

Work Package 2



**PRECONDITIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT
OF APPRENTICESHIP IN THE VET SYSTEM
OF LITHUANIA**



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**KAUNAS
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
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**PRECONDITIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF APPRENTICESHIP
IN THE VET SYSTEM OF LITHUANIA**

REPORT

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1 INTRODUCTION

This research presents a part of research activities conducted in the EU Lifelong Learning Programme Transfer of Innovations Project No. DE/LLP-LdV/TOI/147320 „Development of apprenticeship in Lithuania referring to the experience from Germany, France, the United Kingdom and Netherlands. The project seeks to prepare the guidelines for the implementation and development of effective apprenticeship practices in Lithuania by applying the the experience of apprenticeship development in the above mentioned European countries.

The aim of this research is to evaluate the preconditions for development of apprenticeship in the VET system of Lithuania referring to the overview of historical traditions of VET development, as well as analysis of the current main problems and needs of the apprenticeship development.

In order to achieve this aim there are accomplished the following tasks:

- Analysis of the currently applied concepts of apprenticeship disclosing the differences of their understanding and interpretation by the different stakeholders.
- Analysis of historical development of the apprenticeship in Lithuania, beginning from the medieval guilds of crafts and ending with the reform of VET after the re-establishment of independent state in 1990. How the practical training was incorporated in the systems of work and vocational education and training in the past? What was the role of apprenticeship in the development of VET in Lithuania? How the changing socioeconomical conditions influenced the development of apprenticeship? What are the specificities of the pattern of historical development of apprenticeship in Lithuania and how they have to be considered in the development of apprenticeship today?
- Overview of demographic and social preconditions for the introduction and development of apprenticeship by referring to the statistical data on the numbers of enrollment in the different tracks and levels of education in the last decade.
- Overview of economic preconditions by focussing on the available statistical data showing economical potential of enterprises to participate and invest in apprenticeship, analysing statistical data on employment and trying to estimate, how the current competition and human resource development approaches of enterprises influence their attitudes to apprenticeship.
- Critical review of the existing legal basis regulating the apprenticeship issues.
- Analysis of the existing institutional framework of the VET looking into its sufficiency for the development of the apprenticeship in Lithuania. What are the missing institutional functions needed for the development of the apprenticeship, which are not covered by the current VET institutions?
- Assessment of the existing practices of the organisation and provision of practical training and internships for VET students in the enterprises.



- Critical analysis of the existing practices of cooperation and social partnership in the field of apprenticeship. Are these sufficient for the successful functioning of the apprenticeship ? What new cooperation networks and partnerships need to be established and developed for the development of apprenticeship?
- Analysis of existing funding mechanisms of VET and practical training by assessing their sufficiency to the introduction and development of apprenticeship.

There were applied the following research methods: literature review concerning apprenticeship effective practices and interviews with the different stakeholders - VET institutions, employers, trade unions and policy makers. There were executed interviews with the following stakeholders: 4 interviews with the VET teachers and principles of VET institutions, 2 interviews with employers which currently cooperate in the field of apprenticeship, 2 interviews with the representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science and the Centre for the Development of VET and Qualifications.

2 Understanding and application of the concepts of apprenticeship in Lithuania

The phenomenon and concept of apprenticeship in Lithuania is in the process of emerging and settlement. Looking into the usage of the concept of apprenticeship in the discourse of vocational education and training in Lithuania there can be noticed rather big variety of understanding and application of this concept. Here there will be presented and examined some of the noticed differences of understanding and usage of this concept amongst the different stakeholders of vocational education and training.

Experts and researchers of vocational education and training define apprenticeship *as a form of long term vocational education, when the apprentice concludes employment and training contract with an enterprise, obliging enterprise to provide conditions to apprentice to acquire competences and qualification during the paid work at the enterprise, which can be combined with certain basic theoretical education in the educational institution* (Explanatory dictionary of qualification system terms, 2008). This quite extensive and comprehensive definition indicates specificities of duration of training, features of legal regulation and organization of training and work. Rather similar, although less informative definition of apprenticeship can be found in the Law on the Amendment of the Law on Vocational Education (2007): *Apprenticeship as a form of organization of vocational education and training is the training executed in the workplace in the enterprise, office, organization, farm or at independent master. Theoretical training can take place at the VET institution or at other school.* This definition is clearly focussed on the location of the organization of apprenticeship.

Interviewed representatives of employers define apprenticeship as the training practice, when apprentice or trainee works together with master or supervisor in executing work tasks:

Apprentice works under the guidance of the master or supervisor of certain profession in executing tasks of production. Apprenticeship is aimed to development of practical skills.



It is practice when master (supervisor, shift manager) works together with trainee.

One interviewed employer indicates, that apprenticeship can also be executed in the training institutions, if the process of training is guided by the experienced professionals:

Apprenticeship is the acquisition of vocational qualification (in the training institution) under the guidance of the expert – master in certain vocation

Another employer stresses the function of assistance in apprenticeship:

Apprenticeship is an assistance to the master (specialist), executed by the apprentice or assistant.

The concepts of apprenticeship shared by employers can be described as utilitarian concepts. Such utilitarian understanding of apprenticeship was criticised by the interviewed representative of the Ministry of Education and Science:

Business (employers) still treat apprenticeship mainly as a source of cheap, but unskilled or low-skilled workforce. Following such understanding of apprenticeship the main duty and activity of apprentices is the work in the enterprise directed to creation of certain economical added value, where functions of training and learning become only the additive of this activity or it's indirect derivative.

This opinion is shared by the representative of the Centre for Development of Qualifications and Vocational Training of Lithuania:

After the re-establishment of independent state and introduction of market relationships there has appeared the interest of employers in practical training or apprenticeship, but this interest was caused mainly by the intentions to exploit cheap workforce and to solve momentary deficits of the workforce.

Differently from the representatives of employers, VET providers discern the following features of the concept of apprenticeship:

1. Workplace is treated as the location of training and learning, which are regarded as the principal activities in the process of work of apprentice:

Apprenticeship presents by itself the form of vocational training executed in the enterprise or at the craftsmen.

It is the assistance provided to the apprentices seeking to achieve vocational know-how in the workplace through the practical training. This assistance consists of instructions and guidance at workplaces referring to the competences and fields of activities.

It is the development of competences and practical skills of apprentices (trainees) in the process of work in the real workplace together with master.

2. According to certain interviewed representatives of VET, apprenticeship is best suited in training to work in crafts and manual operations, rather than in complex technological and organisational tasks:



Apprenticeship can be best applied for the training in crafts (manual work), rather than in training to execute complex technological operations demanding highly developed equipment or tools.

Apprenticeship should be targeted to the persons, which choose more practical occupations and crafts.

3. According to the representatives of VET institutions, success of training and learning in apprenticeship very much depends on the motivation of apprentices, as well as on the competences and qualities of masters (practical skills, experience, pedagogical competences):

Apprenticeship can be applied if the apprentice is very motivated to learn the craft and when the master is a real professional in his or her field. Besides, master should not only be highly professional in his field, but also (he, she) should be able to transfer know-how to apprentices with good-will attitude and patience (...) (Apprenticeship) permits to transfer individual experience of master and traditional know-how or crafts to the apprentices.

4. Apprenticeship can be effective in widening the access to vocational training and qualifications to the drop-outs from the system of education and to persons, lacking vocational skills and qualifications needed for successful employment.

The programmes of apprenticeship could involve persons, who previously had to interrupt their training in the vocational schools or studies at higher education institutions, as well as those persons, who could not find employment after graduation of VET schools, colleges or universities and due to unemployment period lost or deteriorated their acquired knowledge and skills. By working and learning together with masters in the workplaces these persons in comparatively short time could become skilled specialists and to get employment.

5. Apprenticeship can face certain risks related to the specific economical and organisational conditions, typical for this kind of training:

Very often the workplaces used in the apprenticeship do not correspond to the real and usual technological and organisational conditions of work process, the work of apprentice is not remunerated and duration of training is longer compared to the traditional school based training.

Apprentices sometimes can not learn to work with the modern equipment and can not apply modern technologies in their workplaces.

In conclusion there can be stated, that there are rather different concepts and understandings of apprenticeship shared by the different stakeholders. The uniting element of these concepts is the location of apprenticeship training – real workplace. The differences in understanding of this concept are more related to the aims of apprenticeship or to it's fields of application.



3 Historical overview of the development of apprenticeship training in Lithuania

Looking into pathway of development of apprenticeship training in Lithuania, there can be discerned three main periods:

1. Development of apprenticeship in the crafts from the Middle Ages until the XIXth century.
2. Apprenticeship in the early period of industrial development in the 3rd and 4th decades of XXth century.
3. Apprenticeship in the Soviet planned VET System.
4. Development of apprenticeship in the current system of VET.

We will examine shortly the main features of the evolution of apprenticeship in these periods, seeking to explain the pathway of it's development and the impact of this pathway to the nowadays situation of apprenticeship.

Development of apprenticeship from the middle ages to the XIXth century

The main features and trends of historical development of apprenticeship in the crafts in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania are not somehow exceptional comparing to the development of apprenticeship in the crafts of Western European countries. Shortage of the sources of historical information does not permit to have very comprehensive and systematic view of the history of apprenticeship in the all crafts – there are only quite episodic information about it in some crafts.

The first guilds of crafts were established in the cities of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania quite late comparing to the Western European countries. For example, the first guilds of craftsmen in Vilnius were established only in the end of XVth century. The Grand Duke of Lithuania Alexander approved the charter of the first guild of Vilnius in 1495. It was the guild of goldsmiths. Afterwards there were established the guilds of sewers, blacksmiths, curriers, shoe-makers, furriers, hatters, saddlers, weavers, joiners, masons, carpenters, casters, maltsters, brewers, butchers, salt sellers, barbers and surgeons. On the beginning of the XVIIth century there were 25 craft guilds in Vilnius with the craftsmen of 44 specialities. Later there were established the guilds of fishers, potters, coopers, wheelwrights, bookbinders, tinkers and other craftsmen. In 1795 there were 38 crafts guilds in Vilnius, where worked 860 craftsmen, 310 journeyman and 420 apprentices. Since 1811 the activities of guilds were regulated by the charters of crafts and laws of Russian Empire. In 1823 there was passed the law on crafts in the Russian empire. In the middle of the XIXth century the number of craft guilds in Vilnius increased to 62 and the number of craftsmen – up to two thousands. The biggest guilds belonged to sewers, bakers, curriers, blacksmiths, joiners, potters, glaziers, chimney-sweeps. Since the middle of XIXth century the guild of Vilnius started to receive the orders from merchants together with the deliveries of raw materials giving the start to the development of first draperies. The guilds in Vilnius existed until 1893.



Similarly the guilds of craftsmen developed in the other cities, like Kaunas, Kėdainiai, Klaipėda, Šiauliai, Telšiai.

Training in the guilds of crafts consisted of the typical 2 stages: stage of apprentice, which comprised learning of the basics of craft and initial socialization into the internal life of guilds, and the stage of journeyman, which comprised acquisition of higher level skills and know-how through the practical experience in assisting to craftsman, opening the way to the official and recognized position of craftsman in the guild. There is very scarce information about the status of apprentices in the guilds and their admission requirements. For example, the XVIIIth century charter of the guild of joiners of Vilnius city mentions only two conditions of admission to apprenticeship in the guild: craftsmen are forbidden to accept to apprenticeship the children of villeins (peasants belonging to nobleman and clergy) with the exception of those, who present the permissions of their landlords and the candidates from other lands must present their birth certificates in order to define the suitability of their origin, as well as evidences of their previous learning and acquisition of the initial knowledge of crafts. Until the beginning of XIXth century there were no requirements of the basic literacy for admission of candidates to apprentices in the guilds and the stage of apprenticeship did not comprise provision of any general education. Only in the middle of 4th decenny of XIXth century the gymnasium of Vilnius created special curriculum of basic education for the apprentices in the crafts guilds. This curriculum consisted of the knowledge of chemistry, mechanics, technology and geometry. The municipal authorities of Vilnius sent the invitations to the guilds enhancing apprentices of guilds to study at the gymnasium. Other conditions of apprenticeship, such as living conditions, duration of training, duties, order of transition to journeyman status depended upon the agreement between the parents of apprentices and craftsmen. Usual duration of apprenticeship training was from 3 to 7 years. As a rule, there were fees for training and even for enrollment in the lists of apprentices. If the apprentice left one craftsmen and went to another, the apprenticeship training had to start from the beginning. The contracts concluded between the parents of apprentices and craftsmen evidence, that duration of training was being determined by common agreement of both contract parties. Usually craftsmen provided all subsistence to the apprentices, as well as tools, clothing, food. In cases of contracts with the parents from the noblemen, the subsistence costs of apprentices were shared amongst the parents and craftsmen or covered by the parents of apprentice. Craftsmen were obliged after the conclusion of training to transfer the apprentices to the status of journeyman completely subsisted by craftsmen. The age of apprentices in the guild of joiners was from 13 to 30 years (average 21 year).

