know your value, and do not let yourself be exploited. Always take risks. Be confident. ”

Despite facing difficulties in his first experience opening a business, Abdurrahman rose from the ashes, and today is happy working as a chef with a good salary and living with his family. He summarizes the point he reached after this difficult journey in three words: "Exhaustion, success, happiness."

Abdurrahman's biggest dream for the future is to open a large restaurant in his home country, Syria.

“ I am thinking of opening the biggest restaurant in Syria... I hope I will be the best manager. ”

*These success stories embody how the first steps towards mastership, with high-quality education and proper guidance, can lead to lasting employment, and even becoming an employer. The activities offered within the scope of VET4JOB have provided young people not only with social skills, but also with a visionary perspective and leadership qualities. This transformation demonstrates the critical role that apprenticeship training plays in empowering young people, enabling them to achieve economic independence and secure their future. As VET4JOB, with our commitment to combating child labour and our vision of providing high-quality apprenticeship training, we will continue to support our youth in revealing their potential and becoming the heroes of their own stories.*

# VET4JOB-II

## • Capacity Building Trainings for VTCs:

To improve the school climate, capacity building training programme based on needs analysis will be planned and implemented at both central and local levels for VTC teachers and administrators.

## • Capacity Building Activities for Other Stakeholders:

Professional organizations will be supported to improve their capacity to provide theoretical and practical training; equipment will be provided to adult training centres, and monitoring training will be given to businesses.

## • Outreach Activities:

Community-based activities will continue to be carried out through family and workplace visits to promote vocational training, introduce and direct people towards apprenticeship training, and raise awareness about child labour. Cooperation with professional organizations will continue to access employers and to gather labour demand information. In order to reach women and individuals under temporary and international protection, the networks in which these groups are involved will be used effectively.

## • Risk Prevention Activities:

Risk prevention activities will be carried out to reduce the risk of apprentice students dropping out of vocational training centres and to support their graduation.

These activities will be addressed through a holistic approach encompassing general prevention efforts, early identification of risks, implementation of appropriate in-school and out-of-school interventions based on the type of risk, and systematic monitoring of the measures taken to ensure their contribution to graduation.

## • Implementation of Student Work File and Workplace-Apprentice Student Matching Softwares in VTCs:

The softwares developed in the first phase of the Programme will be transferred to the Ministry of National Education, and following necessary revisions and user trainings, they will be implemented in the pilot Vocational Training Centres (VTCs).

## • Social Cohesion Activities:

Efforts will continue to enhance social cohesion in Türkiye through activities involving both people under international and temporary protection, and Turkish youth and adults. Social cohesion activities for adults will be expanded.

## • Apprentice Student Forum:

The Six<sup>th</sup> Apprentice Student Forum will be organized,

within a new thematic framework and with solidarity activities.

## • Image Building Efforts in Vocational Training Centres:

Through graffiti, stair painting, and slogan workshops, students will be encouraged to embrace the school culture and develop a sense of belonging.

## • Activities to Combat Child Labour:

As part of the combat against child labour, awareness-raising meetings, interactive training and workshops field observations and evaluations, and local dissemination activities will be carried out.

## • Information Event for Secondary School Guidance Counsellors:

To raise awareness about apprenticeship training for 8th-grade students prior to the LGS (High School Entrance Exam) process, guidance counsellors will be informed, and efforts will be made to expand these initiatives at the provincial level.



## IN THE FUTURE

- **Improve Social and Theoretical Learning Environment at VTCs:**

Installations of air conditioning, furniture, and computer labs, initiated to strengthen the physical infrastructure of practical, theoretical, and social learning environments in vocational training centres, will be completed; small-scale renovations and infrastructure improvements will also be launched.

- **Improving Practical Learning Environment at Workplaces:**

To ensure that apprentice students receive their practical training in safer and high-quality environments, their needs will be identified, and necessary support will be provided to workplaces, primarily regarding occupational health and safety measures.

- **Apprentice Student Support**

The monthly food voucher support provided by VET4JOB-II will continue uninterrupted. Regarding transportation support, educational institutions in need have been asked to develop solutions based on their specific circumstances, and those suggestions deemed feasible may be implemented. Furthermore, the supplied stationery sets have been delivered to vocational training centres, and made available for use by apprentice students.

- **Monitoring of Labour Market:**

The labour market will be closely monitored in each province, collaborations will be established with market actors, and the roadmap will be updated building on the collected information to plan training programmes tailored to demand.

- **Adult Trainings and Employment:**

While profession and job-oriented vocational training

will continue, emphasis will be placed on development and adaptation courses for those already employed.

- **Career Counselling and Guidance:**

Career counselling and guidance services will continue to be provided by increasing the number of counsellors offering these services.

