

SKILLS FINLAND – PROMOTING EXCELLENCE IN SKILLS

Skills Finland is a not-for-profit association which promotes quality and attractiveness of skills and vocational education and training and entrepreneurship. This is achieved through skills competitions and by training and coaching young professionals, competition experts and trainers. Society benefits when skills and learning for work are highly valued.

Skills competitions include the Taitaja-Mästare, the annual Finnish championships in vocational skills, and the junior event Taitaja-Mästare9, which is aimed at ninth-graders in basic education. Skills Finland is also responsible for selecting and managing TeamFinland, for international WorldSkills, EuroSkills and Abilympics competitions.

Skills
skillsfinland



Showcasing Skills, Professions and Entrepreneurship

Skills competitions put skills in a spotlight and increase participants' interest in developing their proficiency. Competitions are designed to inspire young people to aim for excellence and to give them a head start in fast paced workplaces. Competitions enhance the attractiveness of vocational training and ease recruitment difficulties through increased cooperation between schools, vocational training institutions and working life.



Taitaja9 – ninth-graders compete in craftsmanship

In the Taitaja-Mästare9 event, teams of three pupils (15–16-year-olds) from comprehensive schools compete in tasks requiring dexterity. Hundreds of trial competitions are arranged around Finland. The finals take place in conjunction with the annual Taitaja-Mästare. The aim is to aid young people in selecting their careers and training paths, assist schools in guidance and counselling as well as to increase school-leavers' awareness of trades and skill requirements. www.taitaja9.fi



Taitaja and TaitajaPLUS – competitions promoting excellence in skills

Taitaja is the annual competition for young VET (Vocational Education and Training) students and apprentices. The participants compete for the Finnish championships in about 40 vocational skills over three days of competition. In connection with Taitaja special skills categories for students with special needs are also organized. The number of skills categories is from three to five in this competition called TaitajaPLUS.

The competitions are designed to capture the essence of skills at work and for work. They test the essential skills and competencies of occupations to the standards set by national qualification requirements. The competitions encourage students to continue the development of skills, entrepreneurship and culture. They facilitate the selection of rising talent to represent Finland at international skills events.



Together with the competitions there are skill shows and try-a-skill opportunities. An educational fair and various conferences highlight the role and importance of learning and skills in a modern society. It is the largest yearly event in the field of education and training in Finland. The competitors compete in front of tens of thousands of spectators. The event acts as a unique and important meeting point for students, teachers and representatives of VET providers, working life, research institutions and administration. www.taitaja.fi

International skills competitions – an opportunity for the very best



Participation in international competitions develops the skills of young craftspeople and promotes a positive image of vocational learning. International skills competitions are competitions with a difference. They test and develop the vocational skills and are an excellent way of raising skill levels. The competitions provide a unique means of exchange for the range of stakeholders and a comparison of world-class competency standards in the industrial trades and service sectors of the global economy. Cooperation is supported by an extensive international network of contributors and experts associated with the competitions. International events and preparation for them, develop quality and international cooperation in vocational education and training.



WorldSkills Competition – competition between the best of the best

The WorldSkills Competition (WSC) is a biennial international skills event where young professionals compete for the world championships in over 45 skill categories. 900 highly-skilled competitors under the age of 23 from 50 countries take part in the WSC. It is the biggest skills competition in the world. Over four days, young people from WS member countries test themselves against tough international standards.

Skills Finland is the official body in Finland affiliated to WorldSkills International and it organises the Finnish entry to the WorldSkills Competition to be held in 2009 in Calgary Canada and 2011 in London UK.

Skills Finland organised in cooperation with national partners the 38th WorldSkills Competition WorldSkills Helsinki 2005 in Finland. The event attracted 120,000 visitors to the Helsinki Fair Centre and greatly increased the attractiveness of VET in Finland. www.worldskills.org



EuroSkills – a European forum for excellence in skills

EuroSkills is a new forum for excellence in skills. Young people compete for the European championships in 40 skill categories in a competition to be held in Lisbon, Portugal in 2010. The competition specifically promotes the transparency and compatibility of vocational degrees as well as increases the mobility of craftspeople in Europe. Skills Finland is the official body in Finland affiliated to the European Skills Promotion Organisation responsible for EuroSkills.

