



Good for Youth Good for Business

European Alliance for
Apprenticeships

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Good for Youth Good for Business

European Alliance for Apprenticeships

European Commission

Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

Unit C5

Manuscript completed in June 2015

A man is shown from the chest up, wearing a bright green t-shirt. The t-shirt features a graphic design where the words 'EARN & GAIN' and 'TRAIN & LEARN' are crossed in the center. 'EARN' and 'LEARN' are in orange, while 'GAIN' and 'TRAIN' are in white. The background is a white fabric with a colorful, multi-colored plaid pattern. The man's hands are in his pockets, and he is wearing dark jeans.

EARN & GAIN
TRAIN & LEARN

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PREFACE

*by the European Commissioner for Employment,
Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility,
Marianne Thyssen*



In times of high youth unemployment, there is plenty of evidence to show that apprenticeships provide young people with the skills required by employers. The European Alliance for Apprenticeships (EaFA) promotes the quality, supply and a positive image of apprenticeships, because they are an important vehicle for growth and jobs.

Since the Alliance was launched at the World Skills event in Leipzig on 2 July 2013, many stakeholders have joined this multi-stakeholder platform. Nearly all Member States have committed through concrete plans to improve framework conditions for apprenticeships. Social partners, chambers of commerce, industry and crafts, businesses, education and training providers, regions and youth organisations have joined the Alliance through 'pledges' to contribute to the aims of the Alliance. The European Commission continues to mobilise stakeholders, and works with governments and Europe-level social partners to promote reforms of apprenticeship systems.

The private sector plays a key role in apprenticeship schemes. Apprenticeships can only take place if companies, including small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), are willing to take responsibility for the in-company training. This should be done in close cooperation and dialogue with the vocational education and training (VET) providers. Companies can benefit enormously from this cooperation and from engaging in apprenticeship, in particular from better access to talents, skills and innovative ideas. Many companies have already highlighted the value of apprenticeships by joining the European Alliance for Apprenticeships, so we urge more companies to join now. That is why I will invite business representatives to unlock the potential of apprenticeships and to give me concrete feedback on how any barriers can be removed.

In this brochure you can read about some of the many initiatives by stakeholders in this field, highlighting the importance of cooperation at all levels. Work-based learning and apprenticeships continue to be a key priority on the European VET agenda, in order to ensure that learners and workers have the right skills to support sustainable growth in the coming years. It is my belief that this brochure will be an inspiration to everyone working for continued reform, improvement and boosting of apprenticeship systems across Europe. I hope you enjoy reading it.

FOREWORD

*by the Latvian EU Presidency, Minister for Education
and Science, Republic of Latvia,
Ms Mārīte Seile*



The need for closer cooperation between the worlds of education and work has been at the forefront of discussions in many European capitals, as we seek to foster a more competitive labour force. These discussions are prompted by the new EU strategic priorities in vocational education and training (VET), and more broadly by a growing recognition that the skills we teach and acquire must reflect the needs of the modern labour market. The European Alliance for Apprenticeships (EAfA or 'Alliance') established two years ago in Leipzig is a major and practical step towards this goal, helping to mobilise a broad spectrum of stakeholders Europe-wide.

The Latvian Presidency of the EU is firmly convinced that this key initiative needs further support and promotion.

Our aim is to broaden the scope of EAfA, as well as to continue exploring its potential impact. What strategic partnerships are relevant? Which new forms of cooperation nationally and transnationally should be promoted? What kinds of content should an apprenticeship include, as shaped by the demands of our new technological era, including an emphasis on quality? We must also be mindful of the need to emphasise excellence and innovation in VET, and hence the importance of modern apprenticeships.

In its discussions with other EU Member States, the Latvian Presidency focused on ways of opening VET for innovation and the promotion of work-based learning (WBL) approaches. While the Copenhagen Process and the Bruges Communiqué embraced innovation as a part of VET, innovation has not received sufficient attention in the common European VET agenda. Innovation in VET is not just about technology. Innovation should also cover all forms of creativity, which includes both implementation and governance of VET.

Even the promotion of apprenticeships in Europe could be considered innovative, as this is a novel approach for many countries. For others, with a long tradition in this field, the ambition to promote apprenticeships offers an opportunity to re-think their strategies in light of emerging global developments. Apprenticeships and WBL provide a broad platform to introduce genuine technological innovation – so crucial for our national economies if we are to enhance European competitiveness.

Member States are developing their own ways to address apprenticeships and WBL. As the old saying goes, our strength lies in our diversity. Latvia's strategic choice of a 'bottom-up' approach to introducing WBL has enabled us to promote a completely new way of thinking and this has happened during a relatively short period of time. Baltic cooperation on apprenticeships is the next step planned.

Across Europe, we must cooperate better in this area. This could involve first testing our ideas in individual countries or clusters of countries with similar experiences, and then expanding beyond them. EAfA provides an excellent opportunity to involve a wide range of stakeholders, especially business partners, so as to expand apprenticeships and WBL initiatives nationally and further afield, to form new strategic partnerships and to learn from each other.

Many EAfA pledges have been signed so far, which is to be welcomed. The Riga Meeting of Ministers in charge of Vocational Education and Training, European social partners and the European Commission, due to take place on June 22 this year, is an excellent opportunity to advance apprenticeships. We bear in mind that success of our shared endeavour will depend on broadening the scope as well as examining the work, goals and added value of EAfA.

EU Vocational Education and Training: priorities up to 2020

Since 2002, European countries and social partners have cooperated on Vocational Education and Training (VET) through the Copenhagen Process. In 2010, the Bruges Communiqué set out a vision for a modern and attractive VET, with an action plan running until 2014. After a review of the results, five key priorities to further improve VET systems were set for the period 2015 to 2020⁽¹⁾:

KEY PRIORITIES FOR THE PERIOD 2015-2020

1. Work-based learning

Promote work-based learning in all its forms, with a focus on apprenticeships by involving social partners, companies and VET providers, as well as by stimulating innovation and entrepreneurship.

2. Quality assurance

Further develop quality assurance mechanisms in VET in line with the European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET) recommendation and, as part of quality assurance systems, establish continuous information and feedback loops to initial VET (IVET) and continuing VET (CVET) systems based on learning outcomes.

3. Accessibility

Enhance access to VET and qualifications for all through more flexible and permeable systems. Above all, this can be done by offering efficient and integrated guidance services and by making available validation of non-formal and informal learning.

4. Key competences

Further strengthen key competences in VET curricula and provide better opportunities to acquire or develop those skills through IVET and CVET.

5. VET teachers and trainers

Introduce systematic approaches and opportunities for initial and continuous professional development of VET teachers, trainers and mentors in both school and work-based settings.



➔ *VET and apprenticeships lead to jobs*

VET graduates tend to find a job faster than those with general education, and more often in permanent jobs. Higher incomes appear to be associated with VET that is more workplace-based⁽²⁾.

⁽¹⁾ Subject to potential adjustments and formal endorsement by the EU Council and European social partners.

⁽²⁾ From education to working life, Cedefop (2012).

European Alliance for Apprenticeships: its roots and successes

The European Alliance for Apprenticeships (EAfA) is part of the EU's strategy to tackle high youth unemployment and to provide the skills that are needed to ensure sustainable growth and jobs. Apprenticeships smooth the transition of young people from education to work. They also appeal to employers, because they boost a company's productivity.

The EAfA is an informal platform bringing together governments with other relevant stakeholders willing to contribute to the goal of strengthening the quality, supply and image of apprenticeships in Europe. Stakeholders join it through commitments and pledges.

EAfA in a nutshell

- 2 July 2013: Launch of EAfA with Joint Declaration by the European Commission, the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the EU and European social partners
- 15 October 2013: EU Member States adopted a Council Declaration
- Individual commitments by almost all Member States
- Pledges by companies, chambers of commerce, industry and crafts, social partners, VET providers, youth organisations and regions
- Involvement of close to 200 companies through the Alliance for YOUTH
- European Commission financial support through Erasmus+, the European Social Fund, and other available sources.

All EU Member States have included apprenticeships in their 'Youth Guarantee Implementation Plans'. The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) have started country reviews of national apprenticeship systems.

Advancing Europe's apprenticeships

The EAfA has already done much to raise awareness of apprenticeships and trigger concrete actions across Europe. For example, with EU support, the social partners have started projects on the cost-effectiveness (employers) and quality (trade unions) of apprenticeships. The Education and Training 2020 Working Group on VET is also developing guiding principles for apprenticeships, especially on support to companies, governance and the involvement of social partners, quality assurance and attractiveness.



*The three objectives
of the European Alliance
for Apprenticeships:*

- 1. Improving quality*
- 2. Strengthening supply*
- 3. Enhancing the image*



Online survey results

The first EAfA online survey (mid-March to mid-April 2015) aimed to map stakeholders' activities and results in relation to the Alliance's goals of strengthening the supply, quality and image of apprenticeships. It led to a report on EAfA, distributed at the Riga (Latvia) event on 22 June 2015 marking two years of the Alliance. The survey and report were the starting points for an annual follow-up and monitoring exercise managed by the European Commission.