The second stage of training - journeyman stage. During this stage the journeyman were obliged to work at craftsmen for about 3 years and then to travel for the work to other cities in order to get acquainted with the innovations of craft. The work of journeyman was payable. The part of this wage was deducted to the chest of guild. Journeyman also had to buy his own tools. Another important obligation of journeyman was to respect the discipline and rules of guild. One of the biggest violations which was punished even by the removal from the guild was additional work at the craftsmen, which did not belong to the guild. In order to protect themselves against the oppressions and violations from the side of craftsmen the journeyman



used to establish their unions (gospada) which took care about sick journeyman or played the role of intermediary in case of conflicts between craftsmen and journeyman. After the completion of training and return from the travel the journeyman could ask at the seniors of guild for the permission to execute the graduating work in order to prove the mastery. Upon successful completion and approval of this work the journeyman had to become the citizen of city, to pay the fees of registering to the guild and to arrange the regale for the craftsmen of guild. The main functions of journeyman consisted of assistance to the craftsmen in performing the work, what permitted to develop skills and practical know-how of craft and execution of different functions and tasks of guild, including participation in the regular conventions of guild members, public events and holidays of guild, religious life of guild, what facilitated further “vocational” socialization of journeyman in the community of guild. There were numerous requirements to fulfil in order to become the craftsmen. According to the charter of the guild of joiners of Vilnius city, the journeyman seeking to become craftsmen had to provide the documents evidencing suitable origin, certificates evidencing the professional readiness, agreement of the craftsmen of guild and to pay the fee. Before that, the journeyman had to accomplish different procedural requirements: to work in serving the craftsmen for at least of 1 year, to accomplish the qualifying work by manufacturing required products. According to the laws of Russian Empire, after the completion of this work the journeyman had to pass the examination and to be at least 24 years of age. The requirements of qualifying work varied from guild to guild – in some guilds these requirements were very high and complex, like in the guild of wheelwrights, which required from the journeyman to produce covered carriage. Until the establishment of the Council of crafts in the beginning of the XIXth century the transition of journeyman to the status of craftsman and further career completely depended on the will of craftsmen. The age of journeyman of joiners (according to the data of 1795) was 20-56 years (Klimka, 2008).

Development of crafts, industry and apprenticeship in the XIXth and XXth centuries

One of the specificities of the development of crafts and industry in Lithuania comparing to the countries of the Western Europe in the XIXth century and beginning of the XXth century is very strong symbiosis of the crafts and slowly developing industry. Due to the slow pace of industrial development in Lithuania there has not occurred such strong and clear separation of industry and crafts as it was in the Western Europe. Even in the beginning of the XXth century most of industrial enterprises according to their ways of work organization and technological processes of production could be adhered to crafts. Therefore crafts in the second half of the XIXth century and in the first half of the XXth century should be considered as inseparable part of industry, being very important in terms of employment and economical development of the nation and later (1918-1940) played important role in the economical development of the independent country.

Development of industry in the XIXth century was very slow. In the beginning of the XIXth century in the bigger cities of Lithuania there were working alcohol distilleries, breweries, flourmills, sawmills, brickyards. Only in the second half of XIX century industrial enterprises started to exploit steam engines launching the real technological development of industry.



There were established new factories of machinery production, metalworking, leather processing, production of construction materials, papermills, food industry enterprises. Most of the industrial enterprises were established by the newcomers merchants and other rich citizens of foreign origin.

One of the most important sectors of industry until the second half of XIXth century was food industry. After the abolishment of serfdom in 1861 it became dominated by the small enterprises. Bigger enterprises remained only in those fields, which were regulated by the tsarist state authorities, such as alcohol production, tobacco processing, or in those fields which produced the products that can not be competitively produced by small producers, like in the case of flourmills. There were many small food producers in bigger cities and small towns (dairies, bakeries, confectionaries, wineries, oil mills) but due to instability of their business these producers could not develop to bigger enterprises with more advanced production technologies and their production was oriented to serve the needs of the local markets. Flourmills were more technologically developed production enterprises. For example, in 1882 in Kaunas there was built one of the biggest flourmills in the Russian Empire, equipped with the modern equipment produced in Germany and Austrian-Hungarian empire. The growth and development of flourmills in the cities of Lithuania was caused by the recession of export of grain to the Western Europe.

One of the most important enterprises of food industry were breweries. Small breweries in Lithuania worked already in the XVIth century, when the right to work in this field was given mainly to gentry and clergy. Very often the beer was made in distilleries which produced vodka. Grand Duke of Lithuania and the King of Poland Sigismund August chartered the right to produce the beer to German craftsmen in the XVIth century. Germans established the first industrial breweries in Lithuania.

German industrialist Ferdinand Engelmann established industrial brewery in Kaunas in 1853. Close to the First World War this brewery reached the productivity of 12 million liters per year. Most of the workers of the brewery were Lithuanians and Polish, while managerial staff consisted of Germans and Jews. There were 2 more industrial breweries in Kaunas. All breweries of Kaunas employed 129 people in 1909. These breweries were equipped with the steam engine technologies and machines and had the workshops for the repair and maintenance of these machines.

Woodworking industry was also important for the economy due to the availability of materials and forest resources. For example, the first industrial sawmill was established in Kaunas by merchants J. Kopelianski and O. Verbliudski in 1863. The wooden materials produced in the sawmills were used by the producers of furniture and in the construction. Sawmills were equipped with steam engines and different machines for cutting of timber. Part of products, especially deals, boards, planks were exported. The field of furniture production was dominated by the craftsmen and few industrial enterprises. One of the biggest furniture production enterprises was established by J. Riomeris in Kaunas in 1870. This enterprise worked until 1898 and produced different furniture, parquetry, wheels for carriages. There were 64 employees working in 1885. Total number of employees in woodworking enterprises



of Kaunas in 1913 was about 400. In the period of 1870-1880 there was fastly developing the production of matches. The first factory of matches was established in Kaunas in 1866. When the tsarist government introduced the excise duty for matches in 1888-1889 many producers of matches stopped their activity. In the period of 1869-1900 there were working only two bigger factories of matches in Kaunas. They produced only swedish and safe matches. 80% of workforce in these factories constituted of women and youngsters because of low-skilled and low-rewarded work. Factories were equipped with mechanical equipment and machines and most of the work operations were mechanised. The only manual operation in these factories was packing of matches into boxes. The number of workforce in this industry was slowly growing since 1870: 6 workers in 1870, 136 in 1890, 211 in 1900, over 300 in 1910. In the end of XIXth century Lithuanian producers of matches made about 25% of the all factories of matches in the Russian Empire (in total there were 13 factories of matches in the Russian Empire, 3 of them in Lithuania – 1 in Vilnius and 2 in Kaunas).

Bigger papermills were established in Lithuania only in the first half of the XIXth century. At the end of the XIXth century the paper industry of Lithuania consisted of 9 paper mills situated in the regions of Vilnius, Trakai and Kėdainiai. In 1898 there was established paper mill in Klaipėda which shortly became the biggest factory of the city and employed about 1000 workers.

One of the most important branches of industry was metalworking industry. In the second half of the XIXth century there were established first bigger enterprises of metalworking and machinery production, which produced different metal products and machines for agriculture (factory of agricultural machines „Minerva“ established in Kaunas in 1860, metalworking factory „Vulkan“ established in 1867, metalworking factory of brothers Tilmans in 1879, machinery plant Mars in 1869, etc.). The biggest metalworking factory in Lithuania in that period was “Minerva“ which in it's best times employed up to 300 workers. It produced agricultural implements, engines for floormills, sawmills and dairies, steam machines, casted decorative metal elements – metal fences, columns, grids for balconies, stairs, casted garden furniture, wheels for carriers, railway cars, water towers and other metal products.

Factories for cast iron processing and production of agricultural implements which were established in Kaunas played very important role in the metalworking industry of Russian Empire. According to the volume of production there were only 8 regions of Russian Empire which could be compared to the factories of Kaunas - Moscow, Ekaterinoslav, Liflandia, Kaluzhia, Kalushia, Kiev, Lublin and Charkov. Most of the cast iron and machinery production factories of that period were equipped with modern production equipment and most of the work operations were performed with machines.

One of the biggest factories of the production of wire and nails was “Vulkan” which was acquired by german industrialist R. Tilmans in 1878. In 1900 it employed 698 workers. In 1897 m. brothers Tilmans established new factory of wiring and rolling of iron which developed to one of the biggest and most modern enterprises of such type in the Russian Empire. Other big metalworking enterprise in Kaunas was factory „Vestfalija“ established by brothers Schmidt in 1880. In 1900 this factory employed 925 workers. It produced wire for



nails, key locks, fasteners, iron vessels and other similar products. At the end of the XIXth century it was regarded as the best producer of this type in the Russian Empire due to the high quality and variety of products.

Employees for these enterprises were being trained at the workplace, because the first vocational training institutions - schools of crafts were established only at the beginning of the XXth century. The first courses of crafts were launched in Lithuania at the beginning of the XXth century after the reforms of tsarist government implemented in 1905. More systematic vocational training in the fields of agriculture and crafts was developed only after the establishment of the independent state in 1918. Until the 1926 the crafts schools were mainly created by the monasteries and charity associations and their main aim was to help to integrate orphans and children of other socially excluded groups in the labor market. The first public schools of crafts were created in 1926 and the department for special vocational education and training at the Ministry of Education was established only in 1937. The first craft schools in the period of independent state were established in 1919. Until the beginning of 1927 there were established 3 national and 5 private crafts schools with the total number of 250 apprentices. However the crafts schools did not acquired popularity in the population, because people, especially of middle class were more inclined to send their children to the schools of general education and gymnasiums opening the way to higher education. Later the number of apprentices in the crafts schools started to rise, as well as the number of the schools: in the beginning of 1927 there were 8 crafts schools, in 1932 – 16, in 1936 – 19 crafts schools and 2 schools of trade. The number of apprentices was increasing from 265 apprentices in 1927 to 1944 apprentices in 1936 (1322 boys and 622 girls).

According to the law of 1929, the crafts schools were of two types: inferior and secondary. The duration of training in the inferior school of crafts lasted for 2-3 years, in the secondary school of crafts – 4 years. The graduates of these schools could become certified craftsmen after certain period of internship. After the 5 years practice the craftsmen could take the examinations of master in order to obtain the qualification of master.

The craft schools prepared the apprentices in woodworking, mechanical engineering (repair of vehicles), joiners, production of furniture with upholstery, metalworking, electricians and fitters, bricklaying, technical ceramics, decorative ceramics, leather processing, textile, sewing, cooking and housekeeping.

Besides the difficulties of technical infrastructure and funding, other common problem of these schools was the lack of training staff. Crafts schools employed as teachers engineers, technicians and craftsmen.

Looking at the institutional structure of the VET of Lithuania in the period of 1918-1940 there can be discerned three types of vocational training institutions: secondary crafts schools, schools of agriculture and special secondary vocational schools in agronomy, veterinary and technology. These institutions provided young people with vocational skills and qualifications mainly in the fields of agriculture and crafts, as Lithuanian economy of that period was based on agriculture. The schools of agriculture were subordinated to the Ministry of Agriculture



and to the Chamber of Agriculture. In 1937 there were 14 public special vocational schools (secondary crafts schools, lower secondary schools of construction and trade) with 2474 pupils and 30 private schools with 3845 pupils. Many private vocational training institutions belonged to the monasteries and charity organizations.

Undeveloped industry and tertiary sector with the domination of agriculture in the structure of national economy was one of the most important factors which determined such slow development of the vocational education and training. The press of that period claimed, that such underdevelopment of industry and services posed important restrictions for the socioeconomic development of the country. It was noted that the domination of agriculture did not permit to integrate into labour market the graduates of universities with the exception of the public government sector. Development of industry and services was regarded as one of the most important challenges and tasks seeking for the strengthening of the national identity, social stability of society and solution of the main social problems such as poverty and emigration (Trimitas Nr. 19, 1934).

Analysing the press publications on the craftsmanship and apprenticeship in the specialised press of the period of 1918-1940 there can be noticed the following typical features of apprenticeship in this period:

1. Crafts and industry were very closely integrated and even meant the same in that period. There was no strict differentiation of crafts and industry. The main way of the acquisition of practical skills was the apprenticeship at the masters or craftsmen. The social status of the craftsmen was quite low and the cultural attitude towards craftsmanship and apprenticeship was quite negligent:

Now we hear many claims that craftsmen are not capable to understand and accomplish the requirements of customers. The main reason of this situation can be the attitude, that craftsmen do not need a lot of special education, they just have to work and everything will be in the right way. There is also faulty thinking, that craftsmen do not need any special capabilities. It is a common practice that parents send their least capable children to learn the craft. Such youngsters spend few years (or even less) as apprentices at so called master, where they usually serve as gofers without any possibility to have more responsible work tasks and after the completion of training enter their independent life without any examinations and any rights. They receive no intellectual, creative or general education (Valentukonis J., Amatininkas, 1935, No. 3).

There is no sense and reason to train the craftsmen for the industrial enterprises or for the industry in general. First of all, the craftsmen should be trained for their individual independent craft. Independent craftsmen are more flexible and resistant to the different shocks of professional life. (Amatininkas, 1937, No. 1 (143))

2. Lack of state regulation of the status of craftsmen and the weaknesses of crafts schools were also discerned as the important problems:

Today we have the situation when anybody can work as a craftsmen. There is no control, whether the person is suitably prepared for the work or not. We hear the



promises to introduce the examinations by the business organizations and this measure should be implemented as soon as possible (...) Lack of suitable schools of crafts is another obstacle in the development of skills and work culture of craftsmen (...) Since almost twenty years the state cares about training in crafts, however, only very low percentage of the schools of crafts have decent buildings. It has become usual that the huts which are not suitable for any other purpose are offered to the schools of crafts. (Valentukonis J., Amatininkas, 1935, No. 3).

Such situation is explained by the undeveloped industry:

We can not call the current situation of the training of craftsmen in our country as regression, because there are no suitable conditions for the development of industry in our country (Z. Andriūnas, Amatininkas, 1935, No. 8).

3. Very often the press indicated the lack of skilled workers and craftsmen in the labour market:

We have a lack of highly skilled workers for construction, woodworking, joiners, electric fitters; it is difficult to find a good specialist for the processing of leather or skilled sewer. We, engineers, constantly hear the claims, that there is shortage of good craftsmen in the almost all fields. (Amatininkas, 1937, No. 1 (143))

4. The press also indicated the lack of suitable and constructive attitude of industrial enterprises to the organization of apprenticeship:

We have a lot of signals in the press, that industrial enterprises hire a lot of apprentices, but instead to train them the craft, use these apprentices for the work, which should be accomplished by skilled workers receiveing their wage according to the agreed norms. This question of apprentices in the enterprises now is being solved. Since now the enterprises are obliged to train the apprentices in their speciality and to pay the wage for their executed work. (Sunki praktikantų būklė įstaigose. Darbo žinios, 1935, No.4).

