

A EUROPEAN QUALITY FRAMEWORK FOR APPRENTICESHIPS

A EUROPEAN TRADE UNION PROPOSAL



Project activities

Project Period: 2014-16

Final conference: April, 2016

Final Joint conference with employers: May, 2016

Activities:

1. 20 country cases based on interviews at the national level with trade unions, ministries, employers, companies
2. 4 sectoral seminar of employers and trade unions in:
 - Construction sector
 - Energy/electricity sector
 - Hairdressing sector
 - Education sector
3. Project report

Quality Framework – how to use it?

	ETUC Quality Standards	ETUC Quality Criteria (Yes or No?)	Council of the European Union European Alliance for Apprenticeships Guiding Principles
5. Equitable cost-sharing between employ- ers and public authorities	Apprenticeship schemes should be properly funded, with equitable cost-sharing between employers and public authorities at regional and/or national and European levels.	Are apprenticeship schemes supported financially by employers Are apprenticeship schemes supported financially by public authorities? Are apprentices exempt from paying tuition fees?	Involving both employers and public authorities sufficiently in the funding of apprenticeship schemes, whilst ensuring adequate remuneration and social protection of apprentices, and providing appropriate incentives for all actors to participate, especially small and medium sized enterprises, and for an adequate supply of apprenticeship places to be made available. (3f)

Quality Framework – for whom?

- It is a check-up list to help defining actions to improve apprenticeship at European / national / local / institutional levels
- Each criteria links to a good national example
- It can be further developed to national circumstances
- Who can use it?
 - Partners of social dialogue on apprenticeship
 - Policy makers, ministries
 - Trade unions
 - Employers
 - VET providers
 - Companies
 - Etc.

20 Criteria in Quality Framework

1. Definition
2. Regulatory Framework
3. Social partnership and governance
4. Equal opportunities for all
5. Equitable cost-sharing between employers and public authorities
6. Responsiveness to labour market needs
7. Formal contracts
8. Personal development and career opportunities of apprentices
9. Pay and social protection
10. Safe working environment

20 Criteria in Quality Framework

11. Guidance and counselling
12. Quality assurance procedures
13. Solid learning base
14. Balance between work-based and school-based training
15. Teachers, trainers and mentors
16. Competence based/duration
17. Certification and recognition
18. Progression
19. Recognition of non-formal and informal learning
20. Mobility at the European level



**Thank you for your
attention**

The cost-effectiveness of apprenticeships schemes:

Making the business case for apprenticeships



Aim

To explore the business case for apprenticeships by focusing on the cost-effectiveness of apprenticeship schemes in the **ICT, commerce** and **engineering** sectors in 15 target countries

Target countries

Bulgaria; Czech Republic; Estonia; Finland; France; Greece; Hungary; Ireland; Italy; Latvia; Poland; Portugal; Slovakia; Spain; UK

Resource countries

Austria, Denmark, Germany, The Netherlands, Switzerland

Project partners



Key messages

- Needs to be readiness at national level to better adapt systems to enterprises' needs
- Employers and, where appropriate, social partner involvement in the governance of apprenticeship systems.
- The return on the enterprise's investment in apprenticeships will be reached earlier when schemes are demand-driven. For SMEs additional factors weigh in, requiring additional support
- Employment-led apprenticeship systems can involve higher costs for enterprises, for instance when apprentices have the status of an employee.
- The level of the wage or compensation needs to be set at a rate that makes it possible for the enterprise to see a return on its investment.

Recommendations

- Member States in cooperation with employers, VET providers and, where appropriate, social partners need to **design and implement reforms in vocational education and training systems** to make them more responsive to current and future labour market needs.
- As part of a renewed EU strategy on flexicurity, the European Commission should set up an **EU system of benchmarking**, which could have particular added value to promote education and training provision (including apprenticeships) that better meets labour market needs
- Employers, VET providers, universities and Member States should explore the possibilities for setting up **national pilot actions** to develop a public-private partnership to foster the promotion and acquisition of digital skills.