The survey collected the views of EAfA organisations and ambassadors. These include around 60 pledgers and ambassadors from businesses, social partners, chambers of commerce/industry/crafts, education and training providers, regions, as well as non-profit and youth organisations. Some 130 companies were also invited to respond under the business-led Alliance for YOUTh initiative.

The survey received a total of 56 replies: businesses (28), chambers (7), social partners (9), education and training providers (7), regional authorities (1), and other non-profit or youth organisations (4).

Survey conclusions

Many of the respondents to the survey highlighted concrete progress, notably a reported increase in the supply of apprenticeships since EAfA members made their pledge, and a further expected increase for 2016. Equally important were the positive developments reported on the quality and image of apprenticeships. Moreover, the survey revealed the growing importance of mobility in apprenticeships.


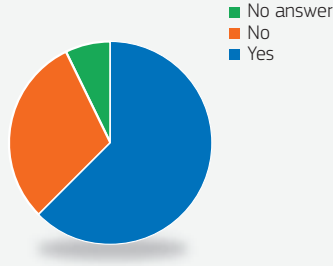
The results also highlighted the valuable role and active commitment of the wide range of EAfA stakeholders, through their diverse and complementary activities. Taking into account the different starting points of pledges, respondents noted increased cooperation, peer learning and sharing of good practices, as well as stronger awareness-raising.

The survey also revealed some challenges, such as the varying levels of experience with apprenticeships and different interpretations of the concept. The distinction between apprenticeships, traineeships and other training activities is not always clear. This applies in particular for stakeholders in the Alliance for YOUTh, which has a broader scope than apprenticeships. The survey underlined the continuing challenges of monitoring and impact evaluation of apprenticeships. Several respondents also called for greater visibility for the Alliance.

Next steps

A summary of the report on the survey and its results will be published on the EAFA website. In late 2015, the European Commission will launch a study to monitor EAFA progress.

SIX QUESTIONS: EAfA online survey

Questions	Examples of replies
Q.1 What have been the results in implementing your pledge since its submission?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses: developing right/transversal skills, ambassadorship activities, apprenticeship mobility • Chambers: study visits, pilot projects introducing dual system (SK,BG,RO), Erasmus+ project (CY, GR) • Social partners: seminars/training VET teachers, improving VET legislation/ criteria, participation in a national Apprenticeship Alliance • Education & Training Providers: EAfA roundtables, new apprenticeship training programmes, peer learning (systems/countries) • Regional authorities: new strategic VET agenda • Non-profit/Youth: learning network for companies & self-assessment tool, quality charter internships/apprenticeships, apprenticeship ambassadors
Q.2 Has the number of apprenticeships increased since the submission of your pledge?	<p>57% of respondents reported increase since submitting their pledge</p>  <p>Q.2</p>
Q.3 Is your organisation aiming to increase the number of apprentices in 2016?	<p>62.5% of respondents reported increase planned for 2016</p>  <p>Q.3</p> <p>Reasons for 'no' include: lack of data, uncertain funding/legislative setting (IT, UK), varying focus of pledges</p>

Questions	Examples of replies
Q.4 What activities are you planning next?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses: attracting talent, skills progression, costs • Chambers: SME helpdesk/coaching, facilitating matching, pilot projects • Social partners: quality of teachers, ensure business/public authorities respect their responsibility, cooperation with Cedefop • Education & Training Providers: partnerships (business/public authorities), conferences on EAfA, trainers, matching skills (low-skilled) • Regional authorities: new VET centres (innovation, technology) • Non-profit/Youth: transnational apprenticeships, business & youth
Q.5 How could the EU best support your activities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Key themes: partnerships & funding (setting-up apprenticeships, projects, teaching/information/promotional material)</i> • Businesses: matching skills, target, proposal dual learning for VET/higher education • Chambers: expertise, know-how transfer, strengthen intermediary bodies • Social partners: social dialogue, capacity building, better access to Erasmus+ • Education & Training Providers: improve learning outcomes, promote apprenticeships EQF level 5/6, strengthen VET providers at EU level • Regional authorities: reinforce regional/territorial dimension • Non-profit/Youth: ensure new EC initiatives have in-built quality control systems
Q.6 Do you have any proposals on how the Alliance can better meet its objectives?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Key themes: improve visibility & sharing of good practices</i> • Businesses: better communicate added value of EAfA, make key achievements more visible, support national reforms • Chambers: showcase pledge delivery/create blog, develop institutional requirements, 50% VET target for apprenticeships • Social partners: support VET teachers/trainers, awareness-raising, EU events on youth unemployment • Education & Training Providers: share good practices, improve impact (e.g. implementation of country-specific recommendations on VET), better explain apprenticeships • Regional authorities: create an EAfA action plan, involve other Commission Directorate-Generals and EU institutions • Non-profit/Youth: networking & dialogue, share good practices

Apprenticeships – A successful form of work-based learning

Work-based learning (WBL), a key aspect of VET, is directly linked to its goal of helping learners acquire the knowledge, skills and competences with direct relevance for the labour market. There are broadly three main forms of WBL:

APPRENTICESHIPS

Apprenticeships formally combine and alternate company-based training (periods of practical work experience at a workplace) with school-based education (periods of theoretical/practical education followed in a school or training centre), and lead to nationally recognised qualification upon successful completion. Most often there is a contractual relationship between the employer and the apprentice, with the apprentice being paid for his/her work.

The term apprenticeships is defined and understood differently in many countries and for research purposes. However, in a nutshell apprenticeships are:



SCHOOL-BASED VET WITH ON-THE-JOB TRAINING

This second form of WBL includes on-the-job training periods in companies. These periods vary in length and typically cover shorter internships, work placements or traineeships that are incorporated as a compulsory or optional element of VET programmes leading to formal qualifications.

WORK-BASED LEARNING IN SCHOOL

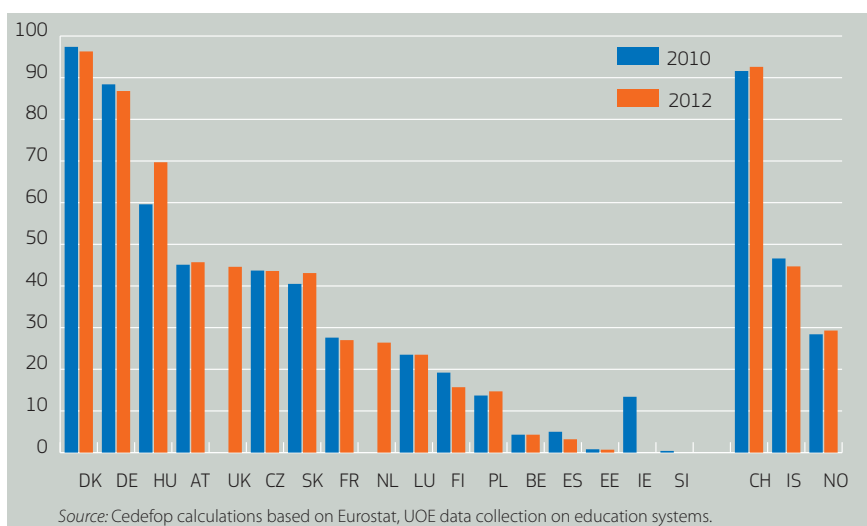
WBL can also be integrated in a school-based programme through on-site labs, workshops, kitchens, restaurants, junior or practice firms, simulations or real business/industry project assignments. The aim is to create 'real life' work environments, establish contacts and/or cooperation with real companies or clients, and develop entrepreneurship competences.



Vocational skills are in demand

The demand for people with medium-level qualifications, mainly vocational, is projected to rise by more than 3.5 million between 2010 and 2020, and to be around 50% of the workforce by 2020⁽³⁾.

IVET work-based students as % of upper secondary IVET, 2010 and 2012



For combined work-based and school-based programmes, at least 25 % of the curriculum is presented in a work environment.



*Work-based programmes are limited
50% of upper secondary students in the EU are in VET
programmes, but only 26.5% of them are in
work-based programmes, ranging from below 5%
in Belgium, Estonia and Spain to more than 85% in
Germany and Denmark.⁽⁴⁾*

⁽³⁾ Skills Supply and Demand in Europe, Medium-Term Forecast up to 2020, Cedefop (2010).

⁽⁴⁾ Education and Training Monitor 2014.

Comparing apprenticeships and traineeships

Apprenticeships are often, but should not be, confused with traineeships⁽⁵⁾.

Here is a comparison of the two different schemes.

