

# HISTORY OF WORLDSKILLS

## WHAT IS WORLDSKILLS?

As an international movement, WorldSkills is the global voice of workplace skills promotion. We use skill **COMPETITIONS AND PROJECTS, EDUCATION AND TRAINING, ADVOCACY, INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT, CAREER, AND RESEARCH** to bring together industry, government, and education organizations to drive an international **SKILLS AGENDA** designed to create economic stability for all people and freedom of choice for all youth.

The continued growth of WorldSkills attests to the fact that traditional trade skills along with the newer technology multi-skilled vocations make an essential contribution to the economic and social well-being of people everywhere. As a free standing, non-political organization, WorldSkills provides a cost effective means for global government, education and industry cooperation in achieving higher standards and status for vocational education and training on a worldwide basis.

**“Fill youth with enthusiasm through special action! Convince young people’s parents, trainers and company chiefs that a promising future is possible only through good vocational training.”**

*Francisco Albert-Vidal,  
IVTO President 1984-1992*

## OUR HERITAGE

In 1946 there was a great need for skilled workers in Spain. Mr José Antonio Elola Olaso, who was General Director of OJE (Spanish Youth Organization), had an insight: it was necessary to convince youth, as well as their parents, teachers and prospective employers, that their future depended on an effective vocational training system.

Mr Olaso chose Francisco Albert-Vidal to further develop this idea together with Antonio Almagro Díaz and Faustino Ramos Díaz, who were on different occasions directors of the Work Centres. For this challenge, the most suitable solution was to promote through a competition. This would enable youth to be inspired, adults would discuss competition results and visitors would be able to see a great variety of trades being demonstrated. Thus the idea of the WorldSkills Competition was born and became a reality in 1950 with the first Iberian Competition and an organization called the International Vocational Training Organization (IVTO) was developed.

In 1953, more European countries took part in the Competition. In 1954, the first organizing council – composed by official and technical representatives of the participating countries – was established to set the rules for international competitions. Over 60 years later, this model is still in place with Official and Technical Delegates from over 65 countries and regions in WorldSkills.

WorldSkills is not just a Competition though, the WorldSkills Foundation (created in 2011) is dedicated to strengthening and growing competitions as a means of promoting the skills movement nationally, regionally and globally through shared research, education and advocacy objectives.

*“WorldSkills has achieved a new level of increased awareness and reach in the past few years. With over 65 Member countries/regions, the WorldSkills brand and message is penetrating every corner of the globe. Its rich history and high standards will enable WorldSkills to become a global voice on skills excellence and vocational education issues. With over 60 years of expertise and knowledge the WorldSkills movement is getting stronger with every year that passes by, learning from the past whilst looking to the future. And as we look to that future we see it filled with the promise of a highly skilled and motivated global workforce.”*

— Simon Bartley. President, WorldSkills

# HISTORY OF WORLDSKILLS

## PAST COMPETITION YEARS AND LOCATIONS

1950: Madrid, Spain  
 1951: Madrid, Spain  
 1953: Madrid, Spain  
 1955: Madrid, Spain  
 1956: Madrid, Spain  
 1957: Madrid, Spain  
 1958: Brussels, Belgium  
 1959: Modena, Italy  
 1960: Barcelona, Spain  
 1961: Duisburg, Germany  
 1962: Gijón, Spain  
 1963: Dublin, Ireland  
 1964: Lisbon, Portugal  
 1966: Glasgow, United Kingdom  
 1966: Utrecht, Netherlands  
 1967: Madrid, Spain  
 1968: Bern, Switzerland  
 1969: Brussels, Belgium  
 1970: Tokyo, Japan  
 1971: Gijón, Spain  
 1973: Munich, Germany  
 1975: Madrid, Spain  
 1977: Utrecht, Netherlands  
 1978: Busan, Korea  
 1979: Cork, Ireland  
 1981: Atlanta, United States of America  
 1983: Linz, Austria  
 1985: Osaka, Japan  
 1988: Sydney, Australia  
 1989: Birmingham, United Kingdom  
 1991: Amsterdam, Netherlands  
 1993: Taipei, Chinese Taipei  
 1995: Lyon, France  
 1997: St Gallen, Switzerland  
 1999: Montreal, Canada  
 2001: Seoul, Korea  
 2003: St Gallen, Switzerland  
 2005: Helsinki, Finland  
 2007: Shizuoka, Japan  
 2009: Calgary, Canada  
 2011: London, United Kingdom  
 2013: Leipzig, Germany  
 2015: São Paulo, Brazil  
 2017: Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

## HISTORY OF WORLDSKILLS COMPETITIONS

WorldSkills has come to symbolize the pinnacle of excellence in vocational education, training and skills development. Every two years, hundreds of young skilled people, accompanied by their teachers and trainers, gather from around the world to compete before the public in their various skills and test themselves against demanding international standards. They represent the best of their peers drawn from regional and national skill competitions currently held in many WorldSkills Member countries and regions. The experience and results of all the competitions provide valuable feedback both to the individuals and the systems and enterprises in which they are being trained. For some it means recognition for outstanding achievement, while for others it provides the motivation and knowledge to aspire to higher standards. For the onlookers it is a revealing experience to see highly competent and skilled young people in action.

From 24 Competitors and 2 countries in 1950, the WorldSkills Competition is set to reach more than 1,000 Competitors from over 60 countries/regions in 2015. The 43rd WorldSkills Competition in São Paulo, Brazil, 11-16 August 2015 will be the biggest Competition to date.

As WorldSkills moves into the future, it continues to reach new milestones and gain new footholds in the world as a viable and crucial organization for launching the global economy through excellence in skilled careers.

## WORLDSKILLS VISION

## IMPROVING OUR WORLD WITH THE POWER OF SKILLS.

Without  
skills there  
is no global  
economy.