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**Comparative analysis of apparent good practice
in Apprenticeship System**



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WORK PACKAGE 3b

**SYNTHESIS REPORT ON COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE
DEVELOPMENT OF APPRENTICESHIP
IN GERMANY, FRANCE, THE NETHERLANDS AND THE UK**

REPORT

Comparative analysis of apparent good practice in Apprenticeship System

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1 INTRODUCTION

This report draws upon the national reports prepared by partners on the key features of the apprenticeship systems in the benchmark countries (England, France, Germany and the Netherlands), whose contribution is hereby acknowledged by the authors assembling this report. Given the substantial contextual differences between the benchmark countries, it is not surprising that there are major differences in their apprenticeship systems. While these differences limit the extent to which comparisons can be made, the thematic approach adopted is designed to facilitate comparison and identify apparent good practice within these systems.

The approach to exploring scope for transfer of good practice entails two aspects. First, there is the extent to which a practice might be transferable from a benchmark country and secondly there is the extent to which it can be adopted in the receiving country. Both aspects are strongly influenced by the similarities and differences in context between the benchmark and receiving countries. This report is concerned with the first notion of transferability, while the next stage, of creating Guidelines proposing aspects of a system of apprenticeship in Lithuania, is concerned more with the receptiveness of the destination country to adopting particular initiatives.

To this end, the report is structured as follows. Section 2 deals with the different contexts of the benchmark countries, particularly features that have a bearing on their apprenticeship systems. The key features considered are grouped into socio-cultural, economic, political, institutional and demographic contexts.

Section 3 analyses the apparent good practice identified in the national reports of the benchmark countries. The apparent good practice is presented under major themes dealing respectively with the organisation of apprentice training; contractual arrangements, access to and promotion of apprenticeships; regulatory arrangements; curriculum design, training time and progression; funding arrangements and stakeholder roles.

2 CONTEXTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

This section compares the key contextual features of the apprenticeship systems in the four benchmark countries to explore the extent to which the apparent good practice identified in the following section may be susceptible to transfer to the destination country. Rather than undertaking a PEST analysis, we consider these features grouped into socio-cultural, economic, political, institutional and demographic since these issues appear to us most pertinent to the consideration of apprenticeship systems.

Different socio-economic models of skills formation are reflected in differences in training regimes, which affect the apprenticeship systems that are developed within them. Reflecting the economic, social, political and cultural contexts in which they were created, national training systems are ‘embedded in broader systems of social relations with which they interact’ (Rainbird, 1993: 185). There is also considerable variety in the extent to which training is a subject of social dialogue (Winterton, 2007).

Groups of countries have similar training systems and various authorities have proposed classifications into typologies according to their common characteristics. Furth (1985) distinguished three families of training systems: the schooling system, where most provision is integrated into formal education, typified by the USA and Japan; the dual system with its emphasis on apprenticeships and workplace learning supported by periods spent in vocational schools, typified by Germany and Switzerland; and the mixed system where more importance is attached to the non-formal sector, as in the UK. Green (1991) distinguished employer-led training systems like Germany, from education-led models, contrasting those with specialist VET institutions, such as France, Italy and Japan, with those where VET is integrated into the normal schooling system, as in Sweden. Calloids (1994) distinguished three systems: enterprise-based systems like Japan; institutional systems like France; and the dual system typified by Germany.

Others have offered more comprehensive taxonomies according to the provenance of the identified differences in training systems. Rainbird (1993) distinguished three models of training systems: the market model characterized by dependence on the labour market and limited institutionalization, as in Italy and the UK; the educational model based on state provision, like France; and the organized social partner model, like Germany. The ILO (1998) contrasted five types of training systems: co-operative systems (Austria, Germany, Switzerland and Latin America); enterprise systems (Japan); voluntarist systems (UK, USA); state-driven demand-led systems (Korea, Singapore, Taiwan and China); and supply-led systems of transition economies (Africa and Asia). The OECD (1998) similarly distinguished market-driven systems, subdivided into the high-skills approach (USA and Canada) and the low-skills approach (Australia, New Zealand and the UK); consensual systems (the Nordic countries, Austria, Benelux, France, Germany and Switzerland); firm-based consensual systems (Japan); and the systems in ‘intermediate catch-up countries’ (Greece, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Mexico and Turkey). Ashton et al (2000) distinguished five types of training systems: the market model associated with Anglophone countries (Australia, Canada, New



Zealand, the UK and USA); the corporatist model (Austria, Denmark, Germany, Netherlands and Switzerland); the developmental state model (Japan, Korea, Singapore and Taiwan); and the neo-market model (Brazil, Chile, Mexico).

These classifications display considerable agreement and most distinguish school-based systems from enterprise and work-based systems, as well as contrasting state-led from market systems. While each country has its own historical and institutional specificities, with some simplification four families can be identified: two variants of the dominant mainland European neo-corporatist model, the traditional Anglophone liberal market model and the transitional socio-economic model associated with the new Central and Eastern European member states.

2.1 Social and cultural traditions

An apprenticeship system is not only rooted in its particular training system but, like the wider system itself, reflects social and cultural traditions. The apprenticeship systems of the benchmark countries were each developed in their particular histories and in confronting these social and cultural peculiarities we are better able to see the extent to which the similarities and differences might facilitate or inhibit transfer.

Despite the differences in detail, apprenticeships in the benchmark countries share many features and have a common root in the medieval craft guilds. While there is no universally agreed definition of what constitutes an apprenticeship they inevitably involve developing theoretical knowledge appropriate to an occupation, combining this with practical experience gained on the job and developing the skills to maintain occupational competence in the face of change. The key elements are a structured programme of training, combining part-time education and work experience, leading to a recognised qualification (Ryan and Unwin, 2001). Employer engagement is crucial: the apprentice and employer are bound contractually ('indentured') and the relationship is a particular form of employment contract, hence wages are normally paid. Often the state offers financial support for learning away from the workplace and the costs associated with obtaining the qualification (Fuller and Unwin, 2003). Whilst these characteristics would have been uncontested 50 years ago, some of these elements can no longer be assumed as a result of recent initiatives in a number of countries to 'modernize' apprenticeships and make them more flexible.

2.2 Economic context

The economic context in which an apprenticeship system develops can be expected to have a major influence on its character. The benchmark countries are not markedly different in terms of economic structure but they do differ in the extent to which, and the means through which, each economy is coordinated.

France and Germany now exhibit similar characteristics in terms of macro-economic coordination although there are important historical differences. While the Netherlands shares

some of these characteristics as a Euro zone member state, the polder model is something of a hybrid between continental European macro-economic coordination and the British liberal market model. These differences are important for apprenticeship systems. It is easier to construct and sustain an overarching apprenticeship system in a coordinated economy than in one that is left to free market forces and this can be seen clearly in the differences between Germany and the UK, which represent the extremes of the benchmark countries considered.

Another important aspect of the economic context is the level of industrialization and the role of industry in the development of the national economy. Industry and industrial work historically provided an important basis for the development of apprenticeship, so the presence of developed industry with strong and advanced enterprises is a crucial factor for successful and effective apprenticeships. All analysed countries represent so called 'post-industrial' economies, where industry, although declining in terms of employment, still has strategic importance in the creation of gross national product, the development of exports and economic growth (especially in Germany and in the Netherlands). Industrial enterprises in these countries traditionally lead the field of apprenticeship both in terms of quality of training and volume of apprenticeship training places.

2.3 Political context (and legislation relating to apprenticeships)

Apprenticeship has been systematically regulated in all of the benchmark countries, which reflects the essential disparity of power between the apprentice and the employer or master. The legislation is designed to ensure that an apprentice receives proper training and is not exploited as a source of cheap labour.

One of the key features of the political context, important for the development of apprenticeship, is the political-economic orientation of the state towards skills development in society. Here there are several important differences between the benchmark countries.

In Germany, VET and skills development is strongly related to the needs of the economy and exhibits strong involvement of the social partners. Legal regulation of general VET is executed in a decentralised way and is under the jurisdiction of the federal authorities. The constitution states that the school system in total is subject to regulation by the federal states. Initial vocational education and training is regarded not only as an instrument for the development of human resources for the national economy, but also as a field of personal development for young people:

VET, including apprenticeship, is based upon the principle of enhancing individual capacity or potential within a broadly defined occupational field. Qualifications, developed by the social partners (employers and trade unions), are awarded on completion of a regulated and recognised programme, comprising occupational knowledge and competences as well as general and civic education, thus providing for the development of the person within the occupation and as a citizen in the wider society (Brockmann et al., 2010).

Political-economic orientation of VET and skills development in France combines a strong coordinating role of the state with important involvement of stakeholders and social partners,



especially in the fields of VET legislation, funding and setting of standards. National policies of VET and skills development integrate the orientations to social cohesion and development of the market economy by ensuring a variety of forms of training provision and measures directed to meeting the needs of economic development, fostering employability of youth and vulnerable groups, as well as to improving the quality and stability of employment.

One of the key features of the political-economic orientation of VET and skills development in the UK is the voluntarist approach of successive British governments towards vocational education and training. One consequence of this voluntarism is a liberal and patchy legal regulation of VET that contributes to the generally low status of VET (including apprenticeship):

The lack of a legislative framework which sets out minimum standards for an apprenticeship, since the demise of most of the earlier statutory Industrial Training Boards (ITBs) in the 1970s, together with lack of employer commitment, accounts for the current low status and standards of apprenticeship and the lack of available training places (Brockmann et al., 2010).