	Apprenticeship	Traineeship
Scope	Full qualifying professional or vocational education and training profile	Complementing educational programme or individual CV
Goal	Professional profile/qualification	Documented practical experience
Educational level	Usually EQF levels 3-5	All EQF levels – common forms in (pre-) vocational education, in higher education and after graduation (sometimes compulsory)
Content	Acquisition of the full set of knowledge, skills and competences of an occupation	Vocational &/or work/career orientation, acquisition of parts of knowledge, skills and competences of an occupation or a profession
On-the-job learning	Equally important to coursework	Usually complementing coursework or optional extra
Length	Fixed, medium- to long-term	Varying, short- to medium-term
	Usually between one and four years	Usually less than one year
Employment status	Typically employee status	Student/trainee often based on an agreement with employer or school; sometimes volunteer status or not clearly defined status

.....
⁽⁵⁾ See European Council Recommendation on a Quality Framework for Traineeships.

	Apprenticeship	Traineeship
Compensation	Typically remunerated – amount collectively negotiated or set by law	Varying remuneration, often unpaid
	Apprenticeship allowance which takes into account net costs and benefits for the individual and the employer	Unregulated financial compensation
Governance	Strongly regulated, often on a tripartite basis involving social partners and VET providers	Unregulated or partly regulated

Source: Building on overview in ‘Apprenticeship and Traineeship Schemes in EU27: Key Success Factors’, European Commission (2013)



Who benefits from apprenticeships?

Win-win schemes for all

Apprenticeships pay off for companies, learners and society as a whole. A good-quality scheme provides the skills that make young people more employable: 60-70 % of apprentices typically secure employment immediately upon completion⁽⁶⁾. It can also provide the workforce that will make companies more productive and profitable. Training firms tend to recoup their training investments by the end or shortly after the training period⁽⁷⁾. In the long run, a good apprenticeship will also benefit society by boosting employment, reducing the need for social welfare and increasing levels of social inclusion.

WHO BENEFITS FROM APPRENTICESHIPS?		
Companies	Learners	Society
Skills Mastering skills development	Skills Practical skills that employers look for	Skills Skills in line with labour market needs
Recruitment Targeted recruitment with lower costs	Work experience Valuable and practical experience to put on CV	Connecting education with work Worlds of education and work connect and align
Productivity Apprentices also work and produce	Quicker job Apprentices find jobs quicker than their peers	Youth employment Easier access to labour market for young people
Innovation Fresh perspectives from apprentices	Better paid Apprentices get better paid in their first job	Social inclusion Participation in education, working life and society
Reputation Enhanced standing and recognition	Longer contract Apprentices stay longer in their first job	

➔ *Companies can benefit*
Swiss firms on average generated a net benefit from training apprentices. More than 60% of all Swiss firms find offering apprenticeships profitable.⁽⁸⁾

.....
 (6) Apprenticeship and Traineeship Schemes in EU27: Key Success Factors, European Commission (2013).
 (7) Return on investment of apprenticeship systems for enterprises, EENEE (2013).
 (8) Return on investment of apprenticeship systems for enterprises, EENEE (2013).

Success factors

Several factors most often contribute to the success of apprenticeship schemes, according to a review and analysis of the main apprenticeship programmes in EU Member States. Here's the European Commission's checklist:

- Robust institutional and regulatory framework
- Active social partner involvement
- Strong employer involvement
- Close partnerships between employers and educational institutions
- Funding including employer subsidies and other incentives
- Close alignment with the labour market needs
- Robust quality assurance
- High-quality guidance, support and mentoring of apprentices
- Appropriate matching of apprentice to host organisation (company)
- Combination of theoretical, school-based training with practical work-related experience
- Existence of an apprenticeship agreement
- Certification of acquired knowledge, skills and competences
- Tailored and flexible approaches to the needs of vulnerable young people

Source: 'Apprenticeship and Traineeship Schemes in EU27: Key Success Factors', European Commission (2013).

Getting companies on board, especially SMEs

CHALLENGES

SMEs⁽⁹⁾, including micro-enterprises, are the backbone of the European economy and provide around two-thirds of private sector employment in Europe. Yet they sometimes struggle to provide apprenticeship placements. Reasons for this include a lack of training infrastructure and personnel to supervise apprentices, as well as insufficient expertise to manage complex rules and administrative requirements.

When business and the economy are weak, or in times of uncertainty, companies are naturally less willing to take on apprentices. Employers may worry about the potential costs of offering training placements. Such placements could involve a substantial major net investment, which may never be recouped if an apprentice then moves to another employer.

Moreover, companies without experience of apprenticeships or who lack a 'training culture' might not be initially convinced of the benefits of taking on apprentices.



*Fewer firms are training, but not everywhere
The ratio of enterprises in the EU-28 providing initial
vocational training decreased from 31 % to 24 %
between 2005 and 2010, but more than doubled in
Greece, Cyprus, Portugal and Slovakia.⁽¹⁰⁾*

HOW DO SMEs ENGAGE IN APPRENTICESHIPS?

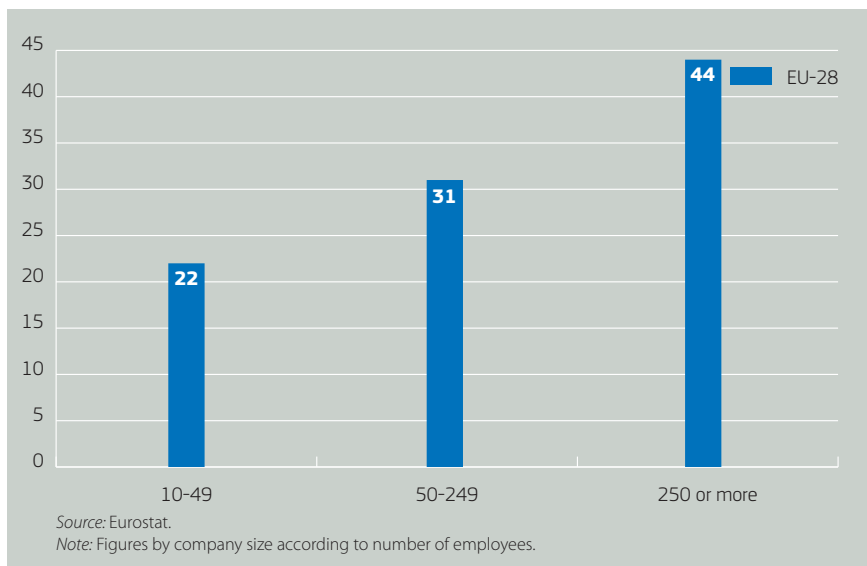
Large enterprises are more likely to offer apprenticeships than their small and medium counterparts. In 2010, at EU level, 24 % of enterprises provided placements. However, on closer inspection, we see that 44 % of large enterprises offered apprenticeships, against 31 % of medium and 22 % of small enterprises (no data is available for micro-enterprises – see figure page 20). This confirms the theory that apprenticeship provision grows with the size of enterprises.

.....
⁽⁹⁾ Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) are defined as those with fewer than 250 employees, whose annual turnover may not exceed €50 million, or whose annual balance sheet may not exceed €43 million. For statistical purposes, SMEs are divided into three categories according to their size: micro-enterprises – fewer than 10 employees; small enterprises – 10-49 employees; medium-sized enterprises – 50-249 employees.

Source: European Commission, 2003.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Percentage of enterprises providing IVT by size class, Eurostat.

Proportion of enterprises offering apprenticeships by size, 2010 (%)



Nevertheless, SMEs are well placed to offer placements for apprentices, if the right conditions are met. In countries like Austria and Germany, SMEs are key providers of apprenticeships, with 66 % and 46 % of apprentices respectively in firms with fewer than 50 employees⁽¹¹⁾.

SUPPORT MEASURES FOR SMEs

If companies are to offer good-quality apprenticeships, they must make appropriate investments. The success of policy initiatives for apprenticeships and youth employability also depends largely on more SMEs being involved in providing placements. To meet these challenges, governments are focusing more on targeted support and on enabling measures for SMEs to be involved in apprenticeships. These efforts can be summarised as three lines of action:

- financial incentives
- infrastructure and non-financial support
- support to in-company trainers.

⁽¹¹⁾ See publication: Lehrlingsausbildung im Überblick 2013, IBW.