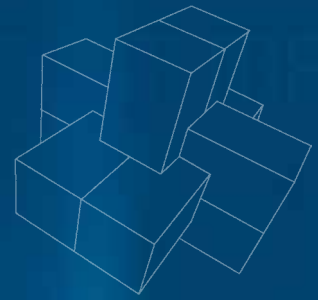
www.euroskills2008.nl



Abilympics – vocational skills competition for persons with disabilities

The abilympics competition is organised every fourth year with the aim of elevating the desire of persons with disabilities for vocational independence and improving their skills, promoting the recognition, attractiveness and status of vocational special education, supporting full participation of persons with disabilities in society and employment and creating more contacts between education and working life. Abilympic competitors participate in some 30 skill categories. In 2007 Finland, for the first time, participated in the Abilympics organised in conjunction with the WorldSkills Competition in Shizuoka Japan. The next competition in 2011 will be held in Seoul, Republic of Korea.

www.jeed.or.jp/english/aboutabilympic.html



Training paving the way towards excellence in skills

Success in international skills competitions is not possible without careful preparation. Skills Finland has developed training together with colleges and companies, and created a nationwide training network comprised of vocational colleges and companies. The aim is to encourage young professionals in the pursuit of excellence to serve the needs of working life and personal fulfilment.

Training is carried out by qualified skills trainers and coaches. It aims at developing new training models, increasing the cooperation between business life and vocational training as well as creating personal success stories and giving young persons a head start in fast paced working life. During training, young people gain national vocational qualification certificates: further vocational qualifications and specialist vocational qualifications. Training takes place at workplaces and colleges, sometimes as apprenticeship training.
www.huippuosaamista.fi

In cooperation with



Trainers, coaches and other competition specialists – a network fostering competence

Skills Finland trains specialists who act as judges, supervisors, coaches and head coaches or trainers in skills competitions, preparation for them and during training. Together, they form an extensive network that connects the competition and training organisations closely with the national education and training system and business life in Finland.

These specialists include vocational teachers and workplace instructors in companies and other organisations. Training helps them guide students on their way to achieving excellence and becoming skilled professionals as well as providing instruction for students preparing for skills demonstrations or competitions or other tasks requiring high-level of skills. In addition, training improves skills and competence of the specialists in organising and developing national and international skills competitions.

In cooperation with





Finland facts

- ▶ Population 5.3 million
- ▶ Capital Helsinki, population 576,600
- ▶ Area 337,030 sq km
- ▶ Language Finnish (92%), Swedish (5,5%)
- ▶ Currency euro (EUR)
- ▶ Major sectors of the economy: (% GDP): services 66,5%, manufacturing industry and construction 30%, agriculture and forestry 4%
- ▶ Religion: Evangelical Lutheran 82%, Orthodox 1%, unaffiliated 15%
- ▶ Proportion of people with post-basic education of total population: 63%



Skills Finland

- ▶ Promotes the quality and status of vocational skills and the attractiveness of vocational education and training and entrepreneurship.
- ▶ Is responsible for organising and developing national vocational skills competitions f. eg. giving hosting rights to regional training providers.
- ▶ Is responsible for selecting and managing the Finnish teams which compete in international skills competitions.
- ▶ Organises training for young professionals in the pursuit of excellence in skills.
- ▶ Organises training for experts, trainers and specialists in skills competitions.
- ▶ Works in close partnership with stakeholders encouraging innovation and the pursuit of excellence in skills at every level.
- ▶ Promotes research on excellence in skills.
- ▶ Established in 1993.
- ▶ Backed by the Ministry of Education, the Finnish National Board of Education, labour market organisations, teachers and students organisations and VET training providers and institutions.

Rahakamarinportti 3 B, 00240 Helsinki, FINLAND
tel. +358 9 8689 680, fax +358 9 8689 6818

skills@skillsfinland.fi
www.skillsfinland.fi



A Member of
International
Abilympic Federation



A Member of
world skills
international

Skills
skillsfinland