Decreasing stability of employment relationships, labour market deregulation, precarious employment and a lack of coordination of social dialogue at sectoral and national levels create serious obstacles for the development of apprenticeship:

The increasing use of agencies, temporary workers and the self-employed has meant that employee status is no longer necessarily identifiable with the individual permanent contract of employment and that it is more and more difficult to integrate apprentices and trainees into the workforce and to provide the necessary mentorship (Brockmann et al., 2010).

Two main shifts in the development of Dutch VET policy since the 1969 can be noted: a search for efficiency and a fight for accessibility of lower educated youth. There is a strong sectoral approach in the development of VET:

The sectoral policy is based on the implementation of sectoral qualification structures, in which the labour-markets demands are translated into educational trajectories (Brockmann et al., 2010).

As in other partners' countries, VET policy of the Netherlands is oriented both to social and economic demands:

The main issue is preparing and supporting youngsters and adults for lifelong learning, according to the needs of a rapidly changing economy. Social demands are fulfilled by a general target for basic qualifications (qualified to participate in the economy).

State regulation of VET is combined with the autonomy of VET providers:

The power of traditional institutions is still quite strong in the Dutch case, connecting school to work in an industrial paradigm through forecasting and prescriptions. However, the Minister for Education in the Netherlands seems to have relaxed the position with (VET) colleges in the last policy document allowing educational content to be chosen by school boards with only a small core curriculum decided upon politically by the government (Nieuwenhuis et al., 2004)

Looking from the perspective of comparability of the political-economic orientation of VET, France could present interesting and relevant cases for policy learning in the development of apprenticeship in Lithuania because of existing similarities of state policy approaches in VET and the strong influence of the state in a coordinating role in VET. From the point of view of current liberal (or neo-liberal) educational policy orientation in Lithuania, the examples and practices of England and to some extent the Netherlands could also be of interest. Despite significant differences in the context of VET policy in Germany and Lithuania, federal governance approach and well established and developed structures of social partnership in the sectors and regions makes the German approach to VET policy very attractive for designers and developers of VET policy in Lithuania. Of particular importance is the attention paid in the German system to individual and holistic education and skills development centred on the notion of *Beruf*.

2.4 Institutional context

Analysing the institutional context of apprenticeship development in the partner countries demonstrates the following elements: the complexity and transparency of the institutional structure of systems of qualifications; the extent of centralization or decentralization of these systems; and the patterns of coordination of activities and interactions of different institutions involved in these systems.

The complexity and transparency of the institutional structure of national systems of qualifications in the benchmark countries can be assessed in terms of the number of institutions, variety of their roles and complexity of their interactions. In these respects the countries exhibit interesting differences.

Regarding the number of institutions in the national systems of qualifications, a very dense institutional framework is typical for France and the UK, but for different reasons. A multiplicity of different public and regulatory institutions in France is caused by the specific path of institutional development of society, marked by a traditional orientation towards centralization and a strong role for the state on one side, and a dense network of different social institutions seeking to defend the rights of interest groups (especially in the field of legislation), on the other side. The dense network of actors and institutions in the UK is more related to the orientation towards deregulation and meeting the needs of the market economy. With respect to Germany and the Netherlands, here the multiplicity of institutions and stakeholders is effectively 'outweighed' by clear and transparent coordination of their activities, based on a strongly developed organisation of social partners in most sectors of the economy and well developed tripartite social dialogue and concertation.

In terms of the centralization of institutions in the national systems of qualifications in these countries, in most cases the features of centralized regulation of institutions are softened by the active involvement and participation of stakeholders in the decision making processes and, especially, in the process of legislation (France, Germany and the Netherlands), as well as by the wide autonomy of actors. For example, provision of practical training and



apprenticeship in the dual VET system of Germany is influenced by the high degree of autonomy of enterprises to decide upon different aspects of the organization of apprenticeships and training (like the ratio of the time an apprentice spends in a real working environment and in the workshop; autonomy of VET teachers in organising the training process and in applying training methods), which creates variety in the quality of provision of practical skills and vocational knowledge depending on the size of enterprises, level of technological development and other factors. Provision of knowledge and skills in the dual VET system is influenced by a highly developed institutional setting of social partnership and rich traditions of cooperation between VET schools, employers, trade unions and professional organizations in this field. Training providers in France (for example, apprenticeship training centres CFAs – *Centres de Formations d’Apprentis*) also enjoy large autonomy in designing and implementing teaching methods and supporting instruments and tools. In the Netherlands the regional vocational training centres (*regionale opleidingscentra* or ROCs) exhibit a high degree of autonomy in provision of training. ROCs can, for instance, spread out training programmes over more or fewer years, and are encouraged to enter the market for further training and retraining for adult workers, unemployed and others. In the UK, the absence of centralized traditions and approaches influences the extent of flexibility of learning and training pathways.

Complexity of the interactions of institutions, amongst other factors, influences and is influenced by the intensiveness and quality of established institutional cooperation networks. Here the partner countries present certain differences. In Germany, France and the Netherlands these networks of cooperation are largely developed in the sectors of economy and on the initiative of organised sectoral stakeholders. In Germany and the Netherlands the state plays the role of coordinator and initiator of dialogue and cooperation between the stakeholder institutions, whereas in France the regulatory power of state is stronger. For example have both countries France and Germany the policy of shortening the VET courses from 48 months (France, BAC PRO) respective 42 months (Germany, some complex profiles) to 36 months. Whereas in France this approach is mandatory for all existing profiles in Germany only profiles that are renewed are shortened. In England, cooperation between stakeholders in the field of education and training is more developed and more strongly sustained at the local (bilateral) level. The role and influence of sectoral stakeholders (for example, sector skills councils) vary considerably. Sometimes there are special institutions that ensure and coordinate effective cooperation between the institutions and stakeholders. For example, in the Netherlands expertise centres have been established, forming an essential link between the organised labour market (enterprises, employers’ organizations and trade unions) and training providers.

2.5 Demographic characteristics

Differences in demographics and labour markets between the benchmark countries may affect the extent to which apparent good practice is susceptible to transfer to Lithuania or any other destination country. The major demographic change across Europe is the ageing workforce. The number of young people has been declining, at different rates, across all 27 member states since 1985. In 2006 young people under 30 represented more than 35% of the total EU population and Figure 1 below shows continued decline in the young population that represent the current and future cohort from which apprentices will largely be drawn.

Age / Country	DE	FR	NL	UK	LT
0-9	9.0	12.5	12.1	11.5	9.5
10-19	10.7	12.4	12.1	12.7	14.2
20-29	11.9	12.8	12.0	13.3	14.6

Table 1: Young people (percentage of total population) 2009 (EUROSTAT 2011)

Table 1 shows that while France and the Netherlands have stable generational replacement at this time, Germany and the UK will face a significant reduction in the young population, as does Lithuania. With birth rates inadequate to replace the ageing workforce and a need to increase the proportion of the labour force with high skills, there is every likelihood of future shortages of intermediate skills in the workforce, the skills that are most often developed through apprenticeship systems.

In terms of employment rates there are also some interesting similarities and differences according to the most recent Eurostat (2010) data from the European Labour Force Survey. From Table 2, showing the 2010 employment rates for the benchmark countries and Lithuania, the differences between the benchmark countries appear significant but less than the differences between them and Lithuania.

	DE	FR	NL	UK	LT
Total	75	69	78	74	62
Men	80	74	83	78	62
Women	69	65	72	67	63

Table 2: Employment rates 2010 (Q2; percentage of working age population) (EUROSTAT 2011)

These employment rates of course reflect the contraction following the financial crisis that began towards the end of 2008. When compared with Table 3, showing the employment rates for 2008, just before the crisis, it appears that Lithuania was more affected than the benchmark countries, although in most cases the employment situation has clearly deteriorated. Germany alone seems to have slightly increased employment during the crisis.



	DE	FR	NL	UK	LT
Total	74	70	79	76	73
Men	80	75	85	82	76
Women	68	66	71	68	68

Table 3: Employment rates 2008 (Q2; percentage of working age population) (EUROSTAT 2011)

Employment rates may be misleading because they do not take into account the number of hours worked, only whether or not an individual is in employment. A fairer comparison is offered by full-time equivalent (FTE) employment rates, developed by the European Commission (2010) and defined as total hours worked (in all jobs held by the individual) divided by the average hours worked in full time jobs. On this basis, as shown in Table 4, the differences are substantially reduced, as are employment rates in general.

	DE	FR	NL	UK	LT
Total	61	60	60	61	60
Men	71	68	71	70	60
Women	50	52	45	50	60

Table 4: FTE employment rates 2009 (percentage of working age population) (EUROSTAT 2011)

Table 4 suggests that the major differences in the crude employment rates are explained in large part by the extent of part-time working. Total FTE employment rates are almost perfectly aligned around 60%, with men's FTE around 70% and women's around 50%. The difference with Lithuania is the absence of this gender differential of 20 percentage points.

Even FTE employment rates give a partial picture since employment rates vary substantially with age and with level of educational attainment. Table 5 compares the benchmark and destination countries in terms of employment rates by age group.