Support by Cedefop

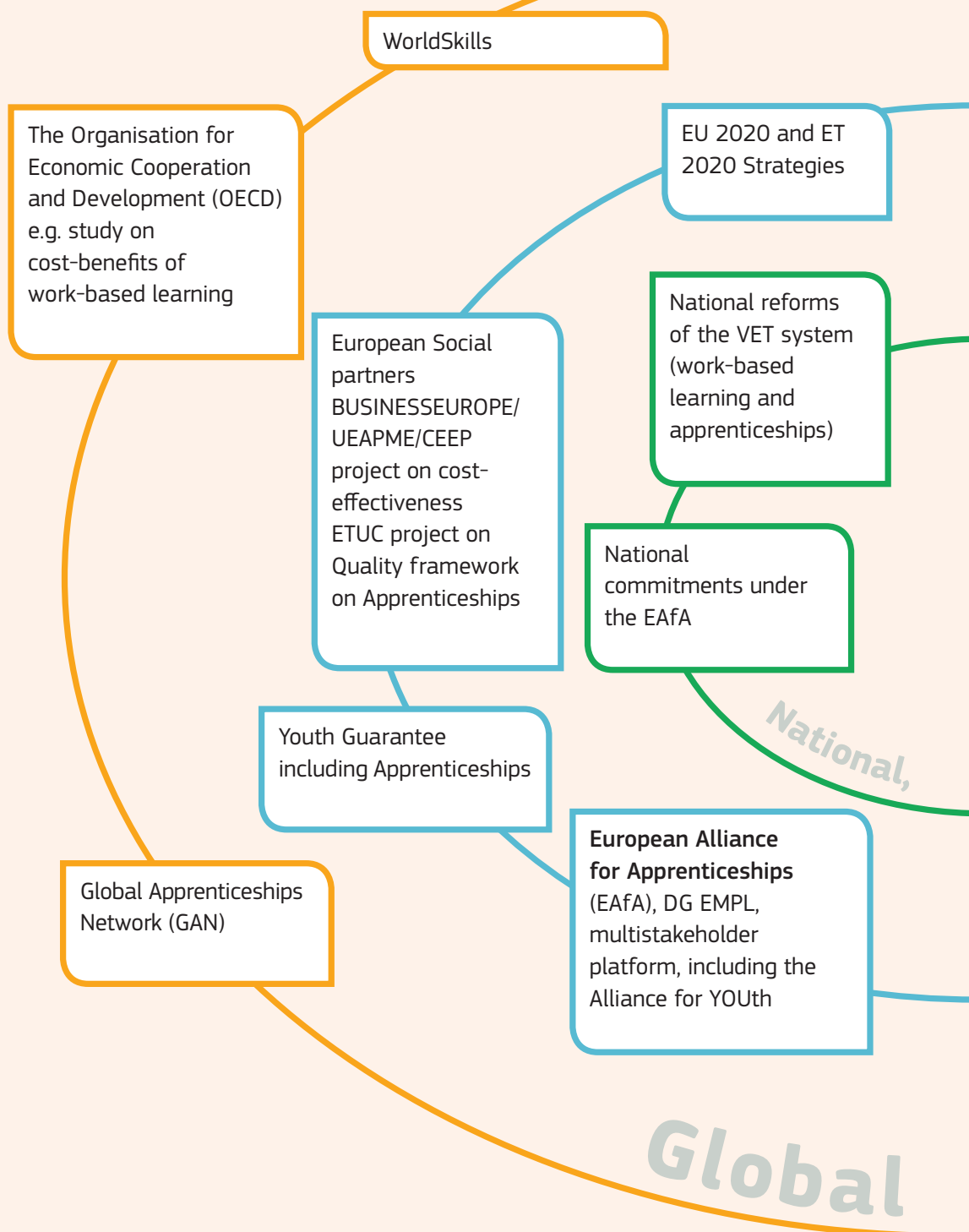
The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) is the EU's decentralised agency in charge of supporting the development of European vocational education and training (VET) policies and contributes to their implementation.

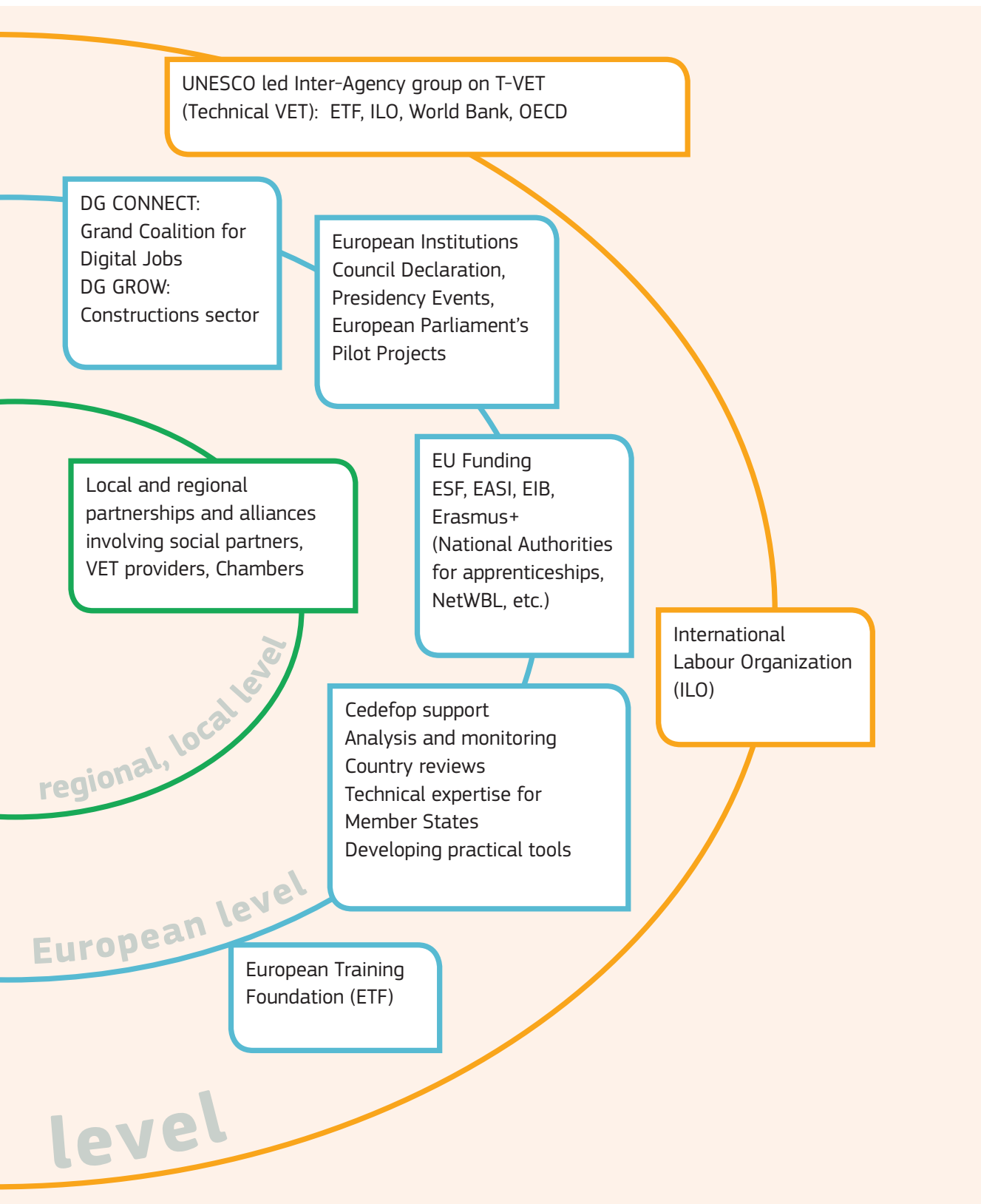
Cedefop provides strategic and expert support to Member States, social partners and other VET stakeholders in developing quality work-based learning, particularly apprenticeships. This support is mainly channelled by:

- Organising with the European Commission a new **event on supporting SMEs** to be engaged in work-based learning, including apprenticeship in November 2015. This event follows on from the 'matching conference' in May 2014.
- Supporting interested Member States in setting up or reforming their apprenticeship through **in-depth apprenticeship reviews** (i.e. Thematic Country Reviews on Apprenticeship). Between May 2014 and April 2015, this covered Lithuania and Malta. From mid-2015 to the end of 2016, the review will be completed in three other volunteer countries: Greece, Italy and Slovenia.
- **Monitoring and analysing developments** in work-based learning, including apprenticeship reforms in Member States, particularly for the deliverables agreed for VET in the Bruges Communiqué and in relation to the commitments Member States have made under the Alliance.
- Providing **strategic and expert input to the ET 2020 working group on VET** (focus on apprenticeship, and other forms of work-based learning until 2015) working closely with DG Employment.
- **Cooperating with the Commission and other international organisations** on the Inter-Agency Working Group on work-based learning and cooperation with the OECD on costs and benefits of apprenticeship. This work could lead to the development of methods and tools for employers to assess return on investment when they take on apprentices.
- Organising the **first policy learning forum on apprenticeship in the EU** in the second half of 2016. The forum will provide a unique platform for stakeholders from countries directly involved in the thematic country reviews on apprenticeship (review beneficiaries) to share their experience and findings with representatives from other Member States (potential beneficiaries).
- Initiating a new strand of **research on apprenticeship for adults** in 2016. This will focus on apprenticeship as an effective way of re-training and up-skilling adults to re-enter the labour market and/or boost their careers.

To find out more, see Cedefop: <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/>

The bigger picture





Guiding principles to support companies, including SMEs

Across Europe, countries must provide the right framework to increase the number of apprenticeships in companies. To that end, the Education and Training 2020 Working Group on Vocational Education and Training (VET) has developed a Guidance Framework on 'Support for companies, in particular SMEs, offering apprenticeships'.