5. There were many different ideas on how to systemize and develop the training, including the practical training and apprenticeship. For example, J. Gėgžna in the article 'Education of craftsmen' proposed the model of systemic education and training of craftsmen based on the differentiation of levels of qualifications:

Speaking about the woodworkers, carpenters, masons, metalworkers and electricians we can state, that according to their acquired education they can be categorised into different levels of qualifications:

- *skilled workers*
- *craftsmen*
- *masters*
- *technicians and engineers*



(...) We need to systemise the education in the way, that there would be continuity in the education and training of craftsmen, masters, technicians and engineers. Speaking in another way, we need to achieve, that engineers and technicians would not be trained only in theoretical field and craftsmen and masters – only by practical training. There have to be established continuous chain in training from the lowest level to the highest. Young apprentices after the graduation of three lower levels of qualification would be able to study more productively at the technical faculty of the university, than the graduates of gymnasiums. Therefore we suggest to introduce the system of technical schools: lower technical schools would prepare the craftsmen, middle technical schools – masters and higher technical schools - technicians. Special attention today should be focussed not so much on the training of craftsmen, but on the education of masters. It is very important, because before receiving the title of craftsmen apprentices have to undergo theoretical course and practical training at the well prepared masters, who would be their only teachers and educators (Gėgžna, 1935/1936).

This author also suggests concrete ideas on how to organise the process of practical training and what didactical principles to follow:

- The main share of practical training should be provided only after the completion of theoretical training at school.
 - During the theoretical training at school practical training should not exceed 12 hours per week. Practical training here should provide only initial practical knowledge and skills which are necessary for the understanding of the instructions of masters in the process of production or in the application of tools, as well as general practical orientation in the work process.
 - During the practical training at the workplaces the work tasks of apprentices should not be confounded with the work tasks of skilled workers working on the regular employment basis.
 - The common volume of education and training in the two first years of training should not exceed 36 lessons and in the last four years - 38 lessons per week.
6. The press of employers notices the lack of attention of state policy to the training of specialists:

The budgets of the Ministry of Education used to reach the amount of 45 millions of litas. However, what part of this budget was invested to the education and training of specialists, trademen and craftsmen, if after 15 years of our independent life we can not find amongst Lithuanians more than 14 thousands of specialists? (Verslas, 1933-01-05, No.46).

One of the outcomes of this situation is the loss of prestige of vocational training and the loss of motivation of trainees to learn:

Our youth seeks for education and science. It is evident from the overly big rush and congestion of youth to the gymnasiums and other schools of general education. Maybe



also the craft schools could be similarly congested, maybe there would be even bigger possibilities to choose the education, if there would be established suitable schools specialised in (vocational) education. Today in the crafts schools of Kaunas learn mostly the children from the poor families, while normally crafts schools should attract also the children from the middle class families (Z. Andriūnas, Amatininkas, 1935, No. 8).

Crafts schools accept the graduates of primary (elementary) schools not younger than 14 years of age, in 2-4 years after the graduation of elementary school. There enter a lot of demotivated children to the crafts schools. How the pupils are trained in their speciality? By working in accomplishing the orders received by the school. The schools in provinces often lack the orders, they face the difficulties in getting the credits and assets for the purchasing of materials. There is a lack of teachers in the crafts schools who would have not only practical experience, but also pedagogical education (Amatų mokyklų negalavimai, Amatininkas, No. 48).

The lack of attention of government to the question of apprenticeship and vocational training can also be illustrated by the fact, that the law of crafts, which introduced the regulations in the crafts and apprenticeship was accepted only in May of 1940, a month before the occupation of Lithuania by the Soviet Union. The first law on the training in crafts was introduced in 1929 but it prescribed only basic functions of the schools of crafts. According to the law of 1940, the craftsmen could not be prepared by the short-term courses of craftsmanship (which was the usual form of training of craftsmen). The qualification of craftsmen could be awarded only after the graduation of the school of crafts or after acquisition of certain experience of work in the workshops of craftsmen or industrial enterprises. This law foresees two categories of craftsmen: masters and journeyman. It also foresees two ways of acquisition of titles: by the formal training at the schools of crafts or by the work experience and examinations. The title of master could be acquired only by graduates of the school of masters of crafts (secondary schools of crafts), or by the journeyman, not younger than 24 years of age having minimal required work experience and successfully passed the examinations. The title of journeyman could be acquired by the persons not younger than 18 years of age who passed the special examinations or by the person who graduated the inferior crafts school. This law permitted to the master of crafts to manage enterprise, to supervise the work of journeyman and train the apprentices, as well as to assess and to certify their achievements, to certify the work experience for journeyman and the outcomes of practical training of apprentices. Journeyman could substitute the master on the temporary basis in the crafts enterprise or to have the independent individual work activity with the right to have not more than two auxiliary workers. Of course, the prescriptions of this law were not implemented due to the Soviet occupation.

Development of VET and apprenticeship in the period of 1940-1990

Soviet occupation which started the June 15 1940 caused radical changes in the economy and society of the country. Industrial enterprises were nationalized and the craftsmen were unionized into the co-operative unions. The new legislation foresaw, that these cooperative



unions of crafts could have the apprentices, not younger than 14 years of age. The apprentices could be trained in the workshops of the unions, schools of productive cooperation or on the individual basis when the apprentice is assigned to the responsible master. The status of apprentices was assigned only to those young people who acquired basic education. After the training apprentices had obligation to work in the union for at least 2 years.

One of the distinctive characteristics of the Soviet period was fast industrialization on the basis of planned economy. However this process started only after the second world war.

Since 1940 there were started important reorganizations in the vocational training system of the Soviet Union, which can be characterised as a centralised mobilization of the workforce reserves. In 1940 there was established the Chief commandment of the work reserves of the Soviet Union. This institution of central planning of work resources was given the responsibility to coordinate and execute the preparation of workforce reserve for industry and transport and to distribute this workforce reserve prepared in the different schools of crafts, factories and railways. It was foreseen that each year this system should prepare and supply to the industry from 800000 to 1000000 workers in the all Soviet Union. To achieve this aim there was introduced so call school of factory based training (russ. школа фабрично-заводского обучения) as a lower type of vocational school. This type of school was established on the basis of industrial factories, construction sites and other workplaces and was integrated in the so called common system of the state reserve of work resources. These schools prepared the workers of „massive professions“ for different branches of industry, construction and other sectors, mostly focussing on heavy industry. Duration of training – 6 months, entrance requirements – 16-18 years of age with any level of general education. This type of school was based on apprenticeship and had to ensure fast preparation of big masses of workers for the centrally planned industry sectors. Later, in the period of 1959-63 all these schools were reorganised to the vocational-technical schools. Skilled workers, metalworkers, skilled workers for chemical industry, metallurgy, minery, transports and communications were foreseen to be prepared in the schools of crafts with the training duration of two years. There was also foreseen to establish special schools of railways for the preparation of skilled railway workers – assistants of engine-drivers, blacksmiths for repair of locomotives, stokers, workers of railway repair and other similar professions. The central government institution – Council of people’s commissairs of the Soviet Union was foreseen to mobilize and recruit on obligatory basis from 800000 to 1000000 young people from 14 to 15 years of age to the training in the crafts and railway schools and from 16 to 17 year of age – to the training in the schools of factory based training. All graduates of these training institutions were considered as mobilized and recruited workforce and were obliged to work at least 4 years in the prescribed workforces at state enterprises.

From the middle of 1941 to 1944 the Soviet occupation was changed by Nazi occupation. New occupational government, seeking to attain and strengthen the social support to occupational regime from the beginning of 1942 started to abolish the former state trusts and industrial combinates created by the Soviet administration, as well as to reprivatize the small crafts enterprises united in the cooperative unions. What regards vocational training the



occupational administration mostly cared of training of the workers and specialists of the industry. According to estimations of occupational administration Lithuania needed 23 thousands of specialists for construction, 1,5 thousands for the production of construction materials, 2 thousands workers for the factories of agricultural implements, 1,5 thousands of agrotechnicians, 7 thousands of specialists in metalworking, 700 specialists of leather processing, 500 bricklayers, 1,7 thousand specialists of chemical industry, 3 thousands of other specialists. Occupational government did not change the former crafts schools. In 1943 there were 32 public schools of crafts in Lithuania: 6 in Kaunas, 5 in Vilnius, 2 in Šiauliai, Panevėžys and Marijampolė, 1 in Alytus, Kėdainiai, Ukmergė, Vilkaviškis, Kaišiadorys, Švenčionys, Vydžiai, Telšiai, Jurbarkas, Mažeikiai, Plungė, Rokiškis, Utena, Biržai, Skapiškis. Each craft school was specialised in training of certain specialties of crafts. In the period of 1943–1944 there were 320 classrooms in the all schools of crafts with 6 thousands of apprentices in total. Besides the schools of crafts there were also working 2 higher technical schools (one in Kaunas and one in Vilnius), which provided the qualification of technician. The volume of apprenticeship in the enterprises in this period significantly decreased (Braslauskas, T. Nacių politika Lietuvos pramonės srityje ir jos rezultatai, Lietuvos istorijos studijos, 11 tomas, Vilniaus universitetas).

With the return of Soviet occupation in 1944 there was launched the process of centrally planned industrialization. The lack of labor force in the fifth and seventh decades of the 20th century further pressed the central planning institutions to direct a greater part of secondary school graduates to vocational training schools (Kerr, 1990). For this purpose an intensive vocational guidance was used in order to direct young persons to the workplaces, lacking labor force most. While reaching this goal, each secondary and vocational school retained close cooperation relations with enterprises, factories, collective farms and the so-called “Soviet farms”. The said enterprises and organizations arranged for the practice places for school students and employed the majority of persons, graduating from vocational schools. In 1988-89 the laws were passed, granting the industrial enterprises the rights to manage vocational technical schools and the local government institutions. However due to the accelerating process of political, economic and financial collapse of the Soviet Union the initiative was not implemented.

Referring to the characteristics of the profile of qualifications provided in the VET schools of the Soviet period there can be mentioned, that the level of theoretical knowledge and practical skills in general was quite high and sufficient for the beginning of the work in the workplace. Initial training in the VET schools provided with the ‘package’ of vocational knowledge and skills needed for the work in the concrete workplace. In the process of work young workers acquired new practical knowledge and skills by learning from more experienced workers and masters.

Despite of rather big attention of the Soviet VET system to the practical training in the workplaces, the vocational education and training was organised and dominated by the vocational training schools. Other important feature of the organisation of practical training in the workplaces of that period was centralised planning, where neither VET schools nor the



state enterprises had any rights of initiative. This is one of the reasons why such organization of practical training as well as the way of partnership between the VET schools and industrial enterprises could not be transferred and used in the conditions of market economy and democratic society.

Apprenticeship in the VET reforms started after 1990

Analysing the reform of VET in Lithuania started after re-establishment of independent state in 1990, there can be noticed, that while one of the principal stated goals of reform was to create demand led vocational training system, the reform faced significant difficulties in involving social partners from the labour market. There were objective reasons of this situation. Introduction and development of market economy and economic restructuring significantly changed the former structure of economy: many large industrial enterprises (which played a very important role in the organising practical training in the Soviet system of vocational technical training) collapsed or were restructured into smaller units, many small and medium enterprises developed in the tertiary sector. The urgent need to survive in the market pushed the questions of initial and continuing vocational training out of the agenda of business or to its very bottom. During the first years of independence, there was a growing negative attitude towards formal initial vocational education and training on the part of employers, employees and learners. It was reflected in the decrease of enrolment into VET: the number of students in VET schools in the period of 1990-1995 fell from 46,000 to 24,000. In such conditions the development of cooperation between employers and VET schools in the organization of practical training was very slow, irregular and occurring on the basis of separate initiatives. Some of these initiatives were influenced by the experiences and relations of co-operation inherited from the times of Soviet Union, when enterprises were obliged to assist the schools in organising internships of practical training. This influence was very limited, because in the process of economic restructuring many former Soviet factories were closed and others acquired new proprietaries and managers. Therefore only very few of the above mentioned initiatives developed to the continuous and systemic cooperation between VET providers and employers in organising the practical training. Government institutions and VET schools also attempted to execute separate projects of development of apprenticeship and practical training in initial VET schools by involving business stakeholders and using experience of other countries. However, these projects were singular, of short-term influence and did not develop into systemic measures.

The Law on Vocational Education and Training introduced in 1997 established the basic institutional arrangements for the organization of practical training of VET students. The Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Crafts were delegated the obligation to coordinate the practical training by registering contracts of practical training signed by VET schools, students and accepting enterprises and executing the general supervision of the execution of these contracts.

Concluding the overview of the historical development of apprenticeship and training in Lithuania there can be discerned the following features important to consider in the



introduction and development of the new forms and types of apprenticeship in the current VET system:

- Apprenticeship and practical training played very important role in the preparation of skilled workers and specialists in the all periods of historical development, but especially before the middle of XXth century. Such distinctive role of apprenticeship in the training is caused by specific features of development of the structure of economy, such as long domination of the agriculture and crafts, weak and late development of the industry.
- In the cultural context of Lithuania apprenticeship is much more related to the training practices of the crafts, than of the industry, because the process of industrialization in the Soviet period was accompanied by the centrally planned and managed school-based system of initial vocational training. For this reason there are no significant past experience of the apprenticeship in the industry, which could be used nowadays.
- In the recent periods of development (XXth century) apprenticeship and practical training in Lithuania was rather closely related to the school based training (crafts schools in the period of 1918-1940, vocational technical schools in the Soviet period, vocational schools in the reestablished independent state since 1990). Therefore there is a certain experience of combining practices and elements of apprenticeship with the school-based vocational training.



4 Economic preconditions for the development of apprenticeship in Lithuania

This part of report will provide the overview of the main economic preconditions for the development of apprenticeship in Lithuania, focussing on the following ones:

- Structure of economy in terms of economic activities, size of enterprises and their performance characteristics.
- Competition strategies of enterprises and their approaches of human resource development.