Age group	DE	FR	NL	UK	LT
Total	75	69	78	74	62
15-24	44	30	66	47	18
25-54	81	81	83	80	72
55-64	58	40	57	57	48

Table 5: Employment rates by age 2010 (percentage of persons in that age group) (EUROSTAT 2011)

The caveat must be made that these are again crude employment rates and FTE rates would certainly alter the picture, but it gives some clue to differences in the labour markets of the countries concerned. Most obviously the employment rate of France, which is on a par with

the other benchmark countries for the 25-54 age group, is held down by relatively low labour market participation rates among young and older workers, a situation that is even more marked in Lithuania and exacerbated by an employment rate for the 25-54 age group that is ten percentage points lower than the benchmark countries.

It is also important to consider employment and unemployment rates by level of educational achievement, which is presented in Tables 6 and 7:

	DE	FR	NL	UK	LT
ISCED 5-6	86	81	87	82	85
ISCED 3-4	75	69	78	71	58
ISCED 0-2	57	53	61	55	29

Table 6: Employment rates by educational level 2010 (Q2; percentages) (EUROSTAT 2011)

	DE	FR	NL	UK	LT
ISCED 5-6	3,2	5,6	2,8	4,1	7,8
ISCED 3-4	7,0	8,8	4,0	8,3	21,9
ISCED 0-2	15,1	15,4	7,4	14,2	41,1

Table 7: Unemployment rates by educational level in 2010 (percentages) (EUROSTAT 2011)

A number of features are evident in Tables 6 and 7. Firstly, there is a universal educational premium across all countries: the probability that an individual will be in employment correlates positively with educational attainment. This is clear for all countries at the tertiary level (ISCED 5-6) but employment rates at intermediate skills levels (ISCED 3-4) show some variation. Germany and the Netherlands have the highest employment rates for this group suggesting that the apprenticeship systems that produces these individuals is well adapted to labour market needs. France and the UK do less well, and probably for different reasons, but generally suggesting that the training (not all of which is under apprenticeship) is less well adapted to the needs of the labour market, a situation that seems more serious in Lithuania. Notwithstanding the educational premium, it is worth commenting on the extent to which those with low or basic skills nonetheless manage to find employment (although there is a big difference between level 0 and level 2) in the benchmark countries. Whether this reflects labour shortages or the fact that so much work is still designed along Taylorist lines is a matter for investigation elsewhere.

What is a stark contrast is the very low employment rate of this low skills group in Lithuania. One possible explanation of this situation is that in general the share of unskilled and low-skilled workforce is comparatively low and the majority of it comprises young drop-outs from secondary or vocational education or older long-term unemployed persons naturally facing more serious difficulties in finding employment. There is statistical evidence of a decrease in



employment of the low skilled and unskilled workforce: for example, employment in craft and related trades decreased from 290,000 in 2006 to 189,400 in 2010, whereas employment of unskilled and low-skilled workforce in elementary occupations decreased from 160,600 in 2006 to 112,100 in 2010. The number of employed with vocational lower secondary education decreased from 68,200 in 2000 to 37,000 in 2009, with general lower secondary education from 105,800 in 2000 to 69,900 in 2009, and primary education from 50,400 in 2000 to 5,400 in 2009. This decrease of employment is related not only to economic crisis or changing labour market demand, but also with workforce emigration, where the low-skilled and unskilled workforce constitute a large part. This can partially explain the statistical data, showing decrease of unemployment amongst the low-skilled and unskilled workforce: the number of unemployed with vocational lower secondary education decreased from 23,900 in 2000 to 9,900 in 2009, whilst unemployed with general lower secondary education falling from 40,800 in 2000 to 29,700 in 2009.

Another related statistical indicator is the share of the skills levels of workforce (skills distribution). Statistical data on the distribution of skills within the workforce is quite similar in all benchmark countries, with perhaps the exception of the UK, which has a higher share of low-skilled and unskilled in the workforce.

The UK's skills base has improved significantly over recent years as reforms have begun to succeed in driving improvements. The proportion of people with a Level 4 and above qualification has risen from 21 per cent in 1994 to 29 percent in 2005. The proportion of people with no qualifications has fallen from 22 per cent in 1994 to 13 per cent in 2005. The number of Apprentices in England has grown from 76,000 in 1997 to 256,000 in 2005.8 Today around 42 per cent of young people age 18-30 participate in higher education, more than ever before.

In OECD comparisons of 30 countries, the UK lies 17th on low skills, 20th on intermediate and 11th on high skills. 7 million adults lack functional numeracy and 5 million lack functional literacy. 17 million adults lack Level 1 numeracy – equivalent to a low level GCSE. The proportion of people with low or no qualifications is more than double that in Sweden, Japan and Canada (Leitch Review of Skills, 2006).

Statistical data demonstrate that the skills distribution of the workforce in France is dominated by the medium skilled workforce: in 2009 unskilled workers represented 6.1%, medium skilled employees 76.5% and highly skilled employees 16.6% (INSEE, 2009).

In the Netherlands the number of employees with lower and extended lower education has been decreasing in the recent years, whereas the share of employees with intermediate and higher education has increased strongly. Like other populations of advanced industrial societies the Dutch workforce has achieved unprecedented levels of formal credentials (Batenburg et al., 1999).

Statistical data for Lithuania also show a high increase in the high skilled among the workforce. According to recent statistical data (2nd quarter 2011) some 493,900 employees belong to the highly skilled category (35.8%), 776,600 are medium skilled employees

(56.3%) and 108,000 are unskilled persons (7.9%) (Statistics Lithuania, 2011). In general there is a decreasing number of unskilled and low skilled in the workforce (from 160,600 in 2006 to 112,100 in 2010 and 108,000 in 2011). Unlike the benchmark countries, the increasing proportion of the workforce with higher education in Lithuania causes a serious problem of over-qualification and skills distribution is influenced by intensive workforce emigration.

On the one hand, similar trends of skills distribution in the partner countries create favourable contextual preconditions for policy learning in the field of apprenticeship development. The measures of apprenticeship proposed by the UK, France, Germany and Netherlands can be treated as one of the essential factors influencing the development of a skilled (medium skilled) workforce and, to some extent, these measures have been designed and implemented considering the workforce skills distribution in these countries. On the other hand, it is necessary to consider specific factors which distinguish the development of the distribution of workforce skills in Lithuania from the benchmark countries, such as workforce emigration and over-qualification issues, as well as a comparatively high mismatch between workforce supply (in terms of skills profiles) and labour market demand. Therefore specific attention should be paid to those measures and instruments of apprenticeship susceptible to addressing these factors.



3 BEST PRACTICE IN APPRENTICESHIP DEVELOPMENT

This section of the report offers an overview of the different concrete cases of success and failures in the development of apprenticeship in the benchmark countries GERMANY, FRANCE, THE NETHERLANDS and ENGLAND.

The issues are grouped into five areas:

- 3.1 Organisation of training
- 3.2 Contractual and regulatory arrangements, access to apprenticeship and promotion of apprenticeships
- 3.3 Curriculum design, training time and progression
- 3.4 Funding arrangements
- 3.5 Stakeholder roles

We choose the following factors for comparative analysis which are important for policy learning purposes:

- | | |
|---|---|
| A | Fit of the analysed apparent good practices to the context and conditions of the implementation and development of apprenticeship in Lithuania. How are the analysed experiences and practices of apprenticeship comparable with the context and conditions of introduction of apprenticeship in Lithuania? How would the application of such measures and experiences react to this context and conditions (no influence, changes of the context, rejection of measures by the context, changes and adaptations of the applied measures and experiences, etc.)? |
| B | Extent to which the goals and objectives of analysed practices respond to the needs and challenges of the introduction and development of apprenticeship in Lithuania. How the goals and objectives of analysed experiences and measures of apprenticeship are comparable with the aims of introduction of apprenticeship in Lithuania (to increase flexibility of VET provision and matching between skills demand and supply, etc.)? |
| C | Potential of analysed practices of apprenticeship to provide know-how needed for proposing original and innovative solutions for the introduction and development of apprenticeship in Lithuania. To what extent and in what way could the analysed experiences and measures of apprenticeship in Germany, France, England and the Netherlands contribute to the development and introduction of new measures and instruments of apprenticeship in Lithuania? What are these innovative measures and instruments that could be developed in learning from the experiences and practices of the benchmark countries? |

3.1 Organisation of training

GERMANY

In Germany the organization of apprenticeship training displays a number of features that are of interest in the context of this project. Organisation is based on the combination of flexible regulation by the state and various voluntary approaches of employers which depend on the specific needs and requirements of enterprises. This organisation is a very important factor helping enterprises to integrate apprenticeship training in the work processes. Enterprises have to integrate the training into work processes because of new regulations concerning the subjects of the final exam. The renewed vocational profiles (VPs) offer sufficient space to do so and to organise training that is close to real work processes. The organisation and provision of theoretical training is also very flexible and can be adapted according to the number of trainees and their distribution according to different VPs. VET schools with big classes of Metal and Electric industry apprentices can and do co-operate closely with the enterprises while in classes of handicraft apprentices they often combine different VPs just to fill the classes (otherwise there would not be sufficient teachers).

Training organisation is sufficiently flexible to adapt to such specificities as constantly changing location of workplaces in the sectors, as for example the constant change of the location of workplaces in construction sector or strongly established work processes in the sector of hotels, restaurants and shops. Because of the very different training arrangements needed for any apprenticeship in the sector of construction we found some specificities arising to one dominant fact: 80 % or 90 % of the workplaces belong to construction sites, which constantly change their location. The employer's representative called a construction enterprise a travelling circus (*Wanderzirkus*).

