



Approaches to apprenticeship in Europe and implications for training standards

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Cedefop work on apprenticeship

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Country specific support to reforming apprenticeship systems or schemes (TCRs or fTCRs)

2

Thematic comparative analyses (selected countries)

3

Building a coherent and comprehensive EU wide knowledge and evidence basis on national apprenticeship systems or schemes (CNO, database on apprenticeships, **Community of Apprenticeship experts**)

A selection of cross-country challenges (TCR findings)

- Place of apprenticeship in the education and training systems
 - Rationale for introduction or vision/purpose unclear
- Training content and learning outcomes
 - No apprenticeship-specific curricula or unique or clear guidelines on how to organize the curricula for the two learning venues
 - No curriculum for the in-company training part or the relevant specifications are not understood by the employers (language) or not in line with the needs of the occupation – companies (content)



CNO – approaches to apprenticeship in Europe

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Overview of function groups

General considerations

School-based VET
includes on-the-
job training in
companies



- Contract
- Remuneration
- % of on-the-job training
-



Apprenticeships
(systems / programmes
/ schemes)

A cross-national overview of apprenticeships through a purposeful approach

- **Function group A: an education and training system**

Full competency and capability in an apprenticeable occupation or trade and constitutes itself in a separate system, distinct from school-based VET (with or without work placements) in content, form, qualification, etc.

- **Function group B: a type of VET delivery within the formal VET system**

A diverse way to deliver VET to achieve formal VET qualifications by bringing people into the labour market (main distinction from school-based VET with work placements is the form)

- **Function group C: hybrid system**

Overview of function groups A and B

Purpose, function, identity, value...

Group A

- **Aim:** to qualify (young) people for specific middle-level occupations as qualified workers (prevalent education and training function)
- **Employers' attitude:** offer both training and work (sector needs)
- **Identity:** strong (specific type of governance, standards, qualification)
- **Set-up:** programme
- **Value:** is signalled by the specific qualification

Positive choice (enculturation into a professional community)

Group B

- **Aim:** to provide a diverse way to deliver VET (prevalent employment function)
- **Employers' attitude:** offer 'work' or work experience to apprentices according to their needs
- **Identity:** weak (shares governance, standards, qualification with school-based VET)
- **Set up:** scheme
- **Value:** not signalled on the qualification

Second chance choice (ease young people's entry into jobs – avoid NEET)

Overview of function groups A and B

Approach to safety nets

Group A

- Safety nets are essential
- Fall back options:
 - School-based VET (NO)
 - Supra-company training (AT)
 - Placement centres connected to vocational schools (DK)

Group B

- Safety nets are not essential
- Apprenticeship and school-based VET – two equivalent modes of training delivery
- Apprenticeship – fall back option

Blurring boundaries?



To conclude....

Some implications for training standards

- The identity of apprenticeship is not given solely by contract between the learner and the employer and remuneration paid by the employer
 - What is the role of the training standards in shaping the identity of apprenticeship? (UK trailblazers' approach: shift towards apprenticeship standards – raise profile)
- The link between apprenticeship training and the qualification seems to become weaker
 - How to restore this link (transparency and quality) and ensure comparability for the purpose of a national apprenticeship qualification? Do standards play a role?
- Delivery of apprenticeship training is determined by the school-based track (the national curriculum) from which it grew (SE employers' concern; Group B)
 - How to ensure that standards are adequate for the practical circumstances of the workplace?
- In company training plans are often “negotiated” (with tension between maintaining high quality standards for in-company training and finding or keeping companies willing to train apprentices)
 - At what level should the separation of learning objectives/outcomes should be done?



Cedefop project page on WBL and apprenticeships

www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events-and-projects/projects/apprenticeships-work-based-learning

Cedefop (2018). *Apprenticeship schemes in European countries: a cross-nation overview*

www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/4166

Cedefop. European database on apprenticeship schemes

www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/data-visualisations/apprenticeship-schemes



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