4.1 Structure of economy in terms of economic activities, size of enterprises and their performance characteristics

One of the most important economic preconditions for development of apprenticeship is the extent of availability of economically strong and developing enterprises in the different sectors, what ensures economic capacity for the development of apprenticeship. Typical statistical criteria indicating such economic capacities of enterprises are the size, turnover, profitability and export indicators. Analyzing the situation with the enterprises of Lithuania there can be discerned the following features:

- Economy of Lithuania is dominated by the small and medium enterprises. This is typical feature of the most sectors.

Size of enterprises	Total number	Food industry	Machinery and equipment production	Furniture production	Construction of buildings	Retail trade	Accommodation services	Food and beverage services
1000 and more employees	37	5	0	0	2	6	1	1
500-999 employees	88	10	0	5	4	10	0	5
250-499 employees	236	18	5	12	16	20	1	4
100-249 employees	986	54	13	37	105	93	11	15
50-99 employees	1787	81	12	50	139	133	19	50
20-49 employees	5294	162	25	129	387	509	60	278
10-19 employees	8144	133	32	145	494	1044	67	473
1-9 employees	145855	681	17	932	10109	36824	1012	1957

Table No.1. Number of enterprises according to size. Source: Statistics Lithuania (www.stat.gov.lt)



Economic statistics of enterprises and sectors evidences, that certain sectors of economy succeeded to sustain profit margins and have certain economic potential to get involved and to invest in apprenticeship. Average profit margin of manufacturing enterprises in the 3rd quarter of 2010 was 5,7%, the ratio of current assets to current liabilities was 1,44%. Rather high profit margin belonged to the enterprises of manufacturing of beverages (14,2%) and to the enterprises of manufacturing of machinery and equipment (86%). Much worse situation is in the construction sector. For example in the construction of buildings the profit margin of enterprises is -2,6%. In the sector of services one of the highest profit margins belong to the enterprises of accomodation sector (10,8%).

The share of non-profitable and profitable enterprises in certain sectors evidences improving economic potential of these sectors:

	Third quarter of 2009		Third quarter of 2010	
	Share of non-profitable enterprises	Share of profitable enterprises	Share of non-profitable enterprises	Share of profitable enterprises
Manufacturing sector	41,3%	58,7%	32,9%	67,1%
Manufacturing of machinery and equipment	61,1%	38,9%	21,7%	78,3%
Construction	55,9%	44,1%	43,2%	56,8%
Accomodation	35,7%	64,3%	40%	60%
Retail trade	41,6%	58,4%	33,6%	64,4%

Table No.2. Share of non-profitable and profitable enterprises. Source: Statistics Lithuania (www.stat.gov.lt)

The capacity of enterprises to generate and sustain employment is also very important precondition for the development of apprenticeship. Changing number of employees in the enterprises indicates the economic conditions of enterprises and trends of their development, including the changes of the demand of workforce. Due to economic crisis the average number of employees decreased rather significantly - from 1301565 in 2008 to 1154500 in 2009 (-11,3 %). There has been rather significant decrease of the number of employees in the sector of manufacturing - from 231722 in 2007 to 175045 in 2009 (- 25%), as well as in the sector of construction - from 117054 in 2007 to 86594 in 2009 (- 26%). The number of employed in the sector of retail trade and repair of motor vehicles decreased from 231168 in 2007 to 203797 in 2009 (-12%)¹. Economic decline and shrinking of employment in the sectors of economy create very unfavourable economic climate for the introduction and development of apprenticeship.

¹ Statistics Lithuania, www.stat.gov.lt



Availability of job vacancies and occupied workplaces in the labour market also presents important preconditions for the development of apprenticeship. Higher number of job vacancies create more space and potential for development of apprenticeship. Although economic crisis significantly reduced the number of vacancies in the labour market, there can be noticed slight increase of these vacancies during the last year – from 4157 job vacancies in the 4th quarter of 2009 to 6140 in the 4th quarter of 2010. There can also be noticed slight increase of job vacancies in the sectors, which traditionally are more interested in apprenticeship. The number of vacancies in the sectors of manufacturing increased from 1037 in the 4th quarter of 2009 to 1746 in the 4th quarter of 2010, as well as in the wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles – from 114 to 669.

In general there can be concluded, that tightness of labour market situation today presents one of the most significant obstacles for the development of apprenticeship.

4.2 Competition strategies of enterprises and their approaches of human resource development

Transition from the planned economy to the market economy and democratic society implied radical rejection of everything what reminded forced collectivism of the Soviet regime. It favored strengthening of radical market individualism and had highly detrimental effect for development of the mutual trust and social capital in the post-communist societies (Gylys, 2008). It also influenced a very complicated and slow restitution and development of mutual trust in the all fields of society, including business. Therefore the establishment and development of the corporate structures, such as employers' organizations and trade unions in Lithuania was very fragmentary, instable and weak. The first more stable leaders amongst employers organizations - Confederation of the Industrialists of Lithuania and Confederation of Business Employers of Lithuania - rised only in some ten years after the re-establishment of independent state in 1990. In 2001, there were officially registered 130 trade unions (Krupavičius, Lukošaitis, 2004). Both employers organizations and trade unions experienced significant challenges to build and develop their institutional identity in society and to acquire trust of their represented interest groups (Krupavičius, Lukošaitis, 2004). Both these stakeholders lacked experience and know-how in the field of training and human resources development and these issues only very recently started to appear on the list of the priorities of their activities. This situation does not permit to exploit the trade unions and employers organizations in the development of apprenticeship in the enterprises.

Training in the enterprises of Lithuania evolved as the cumulative set of reactions of enterprises and related stakeholders to the complex challenges of socioeconomic transition to the market economy and democratic society. There can be discerned the following main socioeconomic changes which influenced shaping and evolution of training processes in the enterprises:

1. Restructuring of economy after the collapse of Soviet Union and centralized planned economy system. It involved different important developments such as privatization of



the former state enterprises, closure and restructuring of the former big industrial enterprises established in the Soviet period, sharp decline of the industry and gradual growth of the service sector etc.

2. Institutional changes and transformations of society, especially development of the social dialogue and its stakeholders, institutional development of the public provision of continuing training and its relationships with the national education system, as well as legal regulation of the continuing vocational training.
3. Upturns and downturns of the economical development in the period since 1990, which involved the decrease of the economy in the initial restructuring phase and during the period of Russian economic crisis, upturn of economical development in the period of 2001-2008 and subsequent economic crisis.
4. European integration process, which involved access to the European Union in 2004 and related challenges in the activities of enterprises – opening to the competition in the EU market of goods, services, capital and labour, intensified migration of the workforce, compliance with the new standards concerning quality, safety and other issues, etc.

Fast changes of the economical and legal status of the enterprises, as well as opening of the free market relations created demand of the new competences in the all levels of human resources. There appeared rather important incompatibilities between the existing skills and qualifications which were acquired in the Soviet period and the new skills needs. Increasing diversification of the economy with the decline of the industry, closure and restructuring of the big industrial enterprises, gradual growth of the tertiary sector with the domination of the small and medium enterprises, privatization of the former state enterprises and opening to the free market relationships required new profiles of qualifications and competences and the initial training providers could not operatively react to these new needs. Different surveys of employers within the last 15 years showed, that a majority of employers believed that the knowledge and skills of the graduates of VET schools are completely insuitable to the new requirements of workplaces requiring essential retraining of these graduates in the enterprises. For this reason enterprises have had to increase their involvement in continuing training and adaptation of the new human resources to the new requirements of workplaces. Part of the skilled workforce had to find their new employment possibilities in the unskilled jobs. High uncertainty of the transitional period of economic development demanded from the employees to be ready to update their skills and competences through the independent learning on the job and in other ways.

Looking into the influence of the privatization process to the training in the enterprises there can be noticed the following factors:

1. In the big part of cases the privatization of the former state enterprises did not facilitate the establishment of the new owners with the new business ideas and possessing the capital for their implementation. *'Often the nominal owners of privatized enterprises were the employees of the enterprise keeping the factual control*



of such enterprises in the hands of their former administration.” (Norkus, 2008). Such situation significantly precluded the development of the new approaches to human resources development and training in the enterprises, because such owners in the most cases could not understand the importance and weight of these processes in the conditions of the market economy. As it is noticed by Norkus, one of the most destructive consequences of such ownership of privatized enterprises is the technological downgrading of the production, when enterprises which former produced high technology or high quality products which can be competitive in the export markets shifted to the production of primitive products for the local market, thus inevitably losing the high skills. Nevertheless the loss of the high skills in this period was related not only because of the ownership situation, but also (and even more) due to the conversion of the markets, when part of the industrial enterprises lost their former markets in the former Soviet Union territories and could not find alternative export markets for the same products forcing them to focus on the needs of the domestic market.

2. One of the most popular legal forms of enterprise organization in Lithuania became closed private company limited by shares. The closed character of such enterprise prevents their owners from the hostile take-over by the competitors and does not create such a pressure to maximize the short-term profits as in the shareholder capitalism model. However, it also did not create any additional incentives and interests of the owners to invest in training of the employees and apprentices and made the training almost totally dependent on the position and approach of the company owner.
3. Above mentioned factors together with the other objective factors, such as lack of financial resources and capital for investment in technologies and human resources led to the domination of the competition on prices and low cost of workforce. Lack of financial resources and capital for investment in technologies and human resources in the enterprises led to the domination of the competition on prices and low cost of workforce. Most of the Lithuanian companies since the beginning of transition to market economy have regarded training and competence development mainly as a source of costs and sought to minimize the funding and volume of training in different ways, for example by concentrating and limiting the investments to the competence development of strategic staff (managers, engineers, technology developers), while refusing or significantly cutting the training provision to other groups of employees. This approach was not favourable for the introduction of apprenticeship practices in the enterprises of Lithuania. Probably one of the legacies of the planned economy system was attitude of employers, that the main and even sole responsibility for the preparation of the completely skilled (plug in and play) workforce lies on the initial vocational training institutions liberating the employers for any obligations in the field of training (Tütlys, Winterton, 2006).



Upturns and downturns of the economic development have had the following influence to the evolution of training of employees and apprentices in the enterprises of Lithuania:

1. The provision of vocational training by the enterprises became dependent on the economic situation. In the period of economic upturns the increase of demand for skilled labour enhanced the increase of the investments of the employers to the competence development of employees as well as increased interest in apprenticeship, while in the period of economic downturn the shortage of financial resources decreased and limited the provision and funding of training from the side of employers. The economic downturn which started with the restructuring of the economy after 1990 had influenced the orientation of the many enterprises to the low-way strategy of survival by competing on price and low labour costs leading to the no-training policy or limiting the provision of training to the obligatory training prescribed by law. It contributed to the development of certain long-term restrictive approaches of enterprises to training and competence development, which remained even when the economy started to recover and develop. It can explain the insignificant changes of the statistical data of provision of training between the 2000 and 2005, when Statistical Department of Lithuania executed the statistical surveys of continuing training coordinated by the Eurostat (Continuing Vocational Training Surveys – CVTS). According to these statistical data in 2005 the continuing vocational training was provided by 46% of enterprises and comparing to the situation in 2000 the share of enterprises providing training for their employees increased only by 3% and was still lower than the average indicator of the EU countries in 1999 (62%) (Statistikos departamentas prie Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės, 2007). The similar tendencies can be noticed from the dynamics of the number of employees involved in continuing training and their share in the total workforce:

Year	Number of employees involved in continuing vocational training	Share of the total workforce %
1999	60 thousands	10
2005	106 thousands	15

Table No.3. Number of employees involved in continuing vocational training 1999–2005. Source: Statistikos departamentas prie Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės (Statistics Lithuania www.stat.gov.lt)

While the number of employees involved in continuing training (in absolute values) increased, the increase of the share of the ‚trained‘ workforce was very modest. These indicators are amongst the lowest comparing to other EU countries.

It is worth to consider the differences of the economic situation between these two dates: 1999-2000 was the period of economic decline due to the Russian financial crisis which seriously hit the performance of many enterprises for which Russia by than period was the



main export market, while the 2005 was the time of fast economic growth in many sectors with the rapidly growing demand of skilled labour. Despite the fact, that in 2005 the spendings of enterprises to training increased 2 times comparing to the spendings in 1999 (from 74 million Litas to 152 million Litas) the total share of these spendings in the annual labour expenses of enterprises made only 1,2% and was 2 times lower than the EU average (2,3%). About 84% of surveyed enterprises (CVTS2 survey) did not foresee any funding for training of employees. 85% of the surveyed enterprises which did not provide continuing training for employees indicated, that the main reasons for non-training was the sufficiency of the existing skills of employees for the needs of enterprise, 75% of these enterprises indicated that they recruit only competent employees with suitable qualifications, 53% of enterprises indicated high training costs as the main impediment for the provision of training (Statistikos departamentas, 2007).

The recent economic downturn of 2008-2010 has very different influence to the training in the enterprises: many enterprises have entirely cut their spending on training, while some enterprises only have restructured their investments in training by making more strict differentiation of priorities. Decreased budgets for training and more limited possibilities to find the substitution for the employees involved in external training (due to the reduced staff) makes employers to pay more attention to the training needs analysis.

In the period of economic upturn of 2003-2008 the growing demand of skills together with the increasing shortage of skilled workforce due to the growing emigration influenced the increase of the volume of the training and apprenticeship combined with hiring of external workforce. For example, sharp shortage of skilled workforce in the rapidly growing construction sector made the enterprises of this sector to recruit any workforce independently from their possessed skills and competences and to provide the needed skills and competences on the workplace. As it was evidenced by one employer in the interview made in 2006:

Today we have such strenuous situation in the labor market of Lithuania, that the employers take any available persons and train them to provide the skills and competences required by the work. However there is a big risk to invest in the training of the employees, because in case if they leave after the training we experience big losses. Therefore selecting the candidates for the training we want to be 100 percents sure about the loyalty of the employee and his (her) motivation to work for the well being of the company.