As the labour market does not provide the qualifications necessary for a middle or upper class shop, hotel, or restaurant the latter all have to participate in GVET. The sector as a whole is a combination of work processes (seller, shop assistant, cook, waiter, housekeeping, etc.) so there is no possibility to separate VET from the place of business. Typically the enterprises offer the traditional training model of combining an experienced and well skilled employee with an apprentice (master-assistant-system, chef-commis-system).

Issues concerning the organisation of training are coordinated by the agreements of the involved stakeholders (schools and employers) and this coordination is executed by an ad hoc approach: reacting to the specific needs and requirements of apprentices, or to the specificities regarding the capabilities of enterprises to cover complete contents of VPs in the course of apprenticeship.

In the apprenticeship course in the metalworking sector depending on the persons involved ordinarily there is a sufficient or close coordination regarding content, timeframe, and special needs between schools and enterprises. As everything which is not defined by law is voluntary to the stakeholders, some schools in some regions may show a very different practice. We found examples of investment by enterprise to improve the school's equipment and contrasting examples where class rooms were only of the lowest standard.



The typical enterprise in the handicraft sectors is small which causes a high degree of involvement of apprentices in the business process so only schools can provide systematic VET. Sometimes there is a deep specialisation of a single enterprise so it needs help and coordination in completing the full range of a VP. In that case some vocational schools operate as coordinators. Members of the relevant exam council's teachers monitor to ensure the content of VET is taught according the syllabus. In the sector of handicraft this surveillance plays an important role in maintaining quality.

FRANCE

Organisation of apprenticeship in France is based on the alternating training approach implying duality in the provision of theoretical and practical training. One of the most interesting cases of the organisation of apprenticeship in France is the coordination of theoretical and practical training in the CFAs (apprenticeship training centres), which provide complementary theoretical and school based practical training for the apprentices undergoing on-the-job learning and training in the companies. This pedagogical approach is referred to as alternance pedagogy and is specific to an apprenticeship characterised by the following features (according to Circular n° 2005-204):

- Focussing on company training at the workplace where the teachers/trainers use the workplace experience to design the VET progress;
- Dividing and distributing the learning and training activities between the company and the CFA based on a specific schedule;
- Securing a complementary role of the CFA in terms of off-the-job provided learning and training where the CFA covers what cannot be done at workplace within the company. This is due to the fact that the size and the nature or range of the activities of the enterprise (especially if it is small and/or has a limited range of exercised activities connected the professional units) does not allow it sometimes to cover the professional units as required to conform with the established training curriculum and the requirements of the occupational referential standards in the domain of the targeted qualification.
- Securing management and continuing communication between the CFA, the company and the apprentice through well established coordination, communication, control and follow-up intermediaries (training master and pedagogical tutor) and tools (liaison document, apprenticeship control book and check-up sheets) as described in next heading.

This approach to the organisation of apprenticeship provides a very interesting example for solving problems related to the lack of the capacities of enterprises (especially SMEs) to provide consistent theoretical and practical training covering all competences or learning outcomes indicated in the VPs, VET standards or curricula. Special attention should be paid

to the two effective instruments of this alternance pedagogy: the liaison book CFA-enterprise and CFA check-up sheets.

The Liaison book CFA-enterprise is usually established by the CFA in collaboration with the concerned sector body: chamber of commerce and industry / chamber of trades and crafts/ chamber of agriculture. It contains identification information concerning the trainee, the training timetable, planned visits to the enterprise, and detailed training programme units and their contents (including implementation follow-up sheets) within the training centre and within the enterprises. This book is extremely useful coordination, follow-up and control instrument as it has the following uses:

- It enables the apprentices to coordinate the practical training they receive in the enterprises with the general and technical training they undertake at the CFA. It also allows them to prepare better their examinations.
- It is used as a source of reference for monitoring progress achieved by the apprentices at both the CFA and the enterprise.
- It allows the apprenticeship master and the CFA trainers to link the practical and theoretical knowledge as they can easily see and follow the individual progress made by each apprentice.
- It is also used by the apprenticeship inspector who advises the apprenticeship masters and monitors training progress within the enterprise by looking at the control books during his/her visits to the company and when talking to the concerned apprentices and their follow-up supervisors and tutors.

The CFA check-up sheet is also designed and used to establish a link between the CFA and the enterprise and offers the following advantages:

- It allows the apprentices to make notes about their workplace and look into the various aspects of the occupation in close collaboration with the person in charge of their training.
- It enables the apprentice to be largely the agent of their own training by encouraging them to discover their occupational environment by appealing individually to their powers of observation, analysis, reflection and expression.

These instruments of information, accounting, reflection and assessment are rather universal in their characteristics and can be adjusted referring to the features and approach of apprenticeship organisation: in case of more centralised and state controlled model of apprenticeship organisation there can be more elaborated and developed functions of external control and assessment, while in case of decentralised approach of apprenticeship the functions and features of self-assessment and reflection can be strengthened.



NETHERLANDS

One of the distinctive features of apprenticeship organisation in the Netherlands is a strong reference to the industry or occupational category. Sectoral bodies being independent organisations managed by representatives of employers and employee organisations in the industry and sometimes representatives of schools for vocational education take responsibility for the volume and quality of apprenticeship and the control of examinations.

Another important feature of apprenticeship organisation is its flexibility which is ensured by the orientation to industrial branches and occupations and by the two legal types of apprenticeships: traditional apprenticeships, which include employment contracts enabling apprentices to spend most of the training time at the workplace and new types of apprenticeships which includes only learning contract leading to domination of the off-the job training. In traditional apprenticeship places the apprentice is an employee of the firm who takes part in the production process and usually most of the training is informal on-the-job (Frietman, 1990). In new style apprenticeship places often part of the training takes place off-the-job. Mostly the apprentice has a task book from the school that gives the practical assignments the apprentice has to fulfil in the firm. The apprentice has a supervisor from the school and a supervisor from the training firm. The supervisor from the school visits the training firm a few times during the apprenticeship period to discuss the progress of the apprentice. The supervisor in the firm, the so-called practical trainer, is responsible for daily supervision at the workplace. Large firms sometimes employ a full-time practical trainer. In smaller firms, on the other hand, the practical trainers are usually craftworkers who only spend part of their time on supervision (Smiths, 2005).

Another important feature of organisation is the role of school: since introduction of the framework of the Adult & Vocational Education Act (WEB) in 1996 the sectoral bodies do not interfere with the supervision of individual apprentices, this responsibility now rests with the school for vocational education. The school is also given the responsibility for the examination of the practical component at the apprenticeship place. From the other side, rather wide autonomy of sectoral stakeholders and schools in the organisation of apprenticeship create problems related to quality assurance.

A potential problem is that the sectoral bodies are both responsible for the quantity and the quality of apprenticeship places. These responsibilities may conflict with each other (Kraayvanger, 1998). Indeed, the criteria for approval seem to be less severe in industries where fewer firms are prepared to participate within the apprenticeship system. For that reason there exist considerable differences in quality both between and within sectors of industry. Small firms often seem to consider apprentices as cheap labour. The schools for vocational education that are responsible for the supervision of apprentices do not have the means to supervise the training in the firm intensively (Den Boer et al, 2001). Nieuwenhuis (2001) concludes, based on interviews with managers of schools for vocational education, that the schools for vocational education leave the responsibility for the quality of the learning at the apprenticeship place to the practical trainer in the training firm. From a survey among schools for vocational education, Leenknecht (2001) also concludes that very often the

apprenticeship place is of insufficient quality. Blokhuis et al (2002) have studied the quality of the apprenticeship places and internships of 4 of pupils of one school (ROC Eindhoven) and state that there are several problems with the quality of the apprenticeship places. Problems mentioned are that firms give priority to production, apprentices are not always given the possibility to work on their practical assignments from their task book and production tasks are not always relevant for their training (Smiths, 2005).

ENGLAND

One of the distinctive features of apprenticeship organisation in England is the central role of apprentices and their choices in defining the fields and types of learning. It permits them to construct their profiles of skills and knowledge according to their individual career plans and their individual reactions to the changes in the labour market. This also ensures high satisfaction of the apprentices and serves as a strong motivator of learning.

Organisation of apprenticeship in England is based on an individual contract between apprentices and training providers, where each apprentice must have a registered training provider (which can also be their employer). Apprenticeship 'qualification framework' areas enable apprentices considerable freedom of choice: young people are able to elect for either or both of the core entitlement or the additional entitlement. The core entitlement includes mathematics, English and ICT; the additional entitlement will include GCSE and 'A' levels and Diplomas.

Responsibilities for organisation of training in Apprenticeship Frameworks are shared by the proposer (an organisation with an idea for an Apprenticeship Framework but who does not necessarily want to develop one), a Framework Developer (the organisation that will develop the Framework for submission to the Issuing Authority) and the Issuing Authority (organisations appointed by the Secretary of State in England to issue Apprenticeship Frameworks for a particular sector and responsible for quality assurance of Apprenticeship Frameworks).