The aim of this Guidance Framework is to help governments introduce or reform support for the companies, mainly SMEs and micro-enterprises, participating in apprenticeship schemes. The guiding principles are:

- 1. Supporting measures that make apprenticeships more accessible to SMEs.**
Examples include institutional setting with intermediary bodies, matching services;
- 2. Finding the right balance between the specific skills needs of training companies and the general need to improve the employability of apprentices.**
For example, formal procedures for approval of training companies, involvement of social partners;
- 3. Sharing costs and benefits that motivate training companies, VET schools and training centres as well as learners.**
Examples include sectoral training funds managed by social partners, non-financial support;
- 4. Focusing on companies having no experience with apprentices.**
Examples include subsidies for an initial period, support through tailored training guidelines;
- 5. Supporting companies providing apprenticeships for disadvantaged learners.**
Examples include individualised coaching or mentoring, specific equipment such as for hearing impairment;
- 6. Promoting systematic cooperation between VET schools, training centres and companies.**
Examples include regular contacts/visits between all parties, theme-specific or general partnerships;
- 7. Motivating and supporting companies to assign qualified trainers and tutors.**
Examples include recognising their identity and work, supporting their competence development.

This guidance is part of a general framework, to be published in full by the end of 2015, which includes the following themes: 1) Support for companies providing apprenticeships, in particular SMEs (this Guidance Framework); 2) Positive image of apprenticeships and improved career guidance; 3) National governance, regulatory framework and social partners' involvement; and 4) Quality assurance in work-based learning.

Statement by European employers' organisations

COST-EFFECTIVENESS OF APPRENTICESHIPS – THE BUSINESS CASE

Apprenticeship schemes bring a number of advantages for enterprises. These include better skills matching thanks to in-house training, more ownership of curricula, increased production, new knowledge and perspectives from apprentices, potential new staff, recognition of the company as a good employer, and so on.

However, companies taking on apprentices can incur costs linked to workstations adaptation, any mistakes made by apprentices, administrative paperwork, time taken by trainers and employees to coach apprentices, etc. It is essential to minimise the regulatory burdens and the cost of training, so as to facilitate the engagement of SMEs in apprenticeship schemes.

BUSINESSEUROPE, CEEP and UEAPME are committed to contribute to the European Alliance for Apprenticeships. So we launched a project on the attractiveness of apprenticeship schemes for employers. Looking at their cost-effectiveness and drawing on the diversity of national apprenticeship systems, our aim is to identify core elements to encourage employers to step up their role in apprenticeship schemes. Our project focuses on the engineering, ICT and commerce sectors with a view to broadening the traditional perception that apprenticeship is only for blue-collar workers.

The European Alliance for Apprenticeships aims to foster the exchange of knowledge and information and to build partnerships between actors from the worlds of employment and education in order to improve the national framework conditions for apprenticeships. This project is also a stepping stone for our future involvement as European social partners in promoting apprenticeships across Europe.



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Markus J. Beyrer
Director General
BUSINESSEUROPE



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Valeria Ronzitti
General Secretary
CEEP



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Peter Faross
Secretary General
UEAPME

Contribution from the European Trade Union Confederation

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF APPRENTICESHIPS – TRADE UNIONS' COMMITMENT

Since the signature of the European Alliance for Apprenticeships in July 2013, the ETUC has been working hard to improve the quality of apprenticeships in Europe. Our focus is high-quality training and working conditions, appropriate wages and social protection of apprentices.

Our project report, [Towards a European quality framework for apprenticeships and work-based learning](#), was published in 2013 and was well received by European and national-level policy-makers. The [ETUC Resolution on Improving quality of Apprenticeship and Work-based learning](#) was based on the project recommendations and was adopted in 2014 by all national trade union confederations and European sectoral trade union federations.

The recommendations of this policy document are linked to the future of the European Alliance for Apprenticeships, as they underline the need for improvement of apprenticeships and dual system schemes in Member States by enhancing the role of the social partners in the negotiation and enforcement of national reforms. We believe a common understanding is needed in Europe about what proper apprenticeships should be, and about which kind of reforms are needed to ensure the right definition and implementation of apprenticeship schemes, as well as full protection for apprentices.

Our work supports the idea that apprenticeship schemes should cater for the real employment and skills needs of employers within the framework of sectoral and/or national priorities, as well as the personal development and career opportunities of apprentices.

The ETUC is continuing its activities in this direction via its policy events and a new project, *Setting up a European quality framework for apprenticeship* (2014-2016). This project aims at identifying common quality elements in Europe in the context of apprenticeships and enhancing the role of trade unions with a view to improving apprenticeships at national level.

We strongly believe that our activities will improve social dialogue on apprenticeships at national level and contribute to increasing the employment rate among young graduates in Europe.



© ETUC

Bernadette Ségol
General Secretary

European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)

Success stories

© Shannen Scott



Image improves with experience

For 69% of apprentices in the UK, their family and friends have been more positive about apprenticeships since they became an apprentice.⁽¹²⁾

APPRENTICESHIPS IN SCOTLAND

Empowerment under 'Apprenticeships in Scotland' has clearly benefited Shannen Scott. She now heads this flourishing social enterprise focused on supporting young people in Scotland and she encourages them to follow in her footsteps as an apprentice.

Shannen started working as a waitress in a fish and chips shop, while studying for a diploma in Business Studies at Dundee and Angus College. At 19, she began her apprenticeship in Business and Enterprise with Apprenticeships in Scotland, a social enterprise project started by one of Scotland's top careers advisors.

The project was created to provide a vehicle for youth leadership and youth enterprise in the VET sector. Today, as head of the organisation, Shannen is a confident, capable leader of a growing youth recruitment agency and an ambassador for more diverse opportunities for young people entering vocational training.

Apprenticeships in Scotland has built new networks which have helped around 5 000 young Scots to get their foot on the employment ladder each year. Shannen was a finalist for 'Young Scot of the Year' and UK Enterprise Learner of the Year 2014. There are now a further 20 young people in training across public, private and voluntary sector organisations in Fife, Scotland with the support of the local authority, and there are plans to extend the scheme across Scotland in 2015-18.

To find out more:

www.apprenticeshipsinscotland.com / www.apprenticeshipsinenterprise.com

.....
(12) UK National Industry Apprentice Survey 2013.

EUROPEANS@SIEMENS

Siemens is one of the largest private-sector providers of vocational training in Germany, training around 10 000 apprentices at any given point in time in almost 40 training centres across the country. Almost 30 % of the apprentices are trained for third parties, including many SMEs. In the EU (excluding Germany), Siemens trains roughly another 1 500 apprentices in Austria, Denmark, Hungary, the Netherlands, Ireland, Portugal, Spain and the UK. In Berlin, through Europeans@Siemens, the company offers a special vocational training programme for young people from other EU Member States. This three-year 'dual' vocational training course helps some 90 apprentices from 18 countries to become electronics or mechatronics technicians, leading to a certificate from the Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The apprentices are hired by the Siemens regional companies in their home countries. After graduation, they will be hired into regular employment by these same companies.

This programme offers a range of benefits to the learners, to Siemens, and to society:

- Young Europeans acquire marketable skills in a work-based programme that is not offered in many of their home countries. They learn German and improve their English, have an international experience, and have a guaranteed employment offer upon graduation with Siemens in their home countries;
- Siemens regional companies in the sending EU countries get access to a unique way of educating their future talent that is not available in many of the countries they operate in: the programme's graduates are operational as of day one, have international work experience, and are highly loyal;
- If German-style dual vocational education cannot be easily transferred to other countries, society still benefits from the employability that is created in this programme and re-imported to the home countries.



© Siemens AG, 2015/Adam Berry

Pictured (left to right): Marianne Thyssen, European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility; Andrea Nahles, Federal Minister of Labour and Social Affairs; Marcel Schlosser (Austria), trainee and Alexandre Seiller (France), trainee.

YOUNG STARS

Despite a high youth unemployment rate, more than 150 000 skilled worker positions will remain vacant on the Slovak labour market between 2015 and 2017. To help Austrian companies to meet their demand for skilled workforce in Slovakia, the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber, financially supported by the go-international initiative of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Science, Research and Economy, has established elements of dual VET in the Region of Nitra.

The **'Young Stars'** pilot project is scientifically supported by the research institute ibw Austria – Research & Development in VET and implemented in cooperation with four Austrian, two Slovakian and two German companies as well as Slovakian authorities, notably the Slovak Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport, and Slovakian employer associations.

After more than two years of close cooperation between all partners involved, the consortium has established suitable framework conditions for apprenticeship training. In September 2014, 33 apprentices started their training in two pilot school classes, for the job profiles 'metalworker' and 'mechatronic'.

Thanks to an arrangement in which 60 % of the apprenticeship training is practical in-company training, the company becomes a training place for the first time. Theoretical learning (40 %) takes place at the VET school in Zlaté Moravce.

The curricula for both job profiles were adapted according to businesses' needs and the requirements of the VET school. This ensures a practice-oriented training that provides labour-market relevant competences.

The successful implementation of contracts between companies/school and companies/students, plus the introduction of motivation scholarships financed by companies, is a first important step for a student towards an apprentice status. Graduates of the apprenticeship pilot programme receive a Slovakian school-leaving certificate and an indenture.

