Three Excellence Medals for Latvian Team in WorldSkills 2017 Competition

Thursday, 19th October was the last day of the world's largest and most prestigious young professionals' vocational education and skills excellence competition *WorldSkills* 2017 held this year in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. In the contest medals were won by three competitors of the Latvian team.

Medals for excellence in the competition went to window-dresser Linda Vilka from Liepaja Secondary School of Music, Art and Design, Andis Lācis from Riga State Technical School and graphic designer Katrīna Elizabete Sīle from Riga State Technical School who also obtained the Best of Nation title for the best performance within the national team.

Excellence awards were received by those competitors who, on the scale of 799 points, reached at least 700. In the overall assessment of countries Latvia prides in the 25th best result leaving behind countries like Finland, Germany, Hungary, Netherlands, Croatia, Ireland, Belgium, Sweden, Norway et al.

Dita Traidās, Director of the State Education Development Agency: "The good results of the Latvian team make a pleasant surprise every year, testifying of the high level of vocational education and skills excellence among young professionals. *WorldSkills* organisation is growing and now includes representatives of 77 member states. *WorldSkills* competition is developing fast as well, and tasks and assessment turn more complicated with every year, and competition grows keener among entrants."

Ms. Traidās admits that the competition poses a significant challenge not only to competitors, experts and the whole delegation but also to the very organisation hosting this grand event in its country and ensuring everything necessary in order that the competition's proceedings were successful. "The more flaws there are in terms of organising the event, the more work there is for experts and more psychological strain for competitors. In spite of this, Latvia has proved that its teams contain not only outstanding professionals, but also strong personalities able to adapt for intense competition situations and to work in stressful conditions", concludes Ms. Traidās.

During the competition there were also elections of the WorldSkills Europe president, and the member states unanimously elected the Latvian representative Dita Traidās, SEDA Director, to be the organisation's president for the next four years. She has become the first woman in this position in the organisation's history. Up to now Ms. Traidās took the position of a WorldSkills Europe board member.

WorldSkills 2017 competition was the most comprehensive event in the history of the competition's existence. For the first time it was held in the Near East, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates from 14th to 19th of October. During the four days eight young people from Latvia presented their skills in the competition of 1300 participants.

The young professional competition WorldSkills is held biannually and inbetween the periods of European scale professional excellence competition EuroSkills. A Latvian team first participated in WorldSkills in 2011. Presently WorldSkills International includes 77 member states from the whole world. Each state is represented by only one state-delegated institution, and in Latvia it is the SEDA.

The photo gallery of competition course and opening and closing ceremonies may be found here. You can learn more about the competition in SkillsLatvia Facebook account and SEDA homepage under the section WorldSkills.

Participation of the Latvian team in the competition WorldSkills 2017 takes place within the project "Career support at general and vocational education establishments" financed by the European Social Fund and co-financed by the Latvian state.

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