	SELECTION ISSUES	PROCESS ISSUES	OUTCOME ISSUES
EMPLOYERS	Use of selection processes used by the best in the sector. Clear rationale from employer about why they want apprentices.	Providing support necessary as specified in partnership agreement with trainer and apprentice. Maintaining close liaison with provider. Monitor progress in workplace. Provider ‘mentor’ in workplace’.	Clear signal by employer about the progression in workplace following Apprenticeship. Indicate importance of Apprenticeship to organisation.
TRAINING PROVIDERS	Ensure that employer and apprentice is capable of meeting demands of the Apprenticeship. To play a part in the selection process undertaken by employers.	Close monitoring of progress. Provide regular updates to employer and apprentice about progress to date. Provide a ‘mentor’. Avoid APL exemption confusion.	Ensure that training is relevant to the apprentice’s occupation.
APPRENTICES	Have a clear rationale for wanting to undertake the Apprenticeship	To articulate concerns about progression or lack of access to learning time	
Specialised expert organisations and institutions: NAS / SFA / YPLA	Establish good practice / rules to govern recruitment of apprentices and setting out obligations for providers, apprentices and employers. Establish rules of good engagement / partnership.	Establishment of a ‘mentor’ system for apprentices. Establish rules for monitoring progress and providing progress reports.	Follow up of those who drop-out.
Others	Provision of IAG about what to expect from an Apprenticeship – so would be apprentice can gauge employer commitment		Provision of IAG about to expect from an apprenticeship (e.g. rates of return from completing)

Table 8: Responsibilities: provision of training

The dominant form of the provision of training in the organisation of apprenticeships is in-house training in the enterprises. Only a small proportion of providers deliver training through sub-contracts or consortia.

Different delivery models are used by providers including programme-led apprenticeships, day release study and fully workplace delivered training, which are used according to the employer’s preferences. The vast majority of providers also operate flexible enrolment - colleges more so than other provider types. Programme-led apprenticeships (PLA) are seen as particularly important in sectors with strong health and safety requirements, but also for young learners who are furthest from the labour market and pose more of a risk to employers. PLA delivered in the workplace can then provide the employer a safe opportunity to ‘try’ the learner, with a view to employing them at the earliest opportunity.

Analysing organisation of apprenticeship in the UK, Fuller and Unwin distinguished expansive and restrictive models (Fuller, Unwin, 2011):

Expansive	Restrictive
<p>Dual status as learner and employee:</p> <p>Explicit institutional recognition and support for apprentice’s status as learner</p> <p>Participation in multiple communities of practice inside and outside the workplace</p> <p>Primary community of practice has shared ‘participative memory’: cultural inheritance of apprenticeship</p> <p>Broad: access to learning fostered by cross-company experiences built in to programme</p> <p>Access to range of qualifications including knowledge-based vocational qualification</p> <p>Planned time off the job including for college attendance and for reflection</p> <p>Gradual transition to full participation</p> <p>Apprenticeship aim: rounded expert who is full participant</p> <p>Post-apprenticeship vision: progression for career</p> <p>Apprenticeship is used as a vehicle for aligning the goals of developing the individual and organisational capability</p> <p>Apprenticeship design fosters opportunities to extend identity through boundary crossing</p> <p>Apprentices have full access to their workplace’s curriculum, values and goals</p>	<p>Status as employee dominates:</p> <p>Ambivalent institutional recognition and support for apprentice’s status as learner</p> <p>Restricted participation in multiple communities of practice</p> <p>Primary community of practice has little or no ‘participative memory’: no or little tradition of apprenticeship</p> <p>Narrow: access to learning restricted in terms of tasks, knowledge and location</p> <p>Access to competence-based qualification only</p> <p>Virtually all on job: limited opportunities for reflection</p> <p>Fast – transition as quick as possible</p> <p>Apprenticeship aim: partial expert but full participant</p> <p>Post-apprenticeship vision: static for job</p> <p>Apprenticeship is used to tailor individual capability to organisational need</p> <p>Apprenticeship design limits opportunity to extend identity: little boundary crossing experienced</p> <p>Apprentices have limited and restricted access to the range of skills and knowledge of their workplace</p>

Table 9: Expansive and restrictive models of organisation of apprenticeship



PLA is one of the measures of expansive type of apprenticeship organisation because it integrates school-based vocational education with workplace based skills development:

The idea was to use a full-time vocational education course as the first phase of an apprenticeship, followed by a full-time period with an employer in order to complete on-the-job training and achieve the competence required for the mandatory National Vocational Qualification (Fuller and Unwin, 2011).

According to Fuller and Unwin, PLAs and other best examples of apprenticeship in the UK ‘mirror the dual approach found in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland’:

They sit at the intersection between the UK employer-based and education-based paradigms, inhabiting what we refer to as the ‘vocational education paradigm’. Here apprenticeship is regarded as a model of learning underpinned by pedagogical and curricular principles and by close dialogue between the key parties in decision-making, whose role are specified formally (Fuller and Unwin, 2011).

Comparison of analysed practices of training organisation

The important issues for policy learning

A	Fit of the analysed apparent good practices to the context and conditions of the implementation and development of apprenticeship in Lithuania.
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The combination of comprehensive coordination of apprenticeship provision activities and processes with wide autonomy of enterprises and VET schools in this process in Germany is possible due to well-established institutional settings of cooperation of stakeholders in the sectors, long experience of participation of enterprises in initial VET and the high interest of enterprises in the quality of the skilled workforce, driven by strong industry having a substantial influence in the national economy. In Lithuania these preconditions are almost absent or very underdeveloped, which raises doubts concerning the possibility of establishing such a model of apprenticeship organisation in the current context. Under conditions of a lack of interest of enterprises in the quality and skills of the workforce, an absence of developed industry, weak involvement of employers organisations and trade unions in VET and skills development, as well as undeveloped networks of social partnership in this field, it is hardly possible to apply the combination of flexible state regulation and various voluntary approaches of employers and trade unions in the organisation of apprenticeship.

The practice of apprenticeship training centres CFA in France is interesting in several regards. First of all, the idea of such bodies of the coordination of apprenticeship fits well to the existing institutional context and existing conditions of implementation of apprenticeship in Lithuania. Implementation of apprenticeship demands external institutional coordination and regulation, especially considering the absence of experience and know-how of enterprises in this field. Besides, there exist institutions, which can be delegated such functions of coordination and provision of theoretical training to apprentices – VET schools, regional VET centres and especially, sectoral practical training centres. These VET institutions have sufficiently rich experience in the fields of curriculum design and organisation of theoretical and practical training.

Experience of the apprenticeship organization from the Netherlands only very partially conforms to the context and conditions of the introduction of apprenticeship in Lithuania. First of all, there are huge differences in the extent and quality of the organisation of employers and trade unions in the regions and sectors: this organisation is considerably weaker in Lithuania, as well as influence and involvement of stakeholders in the provision of training. Therefore sectoral stakeholders in Lithuania currently are not so capable of undertaking the functions of coordination, supervision and quality control of apprenticeship. However, the flexibility in the approaches of apprenticeship in the Netherlands is more compatible with the current conditions in Lithuania.

Flexible and learner-centred organisation of apprenticeship in England is very much dependent on the availability of demand for apprentices and supply of workplaces for apprenticeship in the enterprises. Individual contracting of apprenticeship and developed



traditions of apprenticeship in the workplaces facilitate considerable freedom of choice for all concerned parties: apprentices – in selecting the apprenticeship frameworks and workplaces, employers – in selecting apprentices. This process is supported by the activities of different intermediating organisations in the sectors. This context can be described as a ‘developed market of apprenticeship’. In the absence of a rigid institutional framework and regulation from the state, the establishment and development of such a market requires time, because it is related to the development of a culture of negotiation and mediation of interests between the market players, not to mention the know-how of apprenticeship organisation and provision among enterprises. Experience of expansive programme led apprenticeships (PLA) seems to be more pertinent and interesting for the conditions of Lithuania, because this experience involves the use of services of initial training institutions.

B The extent to which the goals and objectives of analysed practices respond to the needs and aims of the introduction and development of apprenticeship in Lithuania. How are the goals and objectives of analysed experiences and measures of apprenticeship organisation comparable with the aims of introduction of apprenticeship in Lithuania (to increase flexibility of VET provision and matching between skills demand and supply, etc.)?

One of the main aims of the flexible and sector-coordinated organisation of apprenticeship in Germany, as well as of the organisation of traditional and new style apprenticeship in the Netherlands is to ensure effective integration of theoretic training and provision of practical skills in the workplaces. Dual approach of apprenticeship organisation and strong involvement of sectoral stakeholders (employers organisations and trade unions) is also directed to adaptation of the provision of training to the requirements of skills needs and specificities of work organisation in the sectors. These aims correspond to the goals of the introduction of apprenticeship in Lithuania, especially to the goal of flexibilisation of VET provision and matching of VET supply to labour market needs.

The same argument can be applied to the practice of apprenticeship organisation with the apprenticeship centres (CFA) in France, maybe more stressing the priority given to the apprenticeship quality control and assurance in this case. This aim also corresponds to the goals of the introduction of apprenticeship in Lithuania, one of which is to improve the quality of VET provision through better meeting the skills needs of employers.

One of the main reasons of individualised and flexible organisation of apprenticeship in the UK is to ensure that apprenticeships correspond to the needs of the market and the capabilities of employers. Even programme led apprenticeships with the increased share of theoretical training in the colleges are justified by the demands and requirements of the corresponding workplaces.

