

Skills competition: learn, improve your skills and move forward

Every year seven vocational schools from different European countries organize the skills competition “Young Mechanic”, the goal of which is to improve the cooperation between vocational schools and to compare and evaluate the different competences gained while learning in various countries. Each year the competition is held in a different country. This year it took place in Lithuania, in the Vilnius School of Car Mechanics and Business (*Vilniaus automechanikos ir verslo mokykla*). Vocational schools students from Austria, the Czech Republic, Poland, Macedonia, Slovakia, Hungary and Lithuania were competing while the Turkish delegation participated as guests. The competition consisted of a theoretical part with a test in each of the competitor’s native language and seven practical exercises.

Why is the competition important to its participants?

Students gained a new professional and social experience. Not only did they have a chance to show their practical skills and receive a thorough evaluation of their competences but also to compare their achievements with the ones of the students from other countries.

Teachers gained a lot of experience from their colleagues while preparing the students for the competition. They evaluated practical exercises and could compare the skills and abilities of students from different countries doing the same exercises.

For **schools management** the competition was a great opportunity to introduce themselves to the peculiarities of vocational education and training in other countries, to compare the different ways of preparing the same qualification specialists, to share their experience and to look for new ways to develop international communication.

Competition organizer – the Vilnius School of Car Mechanics and Business – gained valuable experience in organizing international competitions, preparing theoretical and practical tasks and developing an appropriate task accomplishment evaluation system.

The competition was observed by people from transport inspection companies, lecturers from higher education institutions and participants of previous competitions. The competition was widely publicized by the media and has therefore contributed to increasing the attractiveness of both the car mechanic profession and vocational education and training in Lithuania. The experience gained while organizing the competition is going to be used nationally while organizing similar sectoral competitions among Lithuanian vocational schools.

After the competition, we would like to wish students “Learn, improve your skills and move forward in your professional career”.

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