Based on the lessons learnt from the project, WKÖ actively supports the Slovak Ministry of Education in ongoing reforms on the systemic level, notably the revision of the vocational training act as well as in administration of the apprenticeship system.

A REVIVED TRADITION IN POLAND

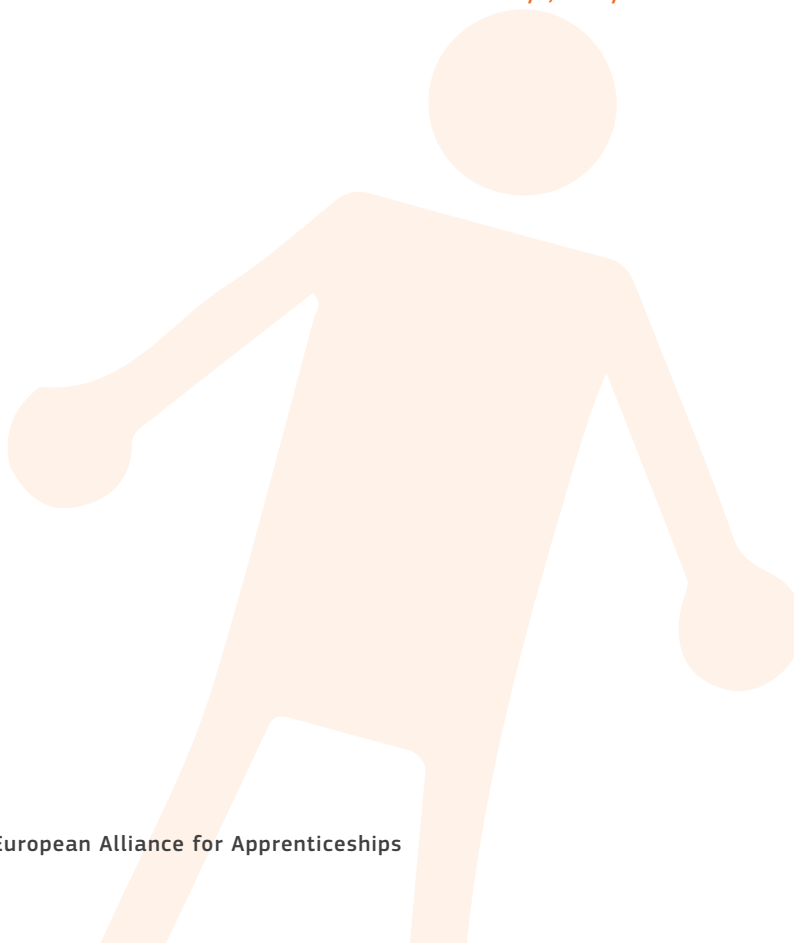
Nestlé's ice cream factory in Namysłów has been providing VET for students from the local Mechanics School since 2008. This is a reactivation of VET, which has a long tradition in Poland and was once common practice there.

How does it work? Formal training takes place at a school where students are taught theoretical knowledge. Students also get on-the-job training for eight hours a week (2*4 hours) in the first and second years and 12 hours a week (3*4 hours) in the third year.

Nestlé's aim is to prepare young people to hold technical positions, especially as electricians, ensuring retention of knowledge in the organisation and sustainability of recruitment needs. The company has also created a specific mentoring programme based on regular surveys of apprentices, so that the programme can be better adapted to students' needs.

“I'm very happy that together with Nestlé we managed to start a dialogue. (...) Not long ago students were trained in professions which proved useless on the current labour market. Now thanks to our cooperation, we can create educational plans that meet the real needs of the labour market.”

Bartosz Medyk, Namysłów Mechanics School director.



There's an App for that!

Across the East and West Midlands, a converted bus has been touring business parks to encourage businesses, particularly SMEs, to consider employing apprentices under the banner, **There's an App for that!** The initiative, under the umbrella of the UK's National Apprenticeship Week (9-15 March 2015), proved successful and has generated new apprenticeship placements for the company Pera and for other local providers and colleges. Accompanying the tour was a team of apprentices, who answered any questions that businesses had.



© Pera Business Park, 2015/ Jessica Molloy

Business-led 'Alliance for YOUTH'

The 'Alliance for YOUTH' brings together leading companies in Europe who recognise that youth unemployment is a major social/economic issue in Europe and are committed to helping to solve it. This business-driven movement seeks to promote a better transition from education and training to employment for youth across Europe. Goals include being a change agent in sharing knowledge and experiences, so as to solve local barriers to youth employment.

Launched by Nestlé, Alliance for YOUTH has a broad membership. All the companies involved have pledged to:

- Be an active member of the European Commission's EAfA – promoting apprenticeships and training and being active ambassadors for this approach across Europe.
- Develop a number of joint/individual initiatives to give young people meaningful work experience and internships.
- Mobilise employees to go out into the community and help young people get 'Ready for Work' by offering CV preparation/interview advice.

To date, almost 200 companies have joined this alliance and pledged to create more than 100 000 opportunities for young people.

Find out more about Nestlé needs YOUTH initiative at:

<http://www.nestle.com/jobs/graduates-entry-level/europe-youth-employment-initiative>

Examples of stakeholders' involvement

EU VET PROVIDERS JOIN FORCES

In 2010, when the European Commission was about to present the Bruges Communiqué, formulating the future of VET in Europe, four associations (EfVET, EUproVET, EVBB and EVTA) joined forces to influence the policy content. Two other associations for academic and professional Higher Education joined the discussions (EUCEN, EURASHE).

In 2014, all six associations agreed to work together under one umbrella. The organisations have kept their respective responsibilities and activities, but want to achieve joint objectives where possible in assuring quality in VET and parity of perception of VET in society. Also important for them is the progression from (H)VET to Higher Education. The acronym VET4EU2 refers to the four networks that are mainly working in secondary VET, plus the two networks focused mainly on Higher Education.

CHAMBERS' KEY ROLE IN APPRENTICESHIPS

Eurochambres represents over 20 million businesses in Europe, more than 98% of them SMEs. Every year, 900 000 apprenticeships are managed by chambers and even more apprentices are trained in their member companies.

In 2013, Eurochambres pledged to increase cooperation among its members in the field of apprenticeships and to facilitate cooperation projects. Since then, it has organised several capacity building events and study visits, including a conference in Brussels on 'Great apprenticeships in small businesses' (April 2014), a workshop in Vienna on the Austrian apprenticeship system and cooperation with other countries (November 2014), a training session on the French apprenticeship system under the European Forum Apprenticeship (February 2015), and a peer-learning activity for the Flemish Chambers, with chambers experts from Hungary, Germany, Austria and France.



National alliances for apprenticeships

Many different stakeholders contribute to developing and implementing quality apprenticeship systems. In several countries, key stakeholders have joined forces for a coordinated approach that will lead to stronger results and impact.

In Germany, ministries, social partners, chambers and the public employment services have formed the Alliance for Initial and Further Training 2015 – 2018. One goal is to increase the number of apprenticeships and to give everyone a chance to experience in-company training.

In France, the President, government, social partners and regions agreed on several ambitious measures to promote apprenticeships at the Third Great Social Conference in July 2014, contributing to the goal of increasing the number of apprentices from 420 000 to 500 000 apprentices by 2017.

In Norway, the government, social partners and regional authorities have signed a Social Contract, which includes a target to increase the number of apprenticeships by 20%.

BASQUE COUNTRY: APPRENTICESHIPS AND INTERNATIONALISATION

For the Basque Country, Spain, apprenticeships are a key element of an ambitious strategy to increase the competitiveness and internationalisation of the region's industry. By 2020, 76 % of jobs in Basque industry will require a VET qualification.

The Fourth Basque Vocational Training Plan aims to strengthen the relations between vocational training centres and companies, in order to develop more high-quality apprenticeships and to improve supply. An international campus for VET was established to support Basque companies abroad, including through training and apprenticeships. Today, 335 Basque enterprises take part in dual apprenticeship programmes.

PUBLIC PROCUREMENT CAN PROMOTE APPRENTICESHIPS

To promote the creation of apprenticeships, governments can link the award of public contracts to the condition that companies provide training. According to the European Expert Network on Economics of Education (EENEE Policy Brief 1/2015), in the sectors involved, between one tenth and one third of companies not active in training may be attracted to become so by making this a condition for the award of contracts. The effect is greatest for small companies with less than 50 employees. The analysis here builds on a Swiss study, showing that apprenticeships created in this way are of the same quality as other apprenticeships. A recent EU Directive on the award of concession contracts specifically mentions the possibility to include award criteria that refer to training measures for young persons. Preferential treatment in the award of public contracts to firms that provide training to unemployed, disabled or young people can be found in countries like Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Norway, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

PROMOTING WORK-BASED LEARNING IN NEIGHBOURHOOD COUNTRIES

For the European Training Foundation (ETF), apprenticeships as part of a wider work-based learning approach are essential for enhancing the relevance of VET provision and its impact on the employment and employability of VET learners.