C The potential of analysed practices of apprenticeship to provide know-how needed for proposing original and innovative solutions for the introduction and development of apprenticeships in Lithuania. To what extent and in what ways could the analysed experiences and measures of apprenticeship in Germany, France, England and the Netherlands contribute to the development and introduction of new measures and instruments of apprenticeship in Lithuania? What are the innovative measures and instruments that could be developed learning from the experiences and practices of the benchmark partner countries?

Some practices and approaches of apprenticeship organisation in Germany provide useful ideas, which can be applied on the basis of separate cases in the sectors demonstrating a higher interest in apprenticeship and human resource development (such as engineering, energy, construction and transport). For example, applying the master–assistant–system or chef–commis–system of practical training in the enterprise supported with provision of theoretical training in the VET schools, or VET school operated coordination of a series of apprenticeship training measures in several enterprises with deep specialisation to cover the full range of VP could become a source for further development of new practices in apprenticeship. The effectiveness of such practices could foster further changes of the above described context (attitudes of employers and trade unions to apprenticeship, capacities of stakeholders, mutual trust) and enhance their wider implementation.

The Dutch approach of traditional apprenticeships could be implemented in those sectors facing increasing momentary labour demand (for example, sectors of construction and transport). Approaches similar to the new type apprenticeships are more suitable for sectors with increasing demand for high skilled labour under such conditions as a shift from competition on price (subcontracting) to competition on quality and innovation (sectors of engineering, chemistry, machinery production, etc.). However, the experience of the Netherlands shows, that implementation of these approaches under conditions of voluntary behaviour of sectoral stakeholders (as can be expected in Lithuania) would lead to neglect or even deterioration of training quality standards.

Establishment of such bodies as apprenticeship centres (CFA) in France on the basis of existing VET providers would favourably change conditions for the implementation and development of apprenticeship by creating a source of institutional expertise and support to enterprises and employers' organisations. The activities of such institutions could also facilitate solution of the current problems and challenges, for example, these bodies could help the enterprises in preparing the training masters and tutors of apprenticeship from selected employees. Such instruments as the liaison book CFA-enterprise and the CFA check-up sheet are also very suitable for the foreseen 'dual' approach of apprenticeship development in Lithuania.

Experience of expansive programme led apprenticeships (PLA) in England also seems to be pertinent and interesting for the development of apprenticeship under the conditions prevailing in Lithuania, because this experience involves the use of services of initial training



institutions. Experience of enterprise based apprenticeships in England could provide useful know-how of the organisation of workplaces and work processes for the purposes of apprenticeship.

3.2 Contractual arrangements and access to apprenticeship

GERMANY

One of the distinctive features of the contractual and regulatory arrangements of apprenticeship in Germany is the transparent legal basis founded on collective agreements between the social partners, which sets out the legal responsibilities to stakeholders. The national Vocational Training Act and the *Länderschulgesetze* (Education Acts at regional state or *Länder* level) sets out the legal responsibilities of government, employers, and other partners, such as chambers of industry and commerce, education institutions and trades unions, with regard to all aspects of apprenticeships. This social partnership approach means that problems and ideas are discussed between the key stakeholders to enable apprenticeship to evolve over time.

Contractual arrangements for apprenticeship in Germany display differing levels of capacity of enterprises in acting and concluding agreements in the field of apprenticeship. For example, in the metal and electric sector big industrial enterprises (such as Volkswagen or Airbus) are highly autonomous in contracting and acting in the field of apprenticeship, while small and medium handcraft enterprises of the sector have to be supported and represented by the sectoral employers organisations, which are capable of acting in the field of apprenticeship.

There is a high degree of standardisation of the contents of apprenticeship contracts because the content of training in a particular VP is fixed by law. The duration of the apprenticeship is also fixed by law and since the 2005 Law on Vocational Education and Training (BBiG) there is more variation in the duration of apprenticeship. In addition to a probationary period of 1 to 4 months, the regular duration can be 24, 36, or 42 months. Apprenticeships in all business related VPs take 36 months. Training in some technical VPs now can start initially for 24 months. Under special criteria they are to be continued up to 36 months. If an apprentice feels well prepared and shows excellent marks (*Berufsschule*) they can apply for an early exam. In such a case the duration of their individual training is reduced.

Another interesting aspect of apprenticeship contracting in Germany is the standardised and tariff based setting of wages and allowances for apprentices. Although the allowance is a subject for individual contractual arrangements, employers do not in practice deviate from the tariffs because all labour market related laws support the employees and an apprentice could take the question of allowance to court after the signature of the contract. Moreover, to pay less than the official tariff is seen as immoral. Allowances are fixed for apprentices in all the legally accepted VPs (see National Report for details).

The main factor influencing access to apprenticeship in Germany is the financial and organisational capability of employers to offer the workplaces of apprenticeship. The legal framework does not impose limitations of access related to age. For example, if an enterprise accepts a 35 year old woman to train in housekeeping, this woman will be contracted and trained in the enterprise's facilities (usually a hotel). The woman will attend the lessons of the



Berufsschule together with young girls of 16 to 20. Under certain conditions the BBiG allows older experienced individuals to enter an examination without having undertaken dedicated training. For example, soldiers who have finished their military service can enter the system of GVET just by passing the exam. There is no need for them to enter an apprenticeship at its beginning but to finish it at its typical end. After having successfully passed the exam the certificate is the same as those of the candidates of a 24, 36, or 42 months VET. In principle every school leaver who has finished the compulsory school (*Hauptschule*) after 9 years can be contracted by an employer. That means that access to apprenticeship is opened to any of those employers who are allowed to train. According to the criteria established by the 2005 Law, the question of access is more to be answered by the ability of the employer (cf. part 3 § 27 – § 33, *BBiG*) than by the school leavers. The ‘right of contracting’ covers the right of school leavers to apply for any VP.

Individuals who do not have a certificate of compulsory education must pass state funded courses to prepare for vocational tracks. However such measures to enhance the accessibility of apprenticeship to low-performers create problems of efficiency and even have negative effects on access according to some observers:

Whatever politicians tell about the efficiency of such programmes to integrate low performers into the labour market only one fact is relevant. To provide an example with numbers: if 500,000 places of apprenticeship per year are offered for which 750,000 school leavers apply 250,000 will stay without any chance. For those who fail to get an apprenticeship one more year is required. A lot of very special institutions take care of them. They often co-operate with local enterprises or the administration so the chance to get an apprenticeship is increasing after one year. But as every place of apprenticeship kept and held by an assisted low performer the school leavers of the current year will lose free places of apprenticeship and so the very expensive assistance system creates its own preconditions of existence. Sometimes the professionals belonging to the assistance system are called parasites.

FRANCE

Legal regulation and contracting of apprenticeship in France has one important similarity with the legal regulation of apprenticeship in Germany: it is based on negotiations and collective agreements between the social partners. Important changes have been made to the contracting of apprenticeship in France under the reform of apprenticeship training started in 2002. These changes seek to optimise the division of roles and responsibilities between the enterprises, sectoral stakeholders, training providers and regional authorities. The law of programming of social cohesion passed on the 18th January 2005 foresaw certain changes in the contracting:

- the duration of apprenticeship contract can be adapted referring to the previous cycles of training and attained level of knowledge and skills of apprentices: in this way the contract can be concluded for the period from six to twelve months in case of supplementary training to the obtained certificate of after completion of apprenticeship

programme or in case of training seeking to obtain qualification of lower level than one already possessed;

- youngsters concluding two subsequent contracts of apprenticeship are granted the right for the allowance at least of the same level as obtained during the first contract;
- apprenticeship contracts for handicapped persons can last up to four years;
- each new apprentice is entitled to receive the card of apprentice, which permits to benefit from the price reductions in public transport, cultural and sportive activities.

From 30th July 2011 young people having completed basic schooling (*la scolarité du premier cycle de l'enseignement secondaire*) and being at least 15 years old can sign a contract of apprenticeship. There are also exceptions permitting those aged over 25 years to sign a contract of apprenticeship provided:

- they are not older than 30 years:
 - if the currently signed contract follows previously signed contract of apprenticeship and leads to the higher level diploma, than the one obtained after the completion of the previous contract,
 - if the previously signed contract is disrupted for the reasons not dependent on the apprentice or due to his/her physical or psychical inaptitude for the work in selected field.
- without age limitations:
 - if the contract is concluded by the person having the project to establish or re-establish own business and this undertaking requires to obtain certificate or qualification provided by the undertaken apprenticeship,
 - if the contract is signed by the working person with special needs.

Junior apprenticeship training (*formation d'apprenti junior*) is accessible for young people who are at least 14 years old. At the beginning stage such young people take part in the education and training programme in the school including the periods of practical training in the professional field and in the second stage they undertake an apprenticeship in the enterprise when they reach the age of 15 years.

Regional and state authorities play a crucial role in ensuring and enhancing access to apprenticeships, undertaking various fiscal and financial measures directed to increasing the number of apprenticeship places in the enterprises and making apprenticeship more accessible to those from disadvantages social groups. For example, measures undertaken by the region Île de France include (Conseil régional d'Île-de-France, 2011):

- Direct financial support to enterprises. The Regional authority pays the enterprise €1,000 per year for each apprentice. Additional payments can also be made in the following cases:



- according to the size of enterprises – in addition €500 for enterprises employing up to 10 employees and for enterprises located in municipalities with fewer than 5000 inhabitants;
- according to the level of pursued training: in addition €500 per year for each apprentice seeking qualification of the level V or IV.
- Reductions of taxes. Reduction of tax of €1,600 or €2,200 is granted to enterprises for each handicapped apprentice accepted.
- Exemptions from the payment of apprenticeship tax. Enterprises employing up to 250 employees, where apprentices represent at least 3% of total staff are exempted from the payment of apprenticeship tax.