- **Recognition of Prior Learning:**

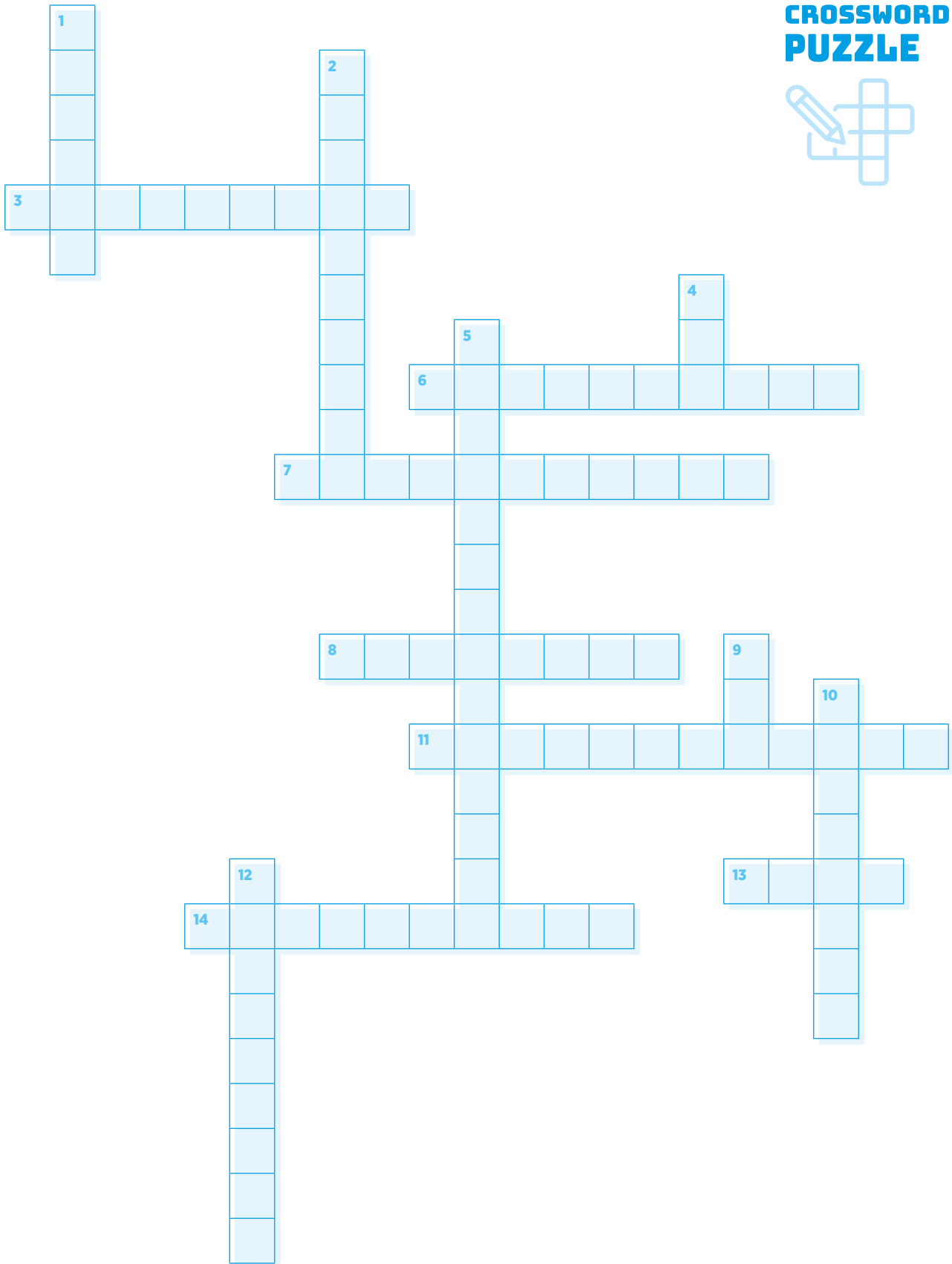
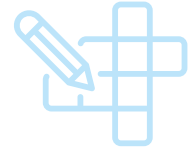
The employment-focused recognition of prior learning service will be implemented following the specification and procurement process in early 2026.

- **İŞKUR Registration and Work Permit:**

Close cooperation established with İŞKUR will continue, and one-on-one registration and activation support, as well as work permit fee support, will continue in 2026, especially for foreign candidates. Awareness-raising and information campaigns will continue.



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## Across

- 3 A vocational field that aims to provide skills in shaping, designing, and producing in branches such as Jewellery Manufacturing and the Processing of Precious and Semi-Precious Stones.
- 6 A person who, according to the principles of an apprenticeship contract, develops their knowledge and skills in a profession through on-the-job training, and who maintains the student status.
- 7 Technology: A professional field that aims to train individuals competent in creating, processing, storing, securing, and sharing electronic data in parallel with technological advancements.
- 8 A significant sector and professional field specializing in fisheries and aquaculture.
- 11 A profession that provides training in the production and design of leather goods such as shoes and handbags.
- 13 A confederation representing tradesmen and craftsmen, and one of the partners of VET4JOB-II (abbreviation)
- 14 The profession involved in raising honeybees to obtain products such as honey, royal jelly, pollen, and propolis.

## Down

- 1 A person who has acquired the knowledge, skills, and work habits required for a profession, can apply these in production, and possesses planning and problem-solving skills.
- 2 A person who has acquired the knowledge, skills, and work habits required for a profession, and can perform tasks and operations to acceptable standards under the supervision of a master.
- 4 JOB: Abbreviation for the Vocational Training Programme for Employment, which also promotes the fight against child labour and aims to develop high-quality vocational skills
- 5 Training: A kind of formal education lasting four years that young people can pursue after secondary school to complete their compulsory education.
- 9 Educational institutions affiliated with the Ministry of National Education, responsible for the theoretical part of formal apprenticeship training, which is given once a week.
- 10 The process of determining and recording the location, boundaries, area, and legal status of all immovable properties in a country.
- 12 A significant professional field that provides skills in casting, smelting, and rolling, as well as metal melting, moulding, steel production, and quality control.

# HIDDEN GEM



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