ETF has developed a tool to foster apprenticeship: the Handbook on Work-based learning (WBL) for policymakers and social partners in partner countries (2014). It is used for policy advice, capacity building and implementation. The Foundation has also published Benefits and obstacles of WBL (2013) and WBL in the Mediterranean Region (2009). Through a multi-annual project (2015-2017), it will work with countries of the Eastern Partnership, Russia and Kazakhstan to develop mechanisms to foster apprenticeship.

Find out more: www.etf.europa.eu

Work in progress and next steps

Since its launch in 2013, the European Alliance for Apprenticeships has become an important platform for stakeholders reforming VET systems and strengthening apprenticeship schemes in Europe. Reform of work-based learning and apprenticeship remains a key priority for modernising VET systems in Europe, and the Alliance will continue to mobilise stakeholders on this issue.

There is an untapped potential to further involve companies, notably small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Apprenticeships can only take place if companies are willing to invest in training and skills, and offer apprenticeship places. The Commission will therefore strengthen the dialogue and involvement with the private sector in the Alliance.

The Commission will cooperate with the OECD and Cedefop in 2015-16 on costs and benefits for different stakeholders, and provide a framework to help employers quantify costs and benefits of apprenticeships. Funding to apprenticeship projects will continue through available schemes. If possible, support for involving SMEs in apprenticeships will be strengthened.

Several different initiatives now aim to ensure the quality of apprenticeships, involving Member States, social partners, employers and youth organisations. Through the European Alliance for Apprenticeships, efforts will be made to seek synergies and coherence between these projects.

The Commission will work with Eurostat and Cedefop, aiming to improve statistical data, monitoring and analysis of developments for work-based learning and apprenticeships in Europe.

The European Alliance for Apprenticeships will continue to encourage more stakeholders to join. It will also work to strengthen the networking effect within the Alliance through online platforms, meetings and events in order to facilitate cooperation, partnerships, sharing of best practices and peer learning. An important next step will be to bring all the different stakeholders together: governments and public sector, social partners, private sector, intermediaries, VET providers and youth organisations.

Overview of activities and tools

Cost-benefits	Quality	Awareness-raising	Mobility
<p>BUSINESSEUROPE, CEEP, UEAPME, ERT, EUROCOMMERCE, CEEMET, DIGITALEUROPE, EUproVET and EFVET Cost-effectiveness in specific countries, sectors and occupations (2015-16)</p> <p>OECD Study on work-based learning in VET, incl. module on cost-benefits (2015-16)</p> <p>Cedefop Costs and benefits, practical tool for companies (2016)</p> <p>Bertelsmann Foundation Simulation of the enterprise costs and benefits in Spain (2014-15)</p> <p>Hungarian Labour Office Tool for the cost-benefit-analysis of work-based apprenticeships (2015-16)</p>	<p>ETUC European Quality Framework for Apprenticeships (2015-16)</p> <p>EQAVET Quality assuring work-based learning</p> <p>European Youth Forum & CSR Europe Quality Internships & Apprenticeships Assessment (QIA-A) tool</p>	<p>Riga Ministerial meeting With conference on EAfA, 22 June 2015</p> <p>Cedefop Matching Conference For SMEs and VET providers, Nov. 2015</p> <p>EU Business Forum on Vocational Training Bi-annual event in autumn 2016</p> <p>European Youth Forum and AIM - the European Brands Association Online portal on youth employability, incl. apprenticeships</p> <p>WorldSkills São Paulo, 2015</p> <p>EuroSkills Gothenburg, 2016</p>	<p>EURES Inclusion of 'worker'-based apprenticeships</p> <p>Drop'pin@EURES Portal for apprenticeships and other youth opportunities</p> <p>Alliance for YOUTH Facebook portal for apprenticeships and other youth opportunities</p> <p>EuroApprenticeship Network for in-company learning mobility</p>
Evidence	Country reviews	Reforms	Funding
<p>Eurostat Working to improve statistics on work-based learning and apprenticeships</p> <p>EAfA Survey Report Report on first online survey 2015</p> <p>DG EMPL Study to monitor progress of EAfA (2015-16)</p> <p>Inter-Agency Group on work-based learning Commission, ETF, ILO, OECD, UNESCO, World Bank</p>	<p>European Semester Yearly country-specific recommendations (CSRs) from the European Commission</p> <p>Education and Training Monitor Yearly publication by the European Commission with country factsheets</p> <p>Cedefop Malta, Lithuania (2014-15) Greece, Slovenia and Italy (2016-17)</p> <p>ILO Latvia, Portugal and Spain (2015-16)</p>	<p>ET 2020 Review Review of ET 2020, including VET, and setting new deliverables towards 2020</p> <p>Guidance framework Developed by ET 2020 Working Group on VET by end-2015</p> <p>NetWBL A network of 29 European national agencies aiming to strengthen work-based learning and apprenticeships</p> <p>Cedefop First policy-learning forum on apprenticeship in the EU in the second half of 2016</p>	<p>Erasmus+ 10 ongoing projects for national authorities on apprenticeships (2015)</p> <p>Call for the involvement of SMEs in apprenticeships (2015, tbc)</p> <p>Your first EURES Job</p> <p>European Social Fund</p> <p>Youth Employment Initiative</p> <p>Employment and Social Innovation</p> <p>European Investment Bank</p>

Funding opportunities

In addition to support for apprenticeship schemes from Member States' national budgets, the EU offers significant funding through several major funds, institutes or schemes.

Erasmus+ provides funding for learning experiences abroad for VET learners, including apprentices, and for teachers and trainers. It also funds strategic partnerships involving education and training providers, social partners and companies, plus policy reform initiatives to strengthen apprenticeship schemes.

<http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/>

The **European Social Fund** can be used in support of apprenticeship reform at national level and initiatives to boost apprenticeship supply and quality.

Additionally, funding under the Youth Employment Initiative will be used to support apprenticeships as direct support targeting young people not in employment, education or training. This funding stream supports regions experiencing youth (ages 15–24) unemployment rates of 25 % or over in the period 2014–2020.

Moreover, under the EURES axis of the EU programme for Employment and Social Innovation, there is funding available for the development of targeted mobility schemes such as 'Your first EURES Job'.

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/yourfirsteuresjob>

The **European Investment Bank** can provide support in the form of loans to the private and public sectors under the programme 'Skills and Jobs – Investing for Youth'.

<http://www.eib.org>

The **Youth Guarantee** is a new approach to tackling youth unemployment. Under this, the Member States have committed to ensuring that, within four months of leaving school or becoming unemployed, young people under 25 can either find a good-quality job suited to their education, skills and experience, or acquire the education, skills and experience required to find a job in the future through an apprenticeship, traineeship or continued education.

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/youthguarantee>

Examples of EU-funded projects

EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND

Project Fifteen – a recipe for success – Established by internationally renowned UK chef Jamie Oliver, the Fifteen apprenticeship combines formal learning at Cornwall College and in Fifteen's kitchen. Eighty percent of the more than 120 apprentices since May 2006 are still working as chefs today. The project won a RegioStars award in 2014.

<https://www.fifteencornwall.co.uk/charity/training-programme/>

Rethinking apprenticeships for made-to-measure training – The Centre for Apprentice Training (CFA) in Marzy, France, designed a new training programme offering a style of teaching that provides the apprentices with tailored content which is accessible remotely. This content provides them with more relevant training and greater flexibility. The Centre has over 600 apprentices per year.

<http://www.cfapmarzy.com>

Helping young people make the right choices – The goal of the project was to match participants, youngsters with a migrant background, to an apprenticeship that was right for them. While the City of Ulm, in Germany, led the project, much support was offered by a range of partners including the youth migration service, the job centre, the careers advisory service, chambers of commerce and local companies.

<http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=1221>

MOBILITY PORTALS

After a specific DG EAC call in 2009 for the setting up of a 'network of mobility networks' and a web platform, the Euroapprenticeship project coordinated by the French Permanent Assembly of Chambers of Trades and Crafts (APCMA) aimed to build and develop a network of competent bodies and intermediary organisations. The focus was to provide expertise, information, help and support to any learning mobility project promoted by VET providers, for the benefit of SMEs, skilled crafts companies and apprentices. As a follow-up, two current KA 2 Erasmus projects aim to strengthen and develop quality assurance for in-company learning mobility (EQAMOB) and to develop an e-twinning webspace for implementing 'virtual/blended learning mobility' (eMova).

<http://www.euroapprenticeship.eu>

SUPPORT FOR NATIONAL AUTHORITIES

Dual education models: Developing a digital box

Five countries are working together on dual education models to support the EAfA. Austria, Denmark, Germany, Luxembourg and Switzerland have formed a partnership to promote the development of work-based VET systems in Europe. The project aims to create a rich resource base conducive to policy learning, policy experimentation and practice development by collecting and combining apprenticeship systems' building blocks from the five countries. This will be done by developing an integrative digital toolbox, a resource base of the key features of their apprentice-based system. This project is part of the 10 projects financed under the Erasmus+ programme, Support for Policy Reform – Key Action 3.