Besides such fiscal and financial support measures regions also implement other instruments facilitating access to apprenticeship and its attractiveness. For example, the Regional Council of Île de France developed a programme to create tools to increase access to apprenticeship in the CFAs (apprenticeship training centres) destined for particular target groups: youth without qualifications and facing difficulties to enter apprenticeship in enterprises, former students of HE institutions who quit studies after the first year, young apprentices having qualifications at levels V and IV and needing assistance to access qualification of level III, youth facing higher risk of discrimination in applying for apprenticeship, etc.

The following measures have been proposed (Conseil régional d'Île-de-France, 2006):

- Explorative traineeship for the apprenticeship. This measure is directed at young people from 14 to 25 years old. It provides the possibility to explore the field of apprenticeship (guidance on the possible apprenticeship fields) and to acquire guidance and support in searching for the apprenticeship places in the enterprises (each young person of at least 16 years of age can benefit 8 guidance sessions to enterprises made by CFA).
- Three pathways leading to apprenticeship:
 - Long pathway leading to apprenticeship is directed at youth over 16 years old having qualifications at level VI and lacking the required education to enter an apprenticeship. It includes the learning and training at the CFA which provides the required education and skills. Practical training in the enterprise is designed to reinforce their choice of occupation and vocational guidance.
 - Integrated vocational training is similar to the long pathway of apprenticeship and executed by the CFA integrating training in the classrooms and practical training in the enterprise.
 - Short pathway leading to apprenticeship is targeted at helping youth having qualifications of levels V, IV and III to enter apprenticeships. Training is undertaken exclusively in CFA premises with the main objective of signing an apprenticeship contract.

- Individually guided apprenticeship cycle: This measure comprises training at the CFA and a period of practical training in the enterprise for those learners who, after the completion of the pathways leading to apprenticeship, do not succeed in signing a contract of apprenticeship, as well as to those facing the rupture of the apprenticeship contract and drop outs of lycées and CFAs.
- Individualised training modules: apprentices having qualifications of the levels V, IV and III, youth in the preparatory courses for apprenticeship can have additional training hours. These modules of individualised training are provided by the specialised providers – centres of personalised pedagogy (les Ateliers de Pédagogie Personnalisée - APP). These trainings provide basic required knowledge (including basic linguistic knowledge).

Any individual aged between 16 and 26 years old has the right to take up an apprenticeship. Those under 16 years of age can also be accepted if they have completed the lower level of secondary education. Disabled individuals over the age of 26 years old may also be allowed to take apprenticeship. The Labour Code (volume I) specifies that undertaking an apprenticeship is subject to a special type of work contract between the apprentice and the employer. The duration of this contract is usually equivalent to the required period for obtaining the qualification through apprenticeship, which can vary between one and three years depending on the occupation and the type of the qualification to be obtained. The apprenticeship contract can be terminated by the employer of the apprentice within a two-month trial period. Once this trial period is passed, the contract can only be terminated by both sides for any of the following reasons: grave misconduct, repeated breaches of duty, proved inaptitude of the apprentice, certification obtained in advance of the expected date.

Under this contract the apprentice usually attends one week training courses within the CFA followed by two to three weeks of work-based training within the enterprise. Within the CFA, two thirds of given curricula concern general transversal courses (French, maths, law, introduction to economics and management) and technical vocational courses (such as technology, technical drawing, etc.) while the remaining third of curriculum is devoted to practical technical and vocational training connected with the speciality of the apprentice in the CFA workshop.

Although apprenticeship favours young people's transition to work, the risk of young apprentices failing to complete their training contracts remains a non-negligible issue, especially during the trial period. Related available data are rather scarce and partial. In this connection, two surveys can be used (Cart and & Toutin-Trelcat, 2010; Arrighi, & Mora, 2010). The first is Céreq's Génération 2004 which can be considered as one of the few nationwide surveys providing some data about broken apprenticeship contract and the reasons why they were breached. According to this survey, the rate of these breaches was estimated then at 17%. The other survey was a specific survey on the reasons of broken contracts and the analysis of apprenticeship (DRTEFP) files registered in the Nord-Pas-de-Calais region from 2002 to 2005. The outcome of these broken contracts is not in all cases negative, as the CFAs succeed in most of them in helping the concerned apprentices to contact new firms and



finally signing new apprenticeship contracts. The reasons for broken contracts can be summarised as follows:

- Most often breaches by the apprentices themselves (about one out of two) for the following reasons:
 - Change in the apprentice's learning/career track such moving to more attractive apprenticeship contract, or to a school-based training (in a vocational lycée) instead of apprenticeship or even finding a proper job.
 - Personal reasons (counting for about a quarter of the breaches) such a health problems and personal conflict with apprenticeship master or with other trainers in the company.
 - Dissatisfaction with working conditions, environment and relations. This reason varies between sectors: unpleasant working conditions and environment were quoted more frequently in food trades (such in the bakeries and butcheries) but rarely mentioned in connection with certain industrial trades (such as machinery-engineering). As for the construction sector, the main reasons given for some dissatisfaction were more or less connected with the nature of training provided and economic factors specific the enterprise and its activity. However, the sectors in which most of the apprentices gave-up and even changed their training track were services to persons such hotels - restaurants and other services such hairdressing.
- Certification is obtained in advance of the expected date.
- Economic situations where some contracts are ended prematurely because the company was obliged to close down.
- Unsatisfactory trial period for the employer.

It is also important to underline that the prematurely breached apprenticeship contracts are less pronounced in HE apprenticeships than in those connected with upper secondary levels such as EQF levels 3 and 4. The apprentice's level of commitment to the chosen learning track through apprenticeship is relatively higher for HE apprentices than for those in the upper secondary CFAs. This can also be explained by the observation that at level NQF level 5 (EQF level 3) for instance, apprenticeship provides youngsters in difficulties at schools (upper and especially lower secondary colleges) with a second a chance, while those who reached HE qualification levels choose this training track (i.e. through apprenticeship) more deliberately (and with more commitment) as it enables them effectively to combine theoretical knowledge and work-based experiential learning as well becoming more familiar with the world of working life. In this connection, one might even say that apprenticeship track is chosen as a 'route of excellence' for HE apprentices, especially in engineering as well as a good investment for involved enterprises (Cart and & Toutin-Trelcat, 2010).

NETHERLANDS

One of the specificities of apprenticeship contracting in the Netherlands is the duality of the types of contracts: traditional apprenticeship places with both a learning contract and an employment contract and new style apprenticeship places with only a learning contract. The wages of apprentices in the traditional apprenticeships are set by sectoral agreements and these types of apprenticeship places are most prevalent in economic sectors that traditionally used the apprenticeship system as a means to train workers, for example the printing industry (de Grip, 1998). The share of these different types of contracts very much depends on the specificities of sectors and their needs in human resources but nowadays the proportion of new style apprenticeship places is substantial. Borghans et al (2000) show that in 30% of training firms, apprentices only have a learning contract and 9% of the firms employ apprentices through co-operation arrangements.

The differences between economic sectors are substantial, however. In administrative occupations in the service sector, new style apprenticeships are the rule, 65% of the firms do not give their apprentices an employment contract, while in the wholesale and retail trade this is only the case for 17% of the firms. Contracts of employment are very common in the building trade and the hotel and catering industry (Smiths, 2005).

Apprenticeship contracts detail the status of an apprentice as well as the rights and obligations of the contracting parties. In traditional apprenticeship contracts the apprentice has the status of an employee of the enterprise working and executing production tasks and learning on the job. In new style apprenticeships training takes place off the job and the tasks and practical assignments of training (to fulfil in the enterprise) are given by the school. Contracts also cover the functions of supervisors: a supervisor from the school and a supervisor from the training enterprise. Their involvement in the apprenticeship process is different: while the supervisor from the school monitors the progress of the apprentice only by a few visits to the training company, the supervisor from the training enterprise is responsible for the daily supervision of the apprenticeship at the workplace.

Another interesting feature of apprenticeship contracting in the Netherlands is its embedding in sector collective agreements between trade unions and employers' associations. Such agreements often stipulate different conditions and requirements of apprenticeship contracting. The collective agreement stipulates an employer's obligation to enable employees to attend vocational education and apprenticeship programs and craft training. Educational institutions and (regional alliances of) employers jointly organize apprenticeship programmes, all of which are governed by the 1996 Adult and Vocational Education Act (*Wet Educatie en Beroepsonderwijs*). An apprentice signs three contracts: an employment contract with a construction company (which then becomes the 'apprenticeship firm'), a contract with a regional training centre (ROC) for classroom-based learning, and a contract with the employer and the ROC concerning the practical component of the apprenticeship program, such as guidance, supervision, and skill standards. The set of contracts, commonly referred to as the 'practice-employment contract', requires approval from the industry's tripartite training body. Apprentices work four days at a contractor and attend class one day a week.



