



Work-based learning (WBL) – is there a common understanding in Europe?

Wilhelm VUKOVICH
European Commission
DG Education and Culture

Bonn, 4 December 2013

Narrow interpretations of WBL

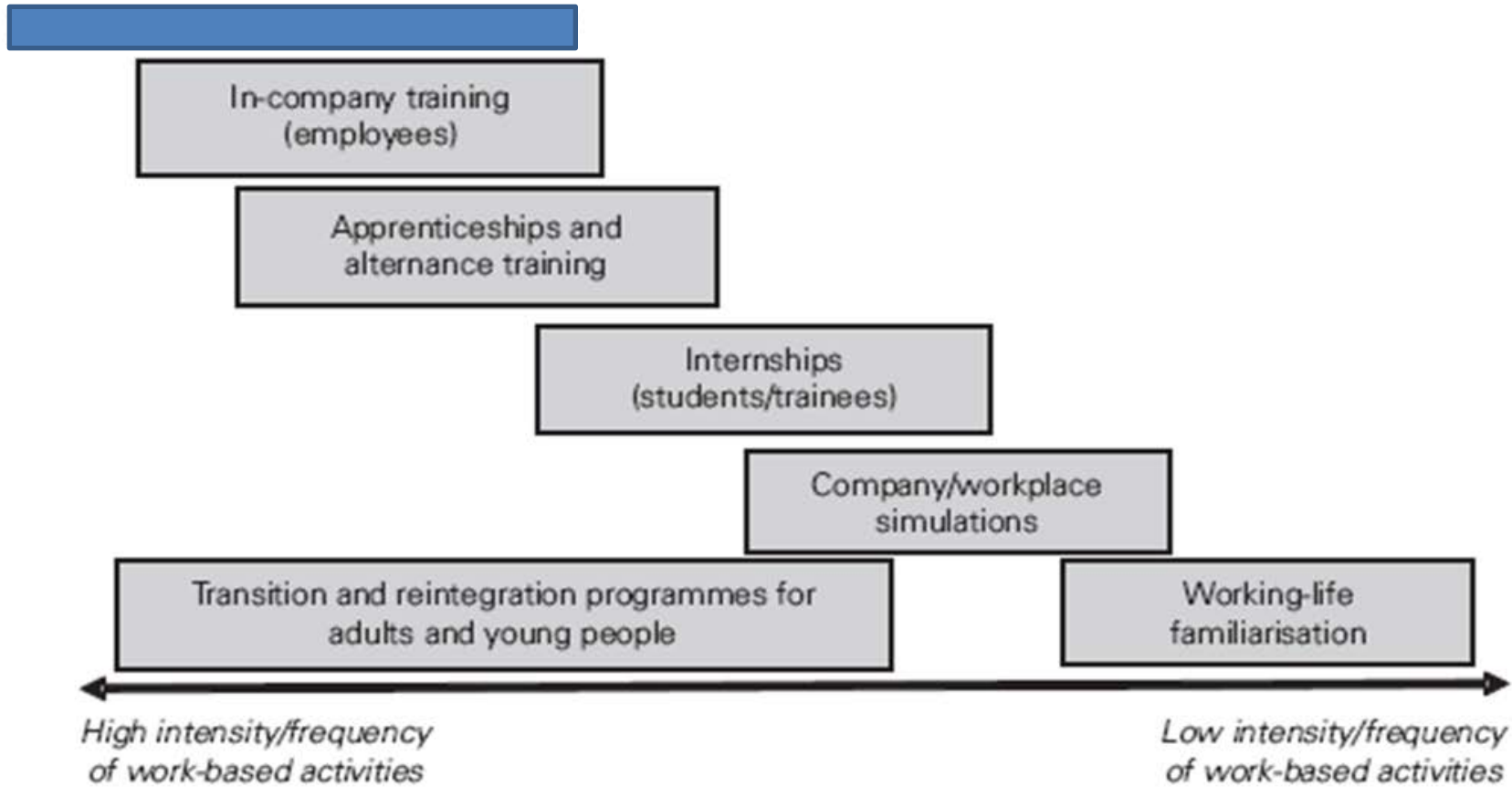
- Learning through undertaking real work, through the production of real goods and services, whether paid or unpaid (Sweet, 2011)
- Application of theory in an authentic, work-based context (Harvey, 2004)

Broad interpretations of WBL

- Acquisition of knowledge and skills through carrying out – and reflecting on - tasks in a vocational context, either at the workplace or in a VET institution (Cedefop, 2011)
- Programs for secondary and post-secondary students to achieve employment-related competences in the workplace (Naidu, 2011)

Limits of interpretations' approaches

- **Narrow:** although more analytically sharper (and less inclusive) it is likely to make WBL less attractive.
- **Broad:** risk of distorting the fundamental concept of WBL and render meaningless the distinction between WBL and school-based learning.