Thank you for your attention



Towards a Shared Vision of Apprenticeships

Joint statement of the European social partners

30 May 2016

As part of the EU social dialogue programme of integrated projects 2014-2016 the European social partners have undertaken separate projects on the cost-effectiveness of apprenticeship schemes (employers) and a European quality framework for apprenticeships (trade unions). At the conclusion of these projects the European social partners highlight the following shared views on apprenticeships in the EU.

Member States, with the involvement of social partners, need to develop and adapt VET systems in view of enhancing their effectiveness and quality, improving the employability of workers by notably providing them with key competences and transversal skills.

Apprenticeships are first and foremost a means of training, primarily of the young, that involve a strong work-based component. Apprenticeships can help young people to enter and remain in the labour market, which is especially important in view of high youth unemployment rates in the majority of Member States.

Quality apprenticeships not only enhance a person's employability and employment prospects through the acquisition of skills and competencies that are needed on the labour market, they also support personal development and lead to a recognised qualification.

To underpin the provision of a quality apprenticeship a common understanding of the content of learning outcomes should be developed. This requires the involvement of the social partners, training providers and national authorities. This would help to enhance transparency on learning outcomes.

In order to support both the needs of the labour market as well as apprentices, apprenticeship systems need to be governed in a way that ensures enterprises' skills needs are sufficiently taken into account. This calls for an appropriate involvement of social partners, in line with national industrial relations systems and education and training practices, and partnerships with VET providers and public authorities.

Apprenticeship systems require a clear and appropriate regulatory framework at the

A EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK FOR APPRENTICESHIP

A EUROPEAN TRADE UNION



Towards a Shared Vision of Apprenticeships – Joint statement of the European social partners

European social partners highlight the following shared views on apprenticeships in the EU:

- Quality apprenticeships not only enhance a person's **employability** and employment prospects through the acquisition of skills and competencies that are needed on the labour market, they also support **personal development** and lead to a **recognised qualification**.

Towards a Shared Vision of Apprenticeships – Joint statement of the European social partners

- The **status of apprentices** differs from country to country. This means that they **can be an employee** with a work contract; a **student** with a contract with the training provider or have a dual status as an employee and a student. The nature of the relationship is determined in the **context of national industrial relations systems** and education and training practices.
- For each apprenticeship, the **contract** should clearly spell out the **rights and obligations** of the employer and apprentice from a **working conditions and training perspective**, including, where appropriate, the way in which apprenticeships are covered by social protection.

Towards a Shared Vision of Apprenticeships - Joint statement of the European social partners

- Apprentices should receive **pay or compensation**, according to the level that is applicable in a given **national context**, in line with **national or sectoral minimum requirements or collective agreements**. It is also necessary to ensure an appropriate element of **commitment of the apprentices**, reflecting the benefits apprenticeships bring them in terms of future qualifications and employment opportunities.
- It is important that the wage or compensation that apprentices receive is set at a rate that makes it **cost-effective for an enterprise**

Towards a Shared Vision of Apprenticeships - Joint statement of the European social partners

- Apprenticeship systems need to be **governed** with the appropriate **involvement of social partners**, in line with national industrial relations systems and education and training practices, and partnerships with **VET providers and public authorities**.
- It is important that the **European Commission** further encourages and facilitates mutual learning and the exchange of practices and ideas between relevant actors to **support Member States and national social partners** in adapting the governance of apprenticeship systems.

Next steps

- European social partners will “explore the possibility of further joint activities, including with a view to achieving **higher levels of mobility of apprentices across Europe**”.
- **A wider debate, with the European institutions and the Member States.** This debate should take place, among others, in the framework of the Advisory Committee on Vocational Training (ACVT):
 - To discuss the policy priorities for supporting the provision, effectiveness and quality of apprenticeships.
 - To pave the way for a **tripartite opinion of employers, trade unions and Member States.** Such an opinion would provide a **clear basis to foster quality and effective apprenticeships** in Europe. And feed into determining the next steps of the European Alliance for Apprenticeships, and would contribute to the associated priorities of the Riga Conclusions.