One of the interviewed enterprises working in the civil engineering field apply the competence development strategy based on the systemic approach towards the assessment of performance, competence development, career management and wage setting, ensuring close and flexible relationships between these processes. This competence development strategy combines the apprenticeship of the young employees by placing them in teams or pairs with the experienced employees and enabling the transfer and exchange of the experience and know-how, and the provision of the individual possibilities to learn and develop competences needed for the work. As it was indicated by the human resource manager of this enterprise:



'It helped us to increase the number of skilled and qualified employees, as well as to increase the autonomy of these employees.'

The training of blue collar workers usually is provided in the way, that it would not require important investments and would not provide transferable skills or qualifications. For example, many of the low skilled and unskilled workers in the construction sector acquire their professional skills and competences at the workplace working together with the experienced workers. Rather often the training of the blue collar workers is very narrowly specialized and closely related to the needs and specifications of the concrete workplace.

Integration to the common EU market not only provides new business opportunities but also presents the challenges to compete for the skilled human resources in the common labour market. Here there can be noticed two important processes of transfer and mobility: emigration of the workforce from the country and increased rate and volume of outsourcing practices amongst the enterprises, when they become the subcontractors or partners of the companies from the 'old member states'. Regarding the emigration, it started to cause skills shortages and related recruitment and human resource managements problems for the enterprises even before the entering of Lithuania to the European Union in 2004. It is generally and widely acknowledged by many employers that they can not compete for the skilled workforce with the enterprises from the Western Europe due to the big differences of wages and much limited financial possibilities. As it was quoted by the interviewed human resource manager of metalworking enterprise:

Emigration presents a big danger for our enterprise because we loose skilled employees, which are very needed. We can not compete with the Western European countries for the skilled workforce because the wages which we can propose are much lower then in these countries.

Enterprises also recognize, that the emigration of skilled workforce is usually caused by much more complex reasons than just level of economic development and welfare. As it was noticed by one human resource manager of fertilizers' production enterprise:

Emigration is a reaction of people to the set of internal problems of the country: lack of economic and political culture, decreasing quality of education, narrowing employment possibilities etc. All these issues have the influence on the decision of people whether to stay or to leave. Here also lies the answer to the question what should be done by the enterprise in order to sustain the workforce in the company - we need to propose and develop complex programmes of motivation, social support, promotion and career. Today the annual emigration rate of employees in our company makes 1-2 percents of our workforce.

Outsourcing of activities and production can also include the transfer of certain practices of skills development and upgrading together with the new ways and approaches of technologies and work organization. Such 'import' of competence development practices and know-how can lead to the enrichment of the human resources of enterprises. One of the most important factors here is the profile and level of the outsourced production and services: how much skill and knowledge intensive they are and how much the participation in such partnership



contributes to the growth of the existing competences of the human resources. Regarding the situation in Lithuania there can be noticed the qualitative change in the development of outsourcing activities: if at the beginning stage there was 'imported' mostly low-skilled and unskilled work (especially in the sectors of textile, metalworking), now the outsourcing activities involve more and more skill and knowledge intensive production (beginning from the biotechnologies and laser technologies and ending with IT services, machinery production, chemical industry etc.). This process expands the potential areas for the development of apprenticeship by creating demand for skilled workforce and new workplaces with higher requirements of skills and competences, as well as with the new know-how in technologies and work organization.

5 Demographic, educational and labour market preconditions for apprenticeship

There can be noticed increasing number of population with general upper secondary education without vocational qualification – according to the data of Statistics Lithuania there were 576,4 thousands in 2009 with 64 thousands of unemployed people. This group form the biggest group of unemployed people comparing to other groups of population according to education. Apprenticeship can be important measure helping these people to acquire skills and competences leading to vocational qualification. The number of unemployed amongst the people having vocational upper secondary education in 2009 was 40,7 thousands, making 14,52% of this group. There has been a significant increase of unemployed in this group of population since 2008, when the number of unemployed in this group has been 14,5 thousands. The similar trend of development can be noticed in the group if population with vocational post secondary education - the number of unemployed in this group rised from 8,5 thousands in 2008 to 23,6 thousands (12,98%) in 2009 (Statistics Lithuania, 2010). It illustrates the impact of skills mismatch of the graduates of VET schools with the requirements of labour market, as well as the need for more flexible training options of re-skilling and re-qualification helping to change skills and qualifications adapting to the changing needs of economy and economic crisis.

The number of population with primary education was decreasing from 465,2 thousands in 2002 to 329,7 thousands in 2009. These data illustrate the trend of current demographic change which is not favourable for the development of all sectors of education including the VET and apprenticeship.

Estimating the most potential target groups of population for development of apprenticeship, there can be discerned the following groups:

1. The group of population with general lower secondary education, although decreasing from 424,2 thousands in 2002 to 394,7 thousands in 2009, is still important in number and has rather significant share of population going directly to the labour market - total number of unemployed and employed in this group in 2009 was 99,6 thousands making 25% of the whole group.



2. The group of population with general upper secondary education – there were 576,4 thousands in this group in 2009, making 20% of total population aged 15 years and over. The number of the members of this population group competing in the labour market was 326 thousands in 2009 (64 thousands of unemployed and 262 thousands of employed), making 56,5% of the whole group.

Analysing the figures of enrollment to the educational institutions, there can be discerned the following trends which influence preconditions for the development of apprenticeship:

Within the last decade there can be noticed important decrease of enrolment in the institutions of the all levels of education - from 875306 in 2000-2001 to 777972 in 2009-2010 (- 12%). It is related to the decrease of birth rate, increasing immigration and other demographic reasons. The biggest decrease of enrolment can be noticed in the institutions of primary education (level 1) – from 211650 in 2000-2001 to 122481 in 2009-2010 (- 43%), lower secondary education (level 2) – from 332097 in 2000-2001 to 241238 in 2009-2010 (- 28%), as well as in the institutions of lower secondary general education – from 324224 to 234322 in the same period (- 28%). The enrolment in these levels of education is very important for the development of apprenticeship, because these educational institutions are the main ‘suppliers’ of future apprentices. Current decrease of the enrolment presents important demographic restriction for the potential expansion and development of apprenticeship. The highest increases in enrolment are noticed in the institutions of higher education – from 97083 in 2000-2001 to 198455 in 2009-2010 (increase more than 2 times), in the institutions of upper secondary general education – from 68376 in 2000-2001 to 82130 in 2009-2010 (+ 20%), as well as in the upper secondary education – from 100957 to 113538 in the same period (+12,5%). It evidences the rate of growth of popularity of higher education.

The figures of enrolment in the vocational education and training evidence quite low prestige of initial vocational training with certain improvement of it in the recent years. Comparing to the institutions of other levels of education, enrolment in the institutions of vocational education remained quite stable. For example, enrolment in lower secondary vocational education in the last decade decreased from 7873 in 2000-2001 to 6961 in 2009-2010 (- 12%), enrolment in the upper secondary vocational education in the same period decreased from 32581 to 31408 (- 4%). In general, enrolment to vocational education and training remains very low making 4,62% in 2000-2001 and 4,92% in 2009-2010. The rate of continuation of education and training from upper secondary education to vocational schools is quite low and decreasing – from 9,3% in 2002 to 6,7 % in 2009. In this context apprenticeship is regarded by the government as a potential measure for the improvement of prestige and attractiveness of vocational education and training.

Human resources of the initial VET system

Statistical data show the decrease of number of teachers in VET schools, as well as decrease of the number of vocational teachers and trainers in the last decade. The qualification of teachers working in the VET system remain quite high.



According to the statistical data, in 2009 the biggest share of vocational teachers consisted of senior vocational teachers (46%), vocational teachers of the first category consisted 16 %, vocational teachers methodical experts – 11 %, vocational teachers experts – 1 %. 26 % of VET teachers are not attested.

The main problem in this field is a lack of practical skills, know-how and experience of the VET teachers and trainers, the gap between their qualifications and the current technological and organizational developments and changes in the enterprises.

Teachers of VET schools Year	Total number of teachers	Number and percentagof vocational teachers and trainers	
		%	
2002–2003	4732	2276	48,1
2005–2006	4874	2356	48,3
2007–2008	4587	2363	51,5
2008–2009	3908	2057	52,6

Table No. 4: Teachers of VET schools. Source: Statistical Yearbook of Lithuania 2010. Statistics Lithuania (www.stat.gov.lt)

6 The existing legal basis regulating the apprenticeship issues in Lithuania

Apprenticeship has been introduced into the laws regulating VET quite recently. Here we can mention the Law on the ammendment of the law of initial vocational education and training issued in 2007. This law contains the following statements concerning apprenticeship:

1. Definition of apprenticeship:

Apprenticeship as a form of organisation of vocational education and training means (practical) training at the workplace in the enterprise, office, organization, farm or at the individual trainer (master). Theoretical training can be executed at the institution of initial vocational training or in the other schools.

It can be noticed, that provided definition of the appreticeship is very close to the concept of the dual vocational education and training.

2. Requirements for the enrollment of trainees and their acceptance:

Person wishing to acquire his/her first qualification in the enterprise, office, agricultural farm or at the individual trainer, to develop skills in upgrading existing qualification or to acquire new qualification is enrolled following the requirements of



the VET programme (curriculum) and the regulations of enrollment of the enterprise, office ir farmer.

The law does not provide the details on how the requirements of the VET programme (curriculum) shall be combined or inter-related with the regulations of enrollment of the enterprise, office ir farmer in the process of enrollment of trainees for apprenticeship.

3. Organization of training in apprenticeship:

Provider of vocational training in the form of apprenticeship shall conclude with the trainee the contracts of employment and training. Practical training is organised at the workplace, while theoretical training can be executed at the VET school by signing the contract of training between provider of apprenticeship, trainee and VET school.

This order of contracting concentrates the legal responsibility for organization and provision of apprenticeship on the side of the provider of training. The law does not regulate the process of initiative raising, as well as does not foresee any requirements regarding selection of providers of theoretical training.

4. Right of trainees (learners) to choose the form of training:

Trainee has a right to choose the form of vocational education and training.

5. Licensing of the providers of apprenticeship:

Ministry of Education and Training issues the licenses for the provision of formal initial vocational education and training according to the regulations stipulated by the Government.

6. Defining the roles of social partners:

Social partners participate in organising apprenticeship in the enterprises, offices, agricultural farms, at the individual trainer and execute the supervision of apprenticeship.

The definition of the roles of social partners is very general, without the differentiation of the types of social partners (employers, trade unions, professional organisations) and prescription of specific roles and responsibilities for them.

7. Financing of apprenticeship:

State financed and public vocational education and training institutions, as well as providers of vocational education and training executing state funded VET programmes receive the financing for education and training from the national budget, the budget of municipalities or national foundation of employment.

Social partners receive state financing for the execution of functions foreseen in the paragraphs 3,5, 6, 7 (apprenticeship) of the article 28 of this law according to the presented and approved estimates of revenues and expenditures. Financing is provided by the ministries which regulate the functions related to provided training.



The law does not stipulate or foresee concrete mechanisms of co-funding of apprenticeship, stipulating the financial responsibilities of enterprises and other providers of apprenticeship. It can create the misleading impression, that all apprenticeship provided according to the formal programmes of initial vocational education and training will be financed from the state budget.

Concluding the analysis of this law, there can be stated, that it provides only very general and key legal statements. More concrete stipulations and regulations of apprenticeship are provided in the other legal acts. Here we can discern two legal acts related to the introduction of apprenticeship:

Descriptor of order of the designing and approval of VET programmes of formal vocational education and training, approved by the ordinance of the Minister of Education and Science No. V-1435 of 27-08-2010.

Descriptor of order of the formal vocational education and training. This document is currently discussed by the experts and will be approved by the ordinance of the Minister of Education and Science. We will analyse the current draft version of the document.

Descriptor of order of the designing and approval of curricula of formal vocational education and training prescribes the following issues related to introduction of apprenticeship:

1. VET programmes must be the same for all providers of VET (including those providing apprenticeship). VET programme is the basic reference document for the planning of training process, material and methodic resources, teaching staff. It indicates learning outcomes, requirements for teachers, methodical and material resources needed for the implementation of programme. It means, that the contents apprenticeship training must coincide with the contents of school based VET.
2. There are discerned two types of VET programmes: modular VET programme and short VET programme. Training in the modular VET programme can lead to the acquisition of qualification, while short VET programmes are designed for the provision of competence, required for the execution of separate works of functions in regulated occupations.
3. Modular VET programme is designed on the basis of competences indicated in the corresponding occupational or VET standard and consists of obligatory and optional modules, with the minimal volume of two modules (both obligatory modules or obligatory+optional module). The minimal volume of practical training shall comprise at least 60 percents of the total volume of vocational training. This order does not prescribe the concrete formal requirements on how to apply modular training in case of apprenticeship. For example, is it allowed to apply different forms of VET (apprenticeship and school based) for the different modules in the same modular programme and how it can be proceeded.
4. Preparation and amendments of the modular VET programmes are organised in the centralised way by the Centre for Development of Qualifications and VET, but these



processes can be initiated and executed by the different stakeholders: the Centre for Development of Qualifications and VET, provider of VET (including the providers of apprenticeship), citizens of Lithuania and the EU, juridical persons etc. The amendment and development of the modular VET programme must involve the group of experts representing providers of VET and employers. This group should consist of at least of 3 persons, having qualification or work experience in the related field. Preparation and amendments of the short VET programmes can be initiated and executed by the VET provider, citizens of Lithuania and the EU, juridical persons etc. These VET programmes are prepared referring to the governmental requirements issued by the relevant ministries or other governmental institutions. These stipulations open the possibilities for the providers of apprenticeship training to initiate the amendments of existing and development of the new modular and short VET programmes.