Source: ICF GHK, 2011

Commission's WBL definition

Covering initial vocational education and training

- apprenticeships or similar 'alternance' schemes – dual system
- on-the-job training periods in companies within school-based VET
- learning in workshops, labs, and practice firms of VET schools or training centres or in business and industry facilities.



Commission's apprenticeship definition

- part of initial vocational education and training;
- formally combine or alternate company based training with school based education; and
- leads to nationally recognised initial VET qualifications.



European
Commission

European Alliance for Apprenticeships

Launched at World Skills in Leipzig, 2 July 2013



Photo: European Commission



European
Commission

European Alliance for Apprenticeships (EAfA)

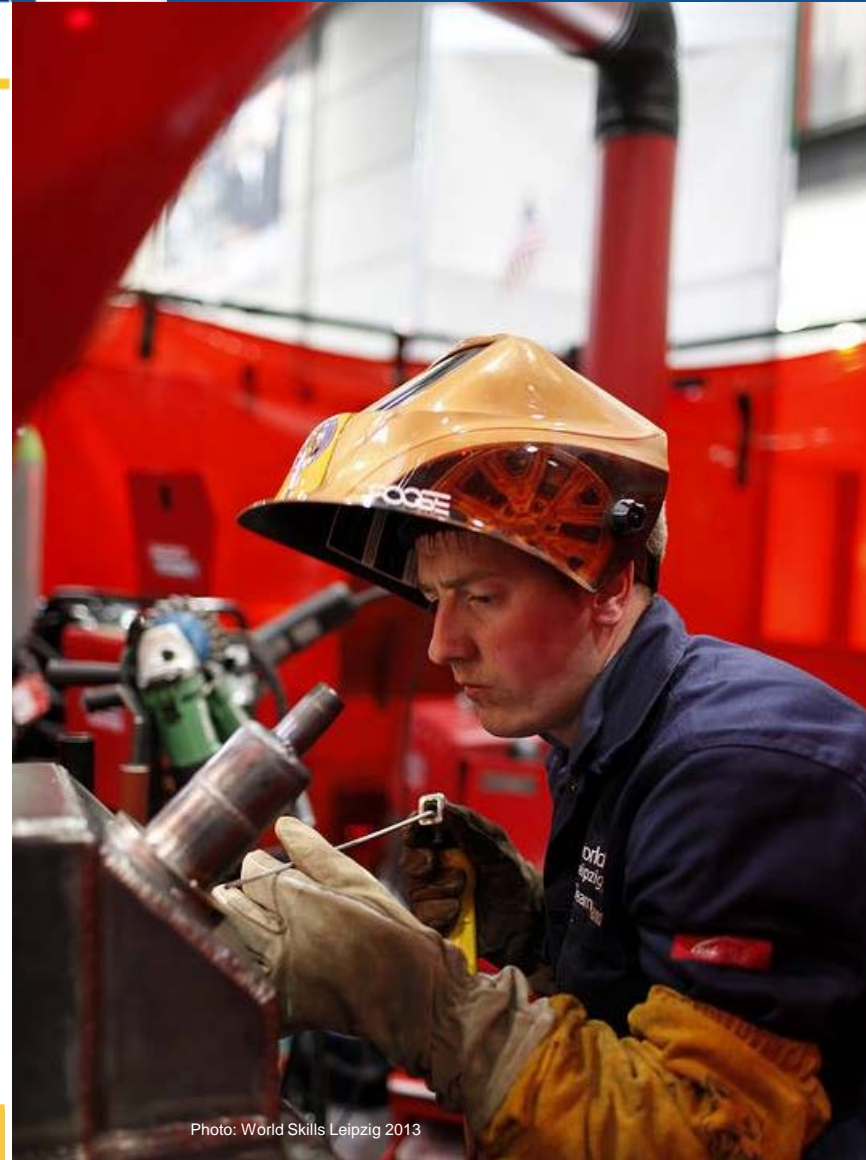


Education
and Culture

Why apprenticeships?

VET with strong work-based learning leads to

- Smooth transition from education to work
- Less youth unemployment
- Better skill matching
- Higher competitiveness





European
Commission

EAfA's Objectives

Strengthen the

- **Quality**
- **Supply**
- **Image**

of apprenticeships





European
Commission



Education
and Culture



What does the Commission do?(I)

- **Helpdesk/consultancy 2013/14**
- **Youth Guarantee Implementation Plans**
- **Apprenticeships within EURES**



What does the Commission do?(II)

- **EENEE cost-benefits literature review**
- **Working group on VET (OMC)**
- **Restricted call on apprenticeships**

What do others do?

- **MSs: Council Declaration on the Alliance**
- **Social partners: Joint Declaration**
- **Pledges: Businesses, chambers, VET providers,...**



Thematic Network on WBL (NetWBL)

- 29 National Agencies under NA-BIBB lead
- Strengthen WBL elements in VET and HE
- Increase policy impact of LLP innovative projects
- Output: On-line toolbox
- European Monitoring Conference, Brussels, 11-12 February 2014



Thank you for your attention

<http://ec.europa.eu/education/apprenticeship>