Apprentices attending class receive full (apprentice) pay for a maximum of eight hours per week. Employers are partly compensated for the productivity loss they incur while employing an apprentice (Smiths, 2005).

Some sectors have specific provisions for apprenticeship contracting. For example, in sectors with a high percentage of temporary work (construction, retail) the apprenticeship or practice-employment contract can be signed not only with the enterprises but also with the temporary work agencies involved in the employment and recruitment of workers. This form of contracting aids many unskilled and unemployed young people to access apprenticeship in the construction sector.

In addition to general requirements established by the national training and education body for apprenticeship firms, temporary work agencies have to comply with the 1998 WAADI Act in order to be accredited. Furthermore temporary work agencies have to be a member of either of the two principal staffing agency associations (ABU or NBBU). A temporary agency needs to employ training coordinators for each distinct type of apprenticeship it provides. These coordinators are responsible for guidance and supervision of apprentices at the workplace. The temporary agency and the apprentice sign a practice-employment contract. Since 1999 only a handful of temporary work agencies have met – or have been willing to meet – the requirements set by the training body for becoming an apprenticeship firm. These agencies offer two-year training programs, certified by the training body. Both the agency and the worker can initiate an assessment of the worker's training need. Whenever a need for training has been determined and discussed by the worker and the agency, agreements are formalized through a training contract. Training may take place during work hours, either on or off the job, or after work. If training is offered after work hours the temporary agency worker is expected to invest his or her own spare time in attending the training. Training costs are discussed and laid down in a separate contract, which may include agreements about payback clauses or specifications about a worker's financial contribution. Temporary work agencies can place their apprentice temporary workers only at construction firms that have been accredited as an apprenticeship firm by the construction industry's national training body. Classroom training takes place at an ROC regional training centre. Agencies are responsible for supervising and monitoring an apprentice's progress (Smiths, 2005).

In addition there are public initiatives to enhance and promote access to apprenticeship. In 2009 the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment established the 'Act investing in young people' (*Wet investeren in jongeren*). According to this Act all municipalities are obliged to give young people between 18 and 27 who apply for social assistance benefits a personal offer consisting of work, training or a combination of both. The biggest cities have been implementing with success this strict activation strategy since the mid-2000s. Youth without basic vocational qualification are encouraged to opt for training to get the equivalent of an upper secondary vocational diploma. In case of refusal, their benefits are reduced. The government wants to prevent dependency on social benefit but also help young people to be in a position, once the economy starts to gather pace, to play a full part in it.

Another exemplary measure of promotion of access to apprenticeship in the Netherlands is the Action Plan on Youth Unemployment introduced in 2009. This plan consists of a wide range of measures including initiatives to promote apprenticeships. Despite concerns over insufficient funding of these initiatives, the first results are encouraging: thirty regional covenants have been concluded to fight youth unemployment resulting in 29,000 young unemployed workers being placed in a job, training or apprenticeship in 2009 and a further 38,000 in 2010.

ENGLAND

Unlike the legal regulation models of apprenticeship described above for Germany, France and the Netherlands, in England, the legal regulation of apprenticeship is based on bilateral contracting between enterprises and apprentices. There is no statutory legal underpinning to apprenticeship: government is not obliged to involve social partners in legal consultations concerning regulation of apprenticeship. Such a liberal legal basis of apprenticeship enhances variety in the forms and types of apprenticeship, leading to a very different quality of training and impact on the development of human capital (Fuller and Unwin, 2007):

In contrast UK governments can and do make whatever changes they wish, and whenever they wish, to what they choose to define as apprenticeships. They are not obliged to consult others with an interest in the changes they make. Ryan and Unwin (2001) refer to this as 'leaflet law' whereby changes are announced in the form of press releases and ministerial statements. Unlike in some other countries, there has been no statement of purpose setting out the nation's reasons for continuing to support apprenticeships. The lack of a clear purpose for apprenticeship in England has allowed it to become a 'wrapper' or 'brand' embracing a range of formal and informal learning experiences, opportunities and attainments, reflecting the diverse nature of around 80 occupational sectors. Apprenticeship is not a 'course' or a 'qualification' but merely a label. Some apprenticeships are highly prized, very selective, and lead to well-paid careers with professional pathways and qualification hierarchies. For example, the Advanced Apprenticeship in the engineering sector has entrance qualifications at least as demanding as A levels, in the shape of GCSE grade C or above in English, Maths and Science, as well as extensive interviews, and cognitive and practical aptitude tests. At the other end of the spectrum are apprenticeships that demand little if anything in the way of entry requirements, offer no opportunity for off-the-job education and training, and limit the apprentice to a restrictive diet of on-the-job experience. These apprenticeships might last for less than a year and provide no real foundation for progression beyond level 2.

The distinctive feature of the contracting of apprenticeship in England is an open and liberal approach in setting contracts. The contracts between government funding agencies and learning providers to deliver apprenticeships encompass a big variety of different providers, including private training companies, Further Education colleges, voluntary sector organisations, Chambers of Commerce or enterprises. Equally there are contracts between apprentices and training providers as well as between the apprentices and the employer.



The content of the apprenticeship contract provides a comprehensive description of the rights and responsibilities as an employee and a trainee. Apprentices are entitled to:

- a full induction in the workplace
- a contract of employment
- a negotiated training plan or contract between yourself, the employer and the training provider
- a fair wage
- a safe working environment and protection from discrimination or bullying
- release from work to attend formal training provision of an appropriate range of work
- experiences to enable apprentice to complete relevant qualifications
- access to support, guidance and mentoring
- quality training
- regular assessments and review of progress
- sufficient time away from work station or desk to study in work time.

Apprentice responsibilities are concerned with:

- Hours of work – it is important to keep agreed hours of work including break times.
- Work rate – it is essential that apprentice work hard to complete tasks in the time set.
- Behaviour – the responsibility is not to distract people from their work by doing things that apprentice know should not be doing.
- Confidentiality – businesses are in competition with each other. There may be rules about things apprentice must not tell other people about their work.
- Materials – there are usually strict rules about the removal of materials from the workplace. Apprentice have to make sure that they do not remove any materials unless with the agreement of supervisor (e.g. apprentice has a completed piece of work which has been agreed to take home).
- Computer and telephone – employers may have rules about the use of the internet and phone for personal use. There may also be strict rules about the use of email and intranet. Messages are often monitored and saved and there can be serious consequences for misuse.
- Tools and equipment –Apprentice needs to ask permission before using equipment or materials for themselves or for schoolwork at the work place.

Among various measures designed to enhance accessibility of apprenticeship in England the Young Apprenticeships (YA) programme is particularly interesting for the role that trade unions play in securing and enhancing access to apprenticeship. A programme of YAs was introduced by the UK Government Department for Education and Skills in 2004 with the goal

of enabling 14-16 year olds to combine the practical application of skills and knowledge in a vocational context with studying for qualifications that relate to particular occupational sectors. This measure seeks to solve the problems of access of apprenticeship by encouraging young people to consider non-traditional routes of vocational training. However, there are also certain side-effects in the implementation of this programme and its impact on access to apprenticeship.

During the public consultation on the 14-19 *Extending Opportunities, Raising Standards* Green Paper, the EOC expressed concerns that greater and earlier vocationalism might lead to more, rather than less, gender-stereotyped curriculum choices. Their concerns stemmed primarily from the fact that, in the ten years that had passed since their introduction, apprenticeships had failed to increase the numbers of young women entering training in jobs normally undertaken mainly by men, such as engineering and construction (and likewise, had failed to increase the numbers of young men in areas such as childcare). This led the DfES to evaluate how equal opportunities concerns were being addressed within its innovative YA provision. A parallel aim of the work was to capture good practice so that learning may be transferred into other qualification routes (e.g. the development of the Special Diplomas), and the systems through which young people make their option choices for year 10 (Wolf, 2009).

Trade unions play an important role in assuring and enhancing the access to apprenticeship. This role of trade unions consists of the different measures - from assistance for young people in find their feet as they have their first experience of the office, factory and workplace and mentorship of apprentices and to the work of Trade Union Congress (TUC) on the national level to ensure that apprenticeships are of high quality, are fairly paid and lead to full-time employment. The central trade union confederation's training arm, Unionlearn, is working with government and the National Apprenticeship Service to persuade employers to offer more, and better, apprenticeship places, with the chance for all learners to progress to level 3 and beyond. We aim to tackle the problem of gender imbalance: there is a 20 per cent pay gap between men and women, with young women tending to go into the lower paid sectors such as hairdressing and childcare.

In the words of Frances O'Grady, TUC deputy general secretary:

“With over a fifth of under-25s now out of work, with graduates chasing non-graduate jobs in huge numbers, and with tuition fees about to be trebled, the need for a world-class system of vocational education with apprenticeships at its heart is surely self evident. Socially and economically - apprenticeships are an investment in all our futures. We welcome the commitment to expand the number of schemes and to increase funding. We welcome plans to improve the status of vocational qualifications. We welcome the pledge to tackle important equality, diversity and progression issues. And we welcome the recognition that unions have a unique contribution to make in supporting apprentices, bargaining for better schemes, and engaging with employers. But we need to raise our game. I want us to transform the way we promote apprenticeships within our movement and in our negotiations with employers. I want us to transform the support we give to apprentices, with our union learning reps becoming 'apprenticeship champions'.”



Comparison of