Descriptor of order of the formal vocational education and training foresees the following issues related to introduction of apprenticeship:

1. The list of formal VET programmes which can be delivered in the form of apprenticeship is prepared and amended on annual basis by the Centre for Development of Qualifications and VET referring to the recommendations of sectoral occupational committee (which is responsible for designing of sectoral-occupational standards). This list is published on the web-site of the Centre for Development of Qualifications and VET. It strengthens centralised regulation of the provision of apprenticeship and decreases the decision making power of the providers of apprenticeship in their choice of training contents.
2. The Centre for Development of Qualifications and VET is responsible for the external assessment of the activities of VET providers (including those providing the apprenticeship) in the implementation of the formal VET programmes.
3. Training provider shall prepare the plan of training with the indication of VET programme, subjects or modules and the order of their learning, duration and the plane of theoretical and practical training. This training plan can be of consecutive and inconsecutive type. The inconsecutive training plan is applied for apprenticeship. It permits to position the provision of training modules in the different order than it is foreseen in the VET programme. This training plan is designed by the provider of training together with the apprentice and provider of theoretical training (VET school) and it can foresee completion of the separate modules of formal vocational education and training or completion of the whole modular VET programme with certain interruptions. The whole duration of training interruptions can not exceed the total duration of training foreseen in the the formal VET programme. The training plan must be approved in written by the provider of training and apprentice. These features of inconsecutive training plan provides the autonomy to the provider of apprenticeship concerning the positioning and sequencing of training modules and helps to consider the needs and possibilities of apprentices.



4. General obligations of apprentices are stipulated in the laws of education and VET, contracts of training. The rights and obligations of apprentices shall be also stipulated by the internal regulations of providers of training (internal orders, rules of behaviour, etc.).
5. Weekly learning workload of apprentices younger than 18 years shall not exceed 36 academic hours (1 academic hour – 45 minutes), apprentices of 18 years of age can have maximal training workload of 40 academic hours per week. Provider of training shall ensure the conditions to learn according to the programme of general education for the apprentices up to 16 years of age.
6. Person, responsible for the organization of training shall have higher education degree in pedagogy or other fields. Persons having higher education in the other field than pedagogy must complete the course providing the psychological and pedagogical knowledge according to the order stipulated by law.
7. The order of the execution of apprenticeship training is the following:
 - a. Apprenticeship training can be provided by the enterprises, offices, organisations, farmers and other physical or juridic persons having the license for the execution of formal vocational education and training according to the corresponding formal VET programme. This license is issued by the Ministry of Education and Science according to the order stipulated by the government.
 - b. In case of training of apprentices younger than 16 years, the provider of apprenticeship is obliged to ensure the conditions for learning of subjects of general education and for the acquisition of basic general education. In such cases provider of apprenticeship shall conclude the contract with apprentice and institution providing general education regarding the provision of general education (learning according to the curricula of general education).
 - c. Provider of apprenticeship is responsible for the planning of admission and enrollment of apprentices: provider shall prepare and approve its internal regulations of admission, which is prepared considering available technical capacities, number of workplaces for apprenticeship and related stipulations of the formal VET programme, as well as general criteria of admission approved by the minister of education and science.
 - d. Expenditures of apprenticeship, incurred by the provider are reimbursed by the Ministry of Education and Science according to the Government decree of 2008-12-08 No. 1320 „Approval of methodics for the calculation of expenditures of VET per student learning according to the formal VET programme“. Ministry of Education and Science and provider of apprenticeship sign the contract of transfer and usage of allocation.
 - e. Provider of apprenticeship is obliged to provide all information about the execution of apprenticeship to the Ministry of Education and Science upon its



request. Apprenticeship provider also provides to the Ministry the documents evidencing execution of obligations and usage of assets, such as filled report of the usage of allocation and filled standardised form of report on the execution of apprenticeship training.

Interviewed employers have no well-defined opinion about the existing legal basis for development of apprenticeship in Lithuania. One of employers stressed, that legal regulations of apprenticeship and vocational training should define more strictly the requirements for the supervisors and trainers of apprentices in the enterprises:

Today practical training of VET students is organised and provided in rather superficial way and the involved pedagogic staff often lack practical skills for the organisation and provision of apprenticeship. We could use the experience of the other EU countries and establish more demanding legal requirements for the qualifications of VET teachers and trainers involved in practical training.

Other interviewed employer indicated, that the suggestions concerning improvement and development of the legal basis of apprenticeship should be made by VET providers, because they have more experience in organization and provision of practical training and have the feedback of students regarding the quality of practical training. Nevertheless he suggested that the legal regulations could pay more attention to „*the improvement of the quality of apprenticeship and funding of it's organization and provision*“. Other suggestion was to prioritise the provision of apprenticeship in the sectors or branches of economy, which experience the biggest demand of workforce.

Interviewed representatives of VET schools indicated the following shortages of the current legal basis what regards regulation of introduction and development of apprenticeship:

1. Current legal basis does not foresee any measures to enhance employers to organise and finance apprenticeship and to accept the apprentices:

It is necessary to revise the current legal acts by introducing the system of concessions and privileges for employers and other stakeholders in order to motivate them to invest more assets to apprenticeship and to take more apprentices for training.

2. Current legal basis is insufficient, because it is not comprehensive and lacks more precise instructions and regulations:

Today apprenticeship is only mentioned in the new Law on Vocational Education and Training. This Law defines apprenticeship as the new form of training, which is different from the current practical training of VET students in the enterprises. Therefore it is necessary to amend it with explanatory legal documents and instructions.

Apprenticeship is only mentioned in the text of the Law on Vocational Education and Training. Therefore it is necessary to introduce the legal act which would declare and explain the organization of training process, funding and awarding of acquired competences.



Very similar attitudes and opinions about the legal basis were expressed by the policy makers. Representative of the Centre for Development of Qualifications and Vocational Training indicated that current legal basis and fiscal policy is not favourable for the introduction and development of apprenticeship:

Today's legal basis and fiscal policy can not enhance employers to invest in apprenticeship, because according to the existing legislation the costs of practical training incurred by employers, can not be considered as direct costs of activity and it imposes higher tax rates.

Representative of the Ministry of Education and Science indicated, that in designing the legal basis for apprenticeship it is necessary to be cautious to impose direct and prescriptive regulation or very strict obligations to employers:

Employers will not accept the laws and regulations which would strictly regulate the process of apprenticeship by foreseeing concrete responsibilities of employers in the provision of the all competences and learning outcomes foreseen in the training curricula. Employers are not yet ready to take the complete responsibility for the training process.

In conclusion there can be noticed, that the existing legal basis opens the way for the introduction of apprenticeship 'owned' and regulated by the enterprises, but it is still insufficient for attracting and motivating employers, trade unions and other stakeholders to participate in the implementation and development of the proposed pattern of apprenticeship.

7 Institutional framework of the VET and its sufficiency for the development of the apprenticeship in Lithuania

This part of report consists of the following parts:

1. Analysis of the existing institutional framework of the VET system in Lithuania focussing on the influence, roles and responsibilities of the institutions responsible for the execution of practical training. The aim of this analysis is to clarify the relevance of existing institutional framework of VET to the introduction of apprenticeship.
2. Analysis of the planned institutional changes of the existing VET systems related to the introduction of apprenticeship seeking to evaluate their feasibility and sufficiency for the effective introduction and development of apprenticeship in Lithuania.

The institutional model of initial VET system of Lithuania can be characterised as school based model with certain fragmentic movement towards market and dual models. There is a clear domination of public VET schools and training centres providing theoretical training in the classroom and practical training in the specially equipped training sites or workshops with the final stage of training cycle in the form of internship in the enterprises (15 weeks), where students learn and work with the supervision of representatives of enterprises. Public VET schools and regional training centres are responsible for organization of both theoretical and practical training processes. They sign the contracts with enterprises for the organization of



practical training periods in the enterprises. There are implemented different initiatives to increase the weight of practical training in the enterprises in the initial VET process. Government policy aims to enhance the cooperation of VET schools with the enterprises, as well as to increase the participation and involvement of business in the initial VET system. Usually practical training is usually executed strictly following the requirements of initial VET curricula and is not separated from the theoretical vocational training – the practical training schedule is organized in such way, that it alternates with theoretical training (each second week). In the school based training there is applied consecutive training plan, oriented to completion of the training programme without interruptions and breaks. Therefore it facilitates to acquire more general vocational knowledge and transferable vocational skills, while the specific vocational skills for the work in the workplaces are acquired to lesser extent. There are also separate cases of the dual training organization, when the public VET provider signs the contract with enterprise. For example, in the Vilnius VET centre of technologies and business the dual training is provided in the programme of electronics of energetic systems. There is concluded tripartite agreement of training between student, VET school and enterprise as well as the employment contract between student and enterprise.

These features of the institutional model of initial VET system can have the following implications to the development of apprenticeship:

1. Development of several institutional scenarios of the introduction of apprenticeship in the current VET model:
 - a. Improvement scenario, when the introduction and development of apprenticeship is regarded as a measure of improvement of existing school-based VET system by creating new alternative of acquisition of skills and competences to the traditional school based route and in the same time facilitating the improvement of practical training in the existing school based model. According to this scenario, institutional introduction and development of the apprenticeship should be incremental and executed at the sectoral or institutional levels on the case-by-case basis. Such introduction and development of apprenticeship would permit to acquire and accumulate the experience of the integration of apprenticeship and theoretical training in the different enterprises and sectors, would facilitate development of different practices of cooperation and partnership between enterprises and VET schools, as well as would permit to develop different optimal mechanisms of funding and co-funding of apprenticeship, etc.
 - b. Replacement and radical reform scenario, when the existing school-based VET model is regarded as ineffective and irrelevant in the current socio-economic context and needs to be reformed or replaced. According to this scenario, introduction of the apprenticeship should be implemented in the centralised and radical way with the perspective, that in the nearer or farer future it would replace school-based VET by transferring the functions and responsibilities of organization of theoretical and practical training to the enterprises, including



the issues of funding (transfer from public to private funding of VET) and ownership of schools and training facilities. This scenario presents multiple challenges beginning from the potential risk of deterioration of the quality of theoretical training and ending with the unpreparedness of employers and private sector to take the responsibility for the organization and funding of initial vocational training.

2. VET schools should be actively involved in the introduction and development of apprenticeship, as equal partners with employers, because they possess the critical mass of methodical and organisational know-how of vocational training, while employers and other stakeholders (for example, trade unions) due to their limited role in provision of VET experience lack of these resources.

What regards the structure of institutional regulation of the VET system, there can be noticed the following features:

1. **Coordinating role of the Ministry of Education and Science**, which is responsible for the coordination of the designing of VET standards (in the near future – occupational standards) and their approval. This ministry coordinates the process of the public funding of VET, defines the requirements for the contents of vocational training contracts and the rules of registration of contracts. Based on the legal acts of Lithuania, mainly the state or the state founded institutions, with the exception of the Chamber of Commerce and the Chamber of Agriculture, remain the main actors in the VET system. For this reason the governmental institutions have had a big influence in regulation of the design of qualifications, setting of VET standards, organization of provision of training. Strong role of the governmental institutions in this process compensates the lack of involvement and activeness of the employers and especially trade unions in this field. However, in the same time there can be presumed, that such strong governmental regulation does not create sufficiently favourable conditions for the development of the initiatives and involvement of employers and trade unions in this process.
2. **Attempts to establish effective tripartite structure of the governance of initial vocational education and training.** It should be noticed, that currently established tripartite institutional structures in VET plays only advisory and consultative roles:

At the national level, representatives of state and municipal institutions, employer and business organisations and employee organisations are members of the Vocational Education and Training Council (Profesinio mokymo taryba) functioning as an advisory body for the Ministry of Education and Science and other governmental institutions in making decisions regarding strategic questions in VET. Another national level advisory body is Lithuanian Vocational Guidance Council (Profesinio orientavimo taryba). It unites vocational guidance and counselling practitioners, various education providers, social partners, labour market institutions, nongovernmental youth and adults organisations.



At the sectoral level the Industrial Lead bodies (Ūkio šakų ekspertų grupės) are the main consultative bodies of the Ministry of Education and Science in developing VET standards and VET curricula. They equally represent the social partners related to VET: employers, trade unions and education providers. There are 14 Industrial Legal Bodies established at the Methodological Centre for Vocational Education and Training (Qualifications and VET Development Centre, 2010).

1. Autonomy of VET schools in the curriculum design and provision of training.

This autonomy is regulated by the national standardization of qualifications. Since 1990 curriculum development is the responsibility of the VET providers. The law on Vocational education and training of 1997 declares that VET schools can design their own training curricula by involving in this process social partners. Similarly are defined the functions in changing the VET curricula: “VET institution has a right with the approval of its founder, Ministry of Education and Science and /or the Ministry of Social security and labor to change training programmes, to create the new programmes and to offer them to include into the Register of study and VET programmes“. VET schools have to ensure VET programme is being developed in accordance with a certain national VET standard and general requirements, which are established by the Ministry of Education and Science. A newly drafted VET programme is subject for approval by the competent employer organisation (e.g. the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Crafts). Experts (vocational teachers, employers) evaluate the quality of the programme, and, in the case of positive assessment, the programme is entered on the Register of Study and Training Programmes. A VET provider is entitled to implement a registered training programme if his resources are sufficient for implementation. Extent of autonomy of VET providers in the process of curriculum design is reflected by the structure of the VET programmes, which consists of the obligatory part prescribed by the VET standard and optional part, defined by the school referring to the needs of local labour market. VET schools also have certain autonomy in the organization of provision of training, especially in the provision of practical training, by applying different forms and mechanisms in this field:

Rather often education institutions establish school companies, hotels, workshops where their students may carry out practical training. For instance, VšĮ Alanta Technology and Business School owns 49% of the private company Alantos agroservisas shares. This company provides services and produces and processes agricultural products. The students have the opportunity to practise their skills at the meat processing manufactory, in the shops or the training workshops that belong to the company. These measures help to improve the preparation of the learners for the real labour market (Qualifications and VET Development Centre, 2010).