In 2014, 10 projects were selected under the Erasmus+ programme to support the introduction or modernisation of apprenticeships within initial VET systems. The projects aim to develop high-quality apprenticeships and excellence in work-based learning in VET through partnerships between National Authorities responsible for education, employment and economic affairs, social partners, relevant intermediary bodies (e.g. chambers of commerce, industry and crafts, professional and sectoral organisations), VET providers and other relevant stakeholders.

http://ec.europa.eu/education/library/others/reform-compendium-2014_en.pdf

Work-based learning in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia

The three EU Baltic States have launched a project which will act as a facilitator for VET national reform and as a tool for enhanced cooperation, exchange of information and experience, as well as for peer learning on implementing reforms. A particular focus will be on developing and promoting work-based learning and apprenticeships. The project aims also at launching the Baltic Alliance of Apprenticeships in order to set concrete actions for Baltic cooperation in VET.

THEMATIC NETWORK WORK-BASED LEARNING AND APPRENTICESHIPS (NETWBL)

NetWBL is a network of 29 European national agencies, coordinated by the German National Agency at BIBB. It is funded by the European Commission, Directorate-General Education and Culture (DG EAC). It aims to strengthen work-based learning (WBL) elements in existing VET systems and Higher Education and to support apprenticeship in particular. The network addresses the key actors involved in WBL in each European country, taking into account the different VET and Higher Education systems and legislative regulations. It also supports the EAfA.

<http://www.na-bibb.de/index.php?id=2071>

Studies and reports

European Commission

[Apprenticeship and Traineeship Schemes in EU 27: Key Success Factors](#),

Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, 2013

[Technical annexes with country overviews](#)

[Practices and policy pointers on work-based learning in Europe](#), Directorate-General for Education and Culture, 2013

[Apprenticeship supply in the European Union](#), Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, 2012

[The effectiveness and costs-benefits of apprenticeships: Results of the quantitative analysis](#), Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, 2013

Cedefop

[Briefing Note – Developing apprenticeships](#), 2014

[Attractiveness of initial vocational education and training: identifying what matters](#), Research paper no39, 2014

ETF

European Training Foundation (ETF), [Work-based learning: Benefits and obstacles](#), 2013

[Work-based learning, A handbook for policy makers and social partners in ETF partner countries](#), 2014

Eurofound

[Mapping youth transitions in Europe, Report](#), 2014

European Parliament

[Dual Education: A Bridge over Troubled Waters?](#), June 2014

Research Institutes

[Success factors for the Dual VET System, Possibilities for Know-how-transfer](#), Institut für Bildungsfragen der Wirtschaft (ibw), 2014

Bertelsmann Stiftung

[Germany's dual vocational training system: a model for other countries?](#), 2013

European Expert Network on Economics of Education (EENEE)

Analytical Report no16, Return on investment of apprenticeship systems for enterprises: Evidence from cost-benefit analyses, October 2013

Policy Brief 1/2015, Public Procurement Can Promote Apprenticeships, January 2015

Surveys

Survey of VET-business cooperation on skills, entrepreneurship and apprenticeships, ICF GHK, September 2014

Links

European Commission DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion homepage

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/>

European Alliance for Apprenticeships

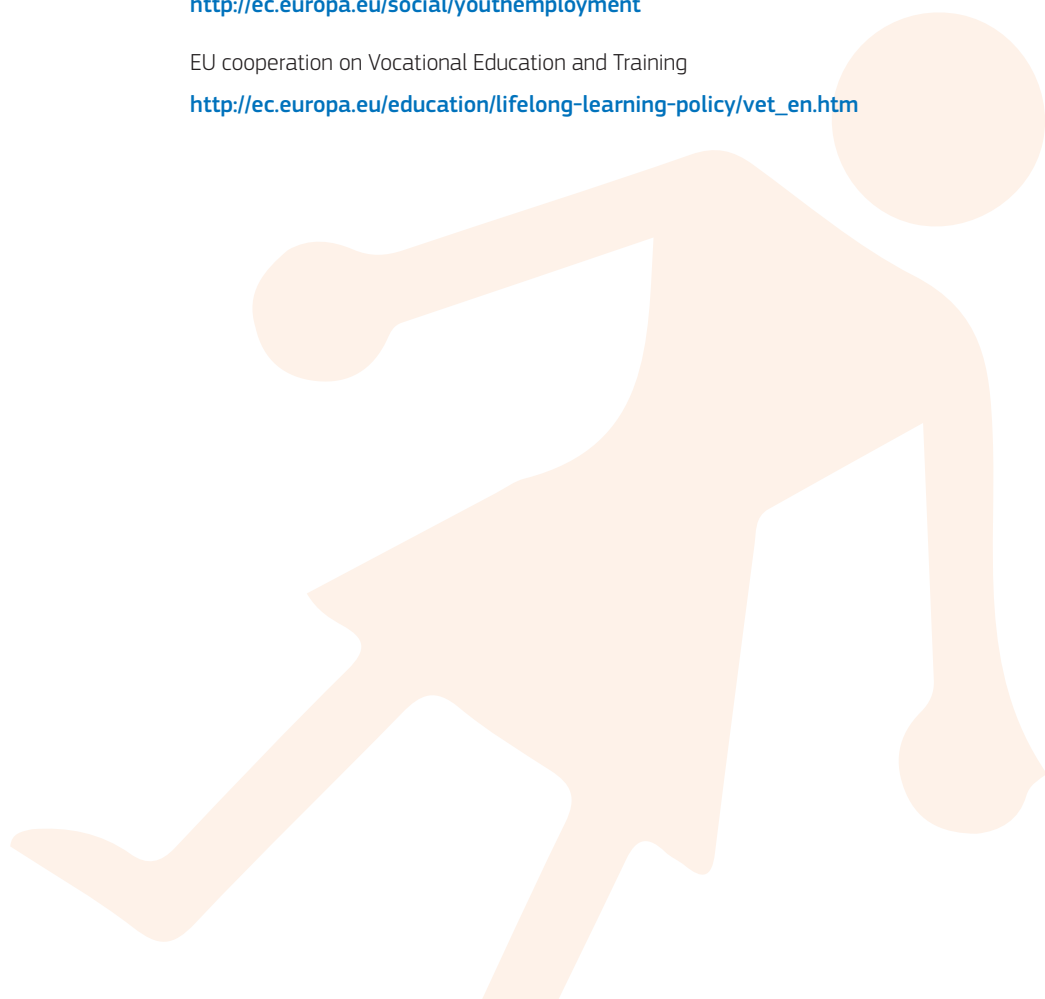
<http://ec.europa.eu/apprenticeships-alliance>

Youth Employment

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/youthemployment>

EU cooperation on Vocational Education and Training

http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/vet_en.htm



Glossary

C-VET	Continuing vocational education and training
Cedefop	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
EAfA (or 'Alliance')	European Alliance for Apprenticeships
ET 2020	Education and Training 2020 strategy
EU 2020	Europe 2020 growth strategy
I-VET	Initial vocational education and training
SMEs	Small and medium-sized enterprises
VET	Vocational education and training
WBL	Work-based learning



Join the Alliance!

By joining the Alliance (EAfA), you can become part of a network of experts from all across Europe working on apprenticeships. This is a real benefit if you are looking to get started or strengthen your engagement in this area.

The Alliance is a platform for sharing experiences and learning from best practices. You can also find partners, develop new ideas and practices, and access the latest news and tools on apprenticeships.

Your commitment

When you join the Alliance, you commit to contributing to better quality, more supply and/or a better image of apprenticeships.

You should provide information on the activities and results of your pledge at least once a year.

You should share learning and practices within the Alliance network and with the public.

You should promote the value of apprenticeships to your stakeholders and a wider public.

BENEFITS OF THE ALLIANCE				
LEARNING	NETWORKING	INFORMATION	TOOLS	VISIBILITY
Share experiences and best practices	European network of apprenticeship experts	News, reports, workshops, events and funding	Guidelines, practical tools and resources	Visibility and publicity around your initiatives

How to join

All you need to do is make a short pledge describing your planned actions on apprenticeships.

These could include up-scaling an existing programme or initiative, launching a new partnership or pilot scheme, starting apprenticeships in a new country, facilitating mobility, working on quality, building awareness and attractiveness, or something else.

Get in touch

To find out more or get in touch with the Alliance, visit the website, which includes an easy-to-complete template for pledges, or send an email.

Email: empl-eafa@ec.europa.eu

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Work-based learning, in particular apprenticeships can enhance employability, notably of young people, and help to address the skills shortages to better match companies' needs. Of great benefit to learners and companies alike, these schemes also contribute to Europe's objective of ensuring sustainable growth and employment. This brochure focuses on the European Alliance for Apprenticeships (EAfA) launched in 2013 and addresses the challenges and possible answers of how to strengthen the quality, supply and image of apprenticeships. This is also in line with the new set of medium-term deliverables agreed at European level in the field of VET for the period 2015-2020. The brochure features examples of successful and inspiring apprenticeship and other work-based learning policy initiatives and projects across Europe.

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