VET schools can search for the partners from employers and sign with them different agreements of cooperation. National policy of VET development seeks to increase the autonomy of VET schools in the organization of provision of training. One of the currently implemented measures in this field is the reorganisation of state-run VET schools into self-



governing institutions (viešoji įstaiga) started in 2003. This initiative permits to the employers, municipalities and other institutions to become stakeholders of VET institutions and to participate in managing them.

The main administrative body in a self-governing institution is the general meeting of shareholders, with each shareholder having a single vote. Thus, the municipality, social partners and other stakeholders, being equal partners, gain the right to take part in administering the institution alongside its founder (the Ministry of Education and Science). This enables them to respond effectively to the needs of a particular region, as well as to the changing requirements for the qualification of graduates. The status of a self-governing institution changes essentially the approach of an enterprise towards the VET institution, because the material and the other values transferred to a VET institution are considered to remain the capital of the enterprise. The enterprise further manages its capital as an investment in the training of its future workers. This gives a VET institution the chance to make use of the company's equipment and its specialists' experience. Currently 13 VET providers have a status of self-governing institution (Qualifications and VET Development Centre, 2010).

The experience of self-governing VET schools proves, that the change of their status is favourable for the development of practical training and its quality. For example, Vilnius Vocational School of Builders upon the suggestion of the Ministry of Education and Science in 2004 became self-governing VET institution with the Ministry of Education and Science and a construction company Ajonda as a main stakeholders. After the school changed its status to the self-governing institution there occurred the following changes in the organization and provision of practical training:

- *Vocational school acquired constant partner of cooperation in the face of construction company. School, Association of Builders of Lithuania and the company Ajonda discussed the principles of working together in the new situation. The asset of company which is invested to the school remains the property of company in the form of share.*
- *Participation of the company in the management of school permitted to the school to use the available technical and technological facilities and machinery of the enterprise in the training process. School sends their pupils to acquire practical skills in working with modern machinery in the work-places of the company.*
- *Company became involved in the all processes of vocational training beginning from the curriculum design and ending with the quality assurance of training. The specialists and experts of the company consult teachers of the school in designing and redesigning of the vocational training programs and modules. Company takes care for the organization of the practical training in its facilities providing access to the modern equipment and machinery, as well as participates in the evaluation of acquired qualifications.*



- *In the same time, participation of the company in the management of the school does not have any negative impact to the external relations of the school with the other stakeholders and enterprises. School develops the relations with different construction companies and providers of the machinery and materials in the construction sector in organizing students traineeships. As far as the company is involved mainly in general construction works, it does not have any specific demands and requirements regarding specialization of the curriculum of the school.*

There can also be discerned other two institutional arrangements which have direct influence on the introduction and development of apprenticeship in Lithuania:

- establishment of the sectoral practical training centres;
- introduction of the national curricula of modular training.

Establishment of the sectoral practical training centres

Here are some facts indicating development of this initiative:

In 2009 there were signed the contracts for establishment of the first 8 sectoral practical training centres. It is foreseen to establish 33 such centres until 2013. The aim of these centres is to provide students, trainees and employees with practical skills needed in the labour market. These centres will be used for the training of students of public VET schools, higher education institutions, employees of enterprises, VET teachers etc. It is expected, that the establishment of these centres and their usage will significantly improve quality of practical training and will contribute to increasing match of skills acquired in the VET schools to the needs of workplaces. The real potential of these centres of practical training will depend on many factors, especially on the availability of high skilled trainers and supervisors of practical training. These centres are established by the partnership of different stakeholders and supported by the financial support of the EU structural funds. For example such centre of mechatronics training in Panevėžys has 19 stakeholders: higher schools, enterprises and other VET schools (Qualifications and VET Development Centre, 2010).

Sectoral practical training centres are being established on the basis of effectively working VET schools and will not require to establish new institutions. There can be distinguished several potential implications of the practical training centres to the development of apprenticeship in Lithuania:

- a. Established practical training centres will support and enhance development of the different initiatives and practices of apprenticeship by providing new work and learning workplaces equipped with the up-to-date technologies. Realisation of this optimistic scenario rises several requirements and conditions:
 - Assuring real work process conditions in the practical training centres. It means not only technological specifications and conditions ensured by the modern equipment and technologies, but also organizational and economic conditions, which can be created only in the real organizational and commercial context of work. This context can be



created by involving practical training centres in the commercial relations with the enterprises, for example, when enterprises place the orders to the practical training centres on the subcontracting basis.

- Availability of experienced and skilled trainers and masters (supervisors of apprentices). These masters should have both a rich experience of real work process and pedagogical competences for the organization and supervision of the learning process at the workplace. It means that they should come from the enterprises.
- Active involvement of apprentices in setting the goals of the work and learning. Apprentices, together with their masters in these practical training centres should have real autonomy and decision making power in setting the objectives of work tasks, discussing and selection of the methods and measures of work or designing the organization of work process.
 - b. Practical training centres can impede the development of apprenticeship by reducing initiatives of employers to organize training of apprentices in the workplaces of enterprises. According to the experts of Liberal Market Institute of Lithuania, establishment of big sectoral practical training centres in the regions can create the monopolies in the provision of vocational training making the private initiatives and investments of enterprises in the apprenticeships economically irrational and non-viable. Therefore the influence of the sectoral practical training centres to the development of apprenticeship depends on the openness of these centres to the cooperation with employers.
 - c. Practical training centres can have no significant impacts to the current development of apprenticeship, if these centres will remain under the dominating influence of vocational schools and school-based training. Absence of lack of skilled and experienced trainers, failure to create the real organizational and economic context of work in the process of training can become serious obstacles for effective functioning of these centres.

Introduction of the national curricula of modular training

According to the interviewed expert from the Centre for Development of Qualifications and Vocational Education there will be introduced the following changes in the field of qualifications and curricula:

1. Current VET standards will be replaced by the occupational standards. In principle their structure is quite similar, but occupational standards do not prescribe the training aims and specifications of competence assessment – these standards indicate competences, limits of competences etc.
2. There will be implemented the National Curriculum of Modular Training which will permit to acquire vocational qualification through different modules in the different VET institutions. It will also bring the credit transfer to the vocational training on the



national level. *Today we (in Lithuania) have the problem that the credit transfer in VET is not feasible, when each VET provider has its own training curricula.*

Qualifications and VET Development Centre started the project “Design of qualifications and establishment of the modular VET system”. This project unites and combines the designing of qualifications with the development of standardized modular VET curricula. It is foreseen to develop the methodology of design of sectoral standards of qualifications, to prepare qualifications standards in the 5 sectors and to train about 100 designers of qualifications standards. The modular VET system will be implemented in 2 stages: on the first stage there will be developed the model of the modular VET system and prepared plan of development of modular VET curricula. On the second stage the current subject based curricula of initial VET will be redesigned to modular curricula according to the prepared model. It is foreseen to prepare 40 modular training curricula in at least 25 sub-sectors of vocational education.

What can be a potential impact of this measure to the development of apprenticeship in Lithuania?

Introduction of the system of modular training and national modular curricula in initial VET can support and foster the development of apprenticeship, if the introduced national curricula of modular training will be sufficiently flexible to consider the following specificities of apprenticeship training process:

- Structuring of the work and learning tasks in the module, as well as structuring of different modules belonging to the modular VET programme according to the internal logics and order of the work process;
- Ensuring, that the modules lead to the acquisition of competences permitting to execute sufficiently complex and important work processes and objectives (key work tasks), which are sufficiently challenging to motivate apprentices for the independent learning and for the intensive cooperation with masters or foremen.
- Consideration of didactic principles of acquisition of the new knowledge and skills, especially the principle of learning from simple to complex, or steps of competence development. The logic of consecutive steps of competence development should be followed both in the design of modules (acquisition of knowledge and skills in the module) and in the design of the whole programme of modular training (acquisition of competences by completing the modules).



8 Existing practices of organisation and provision of practical training in the enterprises to the students of initial vocational training

Existing practices of VET schools and training centres in the organization of practical training of students in the enterprises can provide interesting and useful information about the current state of practical training and apprenticeship at the level of training institutions. We will analyse these practices by focussing on the following issues:

- share of the time for theoretical and practical training;
- organisation of the place of practical training;
- organisation of practical training process.

Share of the time for theoretical and practical training. According to the VET standards and VET curricula practical training in the workshops of schools and in the enterprises make about 60-70 percents of total training hours, including practical training in the enterprises which makes about 15 weeks. Interviewed initial VET providers think, that such share of training time is sufficient for the acquisition of practical skills:

60-70 percents of training time for practical training including 15 weeks of practical training in the enterprises is sufficient time for the acquisition of initial practical skills.

65 percents of practical training and 35 percents of theoretical training is a proportion, which sufficiently ensures quality of vocational training and permits to build the practical skills on the basis of necessary theoretical knowledge.

Some representatives of VET schools notice worrying trends of reduction of duration of practical training:

Within the last two years the duration of training in the VET programmes was reduced by 240 – 480 hours, depending on the specialisation and level of training. With the reduction of the overall duration of training there also declined the number of hours for practical training. This tendency certainly does not contribute to the improvement of the VET quality.

Organisation of the place of practical training. There are two main places of practical training in the initial vocational training – workshops of the VET schools, where the basic practical skills are provided and the workplaces in the enterprises for the organisation of practical training internships before the graduation. Sometimes both practical training and internships are organised in the workshops of schools or in the specially equipped training workplaces. It was confirmed by the interviewed representatives of the VET schools:

Practical training in our school is executed in the specially equipped classrooms and workshops or in the studios which conform to the real workplace conditions. Practical training is managed and supervised by the vocational teachers. Internships of students is organised in the companies and supervised by the mentors of practical training.



Practical training in our VET centre is executed in the classrooms of practical training and internships are organised in the companies by signing the contracts with employers.

VET students from the training programmes of construction acquire their basic practical skills in the workshops of practical training and later develop these skills by learning and working in the real workplaces.

Initial vocational skills are provided in the laboratory of food production during the practical lessons organised in parallel with the theoretical training.

In some cases VET schools establish their own enterprises or provide some services by creating the 'real' workplaces for practical training:

Our training centre has established studios of beauty and floristics, where the students from the programmes of haircutting, cosmetology and floristics undergo their practical training. These studios offer their services and products to the customers and students have the real work conditions to develop their initial practical skills with the supervision of vocational teacher.

Sometimes practical training is executed by providing the services to the customers and local community, as in this case of training of waiters:

Students together with teachers participate in the different social events organised by social partners, in the events and fairs of Kaunas city. Students serve the participants of conferences and are invited to provide their services in the public events at the Kaunas City Hall, Sports Hall and Residence of President. We also participate in the events organised by the businessmen and tradesmen of the old town. During these events students apply their acquired theoretical knowledge and develop practical skills. It serves to the publicity of the school and favours its social image.

Another option of practical training workplaces is the enterprise of practical training, which simulates the conditions of real workplaces. There is a national network of such training enterprises called Simulith:

Students of commercial professions acquire their practical skills not only during their internships in the companies, but also in the enterprise of practical training established in our school. This training enterprise provides simulation of the real workplaces and executes its activity in the national network of practical training enterprises Simulith since 1998.

Interviewed employers confirmed their active participation in the provision of workplaces for practical training to the VET students:

Each year in the summer time we accept for the internships the students from the different VET schools, vocational training centres of construction occupations and higher education institutions. The students from VET schools and higher education institutions are employed in the construction sites. Their training and work is supervised by the supervisors, masters and shift managers of our company.



We accept for internship the VET students from the schools which prepare the specialists in cooking, as well as the students of Kaunas college (higher vocational school) studying in the programme of tourism and hotel management.

Our enterprise accepts for internship the students of colleges with the specialisation of orthopaedic shoe-making, production of orthoses and prostheses, graphics and design, as well as medicine students.

Some interviewed enterprises also use their own continuing training centres for the organization of internships of VET students. This is a case of one company working in the field of metalworking and energy industry:

In our company we have training centre for welders which organise the continuing training for welders and the practical training for the VET students. By accepting the students for apprenticeship we try to ensure, that they work under the supervision and guidance of our skilled and experienced specialists in the real technological and work environment, thus enabling the transfer of experience. Such internships help students to acquire practical skills and to learn how to solve the real problems of production by preparing them for the autonomous acting in the workplace.

Organisation of practical training process.

One of the distinctive features of the organisation of practical training indicated by the interviewed representatives of the VET schools is the contiguous provision of theoretical and practical training:

Practical training is executed according to the requirements stated by the VET curricula and is not separated from the theoretical training.

The contingency of theoretical training and internships is ensured by the conformance of the practical training tasks to the contents of theoretical training, assistance of the VET teachers in the training process and by alternation of the theoretical and practical training time:

Practical skills are developed at the enterprises with active participation of the VET teachers. The tasks of practical training in the enterprise conform to the contents of the training programme.

Practical training is provided by alternating theoretical and practical training (each second week). Internship in the enterprises is provided in the continuous way (after the completion of theoretical training). Assessment of learning outcomes of internship is executed by the VET teacher together by the mentor of practical training from the enterprise.

Teacher provides the assistance to students in the process of provision of services, in communicating with customers and encourages the students in their first steps in the real work environment.

VET schools especially discern the role of VET teachers in the process of practical training during the internships in the enterprises, as well as the importance of the serious attitude of enterprises to the internship:



Results and quality of practical training, both at the school or in the enterprise very much depend on the involvement of VET teachers. We can expect the positive results of internship only if there are conditions for VET teachers to work with the students during the practical training, if the VET teacher by the enterprise is not regarded as an agent of detainments of production and the students are not treated as a cheap and unskilled workforce.

One of the biggest problems in the organisation of internships for the VET students discerned by the interviewed representatives of VET schools was the fragmentation and wide dissipation of workplaces for internships:

There are quite few enterprises which can accept for internship bigger number of students, therefore we have to divide our groups of students and to direct these smaller groups to 2 – 3 enterprises. In such situations supervising VET teacher has to split his working time into several parts and can not ensure suitable and sufficient supervision and guidance of students during their internships.

Interviewed employers discerned some other problems in the organisation of practical training: difficulties of the adjustment of practical training with the production process and the lack of the organisation of the training process from the side of VET schools:

One of the biggest problems which we face in the field of internships for VET students is the adjustment of practical training with the activities of production and their organisation. We are working in the field of repair of potentially dangerous equipment (pressure vessels), where the execution of concrete tasks of repair requires to have certain qualification.

Sometimes it is rather difficult to adjust the time of internship with the training plans prescribed by the VET programmes.

We have an impression, that VET schools do not organise training process during the internship. They just leave the students to the disposition of enterprises and that is all.

Regarding the practical steps for the implementation of the apprenticeship as the form of vocational training organised entirely by the enterprise, there can be mentioned only few steps. Since 2007 there was implemented one ESF funded project for the preparation of the trainers and mentors in the enterprises. This project trained about 1000 mentors in the enterprises and subsidised their wages related to work in apprenticeship. During this project apprenticeship was provided for the 4000 students of VET schools. However after the end of project funding this initiative was not continued. Today there are similar ESF funded apprenticeship development projects in the rural communities, where young people are trained in the occupations of ethnic cultural and culinary heritage.



9 Existing practices of the cooperation and social partnership in the field of apprenticeship in Lithuania

There can be distinguished the following features of the social partnership in the vocational education and training, which influence the development of apprenticeship:

1. Lack of experience and intensiveness of the partnership relationships between the VET institutions and the employers, making the process of social partnership in VET overly formal and dependent on the state interventions.

One of the main problems related to the passive and insufficient involvement of employers and trade unions in the cooperation and partnership with the education and training providers is a lack of systematic approach towards the partnership. Employers and trade unions in many cases are involved in cooperation only very formally or the cooperation concerns only narrow fields of the design, provision or awarding of qualifications. Besides, employers and trade unions often miss bigger attention of the government and the different measures of financial and fiscal policies, which could motivate them to be more actively involved.

Interviewed representatives of trade unions indicate, that the lack of the involvement of trade unions in the processes of VET is caused not only by the lack of experience and know-how of these issues amongst the members of trade unions. Highly strenuous and complicated industrial relations demand trade unions to invest almost all their efforts and human resources to the negotiations with employers in the field of wages, labour security and work conditions. For this reason the questions related to education, skills and qualifications become secondary in the agendas of trade unions activities.

2. Lack of mutual trust between the employers, VET providers and other stakeholders (trade unions, professional organizations). It is caused by the mismatches of skills supply and demand which are typical for transitional economies.

Current legal, political and financial conditions do not facilitate development of the mutual trust between the stakeholders, providers of qualifications and society. Other important factor limiting the possibilities for the development of mutual trust is orientation of state policy to market liberalism approach, which is rather typical for the socioeconomic and institutional transformations and changes in the many post-soviet countries of the Central and Eastern Europe. Revolutionary and later, evolutionary socio-economical transformations in the most of these countries had led to the fragmented interest coordination and weak partnership between the social stakeholders and in the same time to the arm's-length state-economy relations. Looking to the political-ideological side of these developments, some researchers notice, that the neoliberal approach has been regarded as the most pertinent approach for the quick and effective elimination of the negative legacy of the previous system leading to more quick 'catching-up' of the economies of post-socialist countries with the developed Western economies. This 'instant market reform' approach influenced certain typical developments in the field of education and training:



- Strong orientation of the goals of VET institutions to the development of economical performance and competitiveness. Official policy documents and strategies in the field of VET strongly stressed the importance of the economic goals of education for the economical development of the country.
- Liberalization of the curriculum design in VET and higher education by delegating the function of curriculum design to vocational schools and encouraging providers of vocational training to compete for the enrollment of students and to adapt their provided education and training to the market needs.
- Orientation to the liberal approaches of the organization and provision of training, for example, plans to introduce national system of modular training in the system of VET, seeking to make training process more flexible and responding to the current needs of economy.

The state funding of VET is also being reformed according to examples of liberal models (introduction of the vouchers system of funding) leading to the increased competition between the education and training providers for the students' enrolment and increasing the freedom and to higher responsibility of learners and students in choosing their education and career pathways.

3. Weak professional organizations and lack of know-how and experience of trade unions in the field of education, training and human resource development. The main obstacle and problem here is the weakness of the development of employers organizations (to lesser extent) and trade unions (to bigger extent) and the lack of their experience and expertise in the field of qualifications and vocational training. As it was expressed by the interviewed representative of the Ministry of Education and Science:

In the countries with well established traditions of social partnership the center of gravity of this social partnership is the social dialogue between employers organizations and trade unions. Employers care about business interests related to human resource development, trade unions care about the interests related to employment quality and continuity. In Lithuania we are only on the initial stage of development of trade unions (current trade unions often lack expertise in this field and their approach is more centred on the limitation of the competition in the labour market). Trade unions pay more attention to the specific functional skills and knowledge and very often ignore the importance of transferable skills and key skills which enable and enhance mobility of employees in the labour market. Very similar approach and attitude often can be noticed amongst the employers.

Interviewed representatives of employers and VET schools have had rather different opinions about the existing state of partnership between VET schools and employers in organising and provision of practical training for VET students. Some employers have rather developed traditions of cooperation with VET schools and training centres:

Our cooperation with VET schools is actively developed for more than 10 years. When we accept VET students for internships there are signed tripartite contracts between the student,



enterprise and training institution. Our enterprise assigns skilled specialists as mentors for the supervision and guidance of VET students.

We cooperate with employers very closely. Our students perform their internships and even some lessons of practical training in the real workplaces in enterprises. We have prepared the mentors of practical training during the projects funded by the ESF. Some of our students receive the special scholarships from the big construction enterprise.

Other interviewees indicate, that the cooperation is very fragmented and initiatives of cooperation often remain without response from the partners. As it was stated by one employer:

Cooperation with VET schools occurs only when the schools need us for the organisation of internships of students. Before and beyond that – no cooperation.

Opinion of one representative of VET school is different:

We can state, that the cooperation with employers is executed mainly on the initiative of the school.

Interviewed employers indicated, that the passiveness in cooperation can be related to the lack of different kind of support in organisation of internships:

We have to solve all the problems related to the organisation of internships only ourselves and with our own financial resources.

Enterprises which organise the internships need the support from the state in development of their training infrastructure.

We receive no information or methodical guidance on how to organise practical training during the internships. Nobody explains us the goals of internships, nobody introduces training plans.

Concluding there can be stressed, that the current social partnership in the organization of practical training and internships for VET students is fragmentic and diverse leading to the different experience and know-how of stakeholders in this field.



10 Preconditions related to funding of vocational education and training

IVET is funded from the state budget in accordance with a methodology for calculating training costs for each student. The unit costs (the so-called “pupil”s basket”) include allocations for staff salaries and social insurance, the in-service training of teachers and funding for the acquisition of professional and technical literature, and manuals and other learning materials. The funding for the maintenance of training facilities is also allocated in accordance with this methodology. Additionally, VET providers, under the approved Government investment, may receive funding from the State budget for the development and construction of training facilities, etc. VET providers (whose main activity is vocational training) may receive income from physical and legal entities for services provided (e.g. training courses, rent of premises). This income should be used for educational and training purposes (Qualifications and VET Development Centre, 2010).

Lack of funding and co-funding of the VET institutions is very often indicated as one of the most important obstacles in the development of VET in many researches and surveys reports. Lack of funding is regarded as the main reason of the outdated technical basis of training and the lack of skilled and qualified staff in the VET. From the one side the lack of public funding should enhance the initiatives of the VET institutions to look for the external partners, to provide the services for the market in order to find additional funding possibilities. Therefore the cooperation between the VET institutions and employers in the field of the organization of practical training becomes a very important measure in coping with the problems caused by the outdated technical basis of practical training. From the other side, lack of funding of VET poses the difficulties to the cooperation between the employers and VET institutions. The VET schools due to the lack of public funding, outdated practical training basis lose their attractiveness for the employers, because the cooperation with such schools for employers becomes too costly and non-beneficiary in the short term.

Interviewed employers also indicate the problem of funding of the internships and the need of state support in this field

There is no funding of practical training in the enterprise from the state.

Practical training in the enterprises demands quite important financial resources, especially in training of welding specialists, where both welding materials and equipment are very expensive.

Employers which accept the students to internships would be more interested, could invest more of their time and efforts to students, if they would be enhanced through the fiscal system.

Interviewed representatives of VET schools also indicated insufficient funding of practical training in the schools:

Our school does it’s best to create suitable conditions for the acquisition of initial practical skills by equipping the training places, purchasing new equipment, tools and materials,



investing in training of VET teachers. However, the amount of funding received through the vouchers of VET students is insufficient for the updating of the technologies in the workshops. Therefore the school seeks to receive additional funding by participating in the different projects and cooperating with social partners.

State funding is not sufficient for the organisation of practical training and informal vocational training in the school. Enterprises also do not receive any funding for the organisation of internships.

It can be concluded, that funding remains one of the crucial issues of the introduction and development of apprenticeship. Both employers and VET schools expect the state to play very important role in the funding of apprenticeship training.

11 Concluding remarks

Above analysed preconditions for introduction and development of apprenticeship in the VET system of Lithuania can be summarised by distinguishing the following categories:

- preconditions which support the introduction and development of apprenticeship;
- obstacles for the introduction and development of apprenticeship;
- potential benefits of the introduction of apprenticeship and it's potential contribution to the solution of current and future problems of VET in Lithuania;
- potential risks and dangers in the introduction and development of apprenticeship in Lithuania.

There are the following important **preconditions which support the introduction and development of apprenticeship:**

1. External economic pressures, especially development of industry and service sector, increasing demand of skilled specialists and increasing interest of employers to invest in skills and to be more actively involved in the initial vocational training.
2. Political initiatives of government to move the current supply based model of VET to more demand led VET by increasing the flexibility and responsiveness of vocational training to the needs of market. There can be mentioned such initiatives, as intended introduction of the national system of modular training (national modular curricula), opening the possibility for VET schools to become the public entities with co-ownership of enterprises and other stakeholders, establishment of sectoral-practical training centres, legal introduction of apprenticeship, as the form of vocational training owned and organised by the employers.
3. Current practices and experiences of cooperation between employers and VET institutions in organising and provision of internships in the enterprises for VET students.
4. Experience of organization of practical training and re-training of new employees at the workplaces, developed by the part of enterprises in the last decades in reacting to



the shortages of skilled workforce and mismatches of the qualifications of the graduates of VET schools and higher education institutions with the needs of workplaces.

5. Increasing interest of employers organizations in the issues related to organization of vocational training and human resource development. Sectoral employers organizations become more and more active in initiating and supporting the processes of continuing vocational training, Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Trades are more active in the field of initial vocational education and training (registering and supervision of curricula, assessment of competences, etc.).

There can be discerned the following **obstacles for the introduction and development of apprenticeship**:

1. Lack of economically and financially strong enterprises, especially in the industrial sector. It is related to the specificities of economical and industrial development of the country in the past. Industrial development acquired significant pace only in the period of Soviet Union, whereas collapse of its centrally planned economy and regime could not permit the smooth transfer of industry to the new conditions of market economy and led to the complex socioeconomic restructurings and transitions. Therefore many enterprises today are not economically and financially ready to take the obligations for the organization of apprenticeship.
2. The lack of understanding of the long-term benefits of apprenticeship amongst the employers and other social stakeholders, caused by many factors, amongst which we can discern dominated short-term development orientation related to the competition strategy based on low labour costs. Only quite few enterprises apply strategic planning of their human resources.
3. Shortages of the legal regulation and fiscal policy. Current laws and legal regulations, as well as fiscal policy do not foresee any measures or mechanisms, which could enhance and motivate employers to invest in apprenticeship and to take part in it. For example, the expenses of practical training of apprentices, incurred by the enterprises can not be included in the regular costs of production, what would help to decrease the rate of taxation.
4. Absence of mentors for apprenticeship in the enterprises. In order to introduce and to develop apprenticeship training, it is necessary to have specially prepared and qualified mentors from the staff of enterprises, possessing both highly developed practical skills and pedagogical competences permitting to train apprentices. There was executed one ESF funded project coordinated by the Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Trades for the selection and training of 1000 of such mentors in the enterprises, but this project did not have any significant follow-up.

There can be discerned the following **potential benefits of the introduction of apprenticeship**:



1. Increased attractiveness of initial vocational education and training for the young people, resulting from the improved employability of apprentices. Apprenticeship would not replace school based initial vocational training but rather supplement it by offering the new alternative of pathways of vocational training and acquisition of qualifications.
2. Contribution to the successful implementation of the occupational-sectoral standards and national system of modular training in VET. Successful introduction and development of apprenticeship model, foreseen in the new legislation of VET would create effective institutional and methodical basis for the introduction of modular training. Flexibility of modular training, from the other side, is favourable for the development of apprenticeship.
3. Rationalisation of the funding of vocational training with increased share of the co-funding of employers.

There can be discerned the following **potential risks and dangers in the introduction and development of apprenticeship in Lithuania:**

1. Risk of deterioration of the quality of VET provided via apprenticeship due to the lack of readiness of employers and their organisations to play the role of organisation of apprenticeship and the weak preparedness of trade unions to involve in the quality assurance of apprenticeship and defence of the rights of apprentices.
2. Risk of the development of scattered and unequal system of initial VET with different levels of training quality and different access possibilities. High quality apprenticeship can become accessible only to the minority of applicants due to the scarcity of high quality training workplaces proposed by strong and motivated employers, while in the same time many of the workplaces used for apprenticeship could not lead to the acquisition of high quality skills, competences and qualifications. Another risk is related to the possible devaluation of the theoretical knowledge and background in vocational training, if the low-skilled workforce enterprises would make the dominant share of apprenticeship providers.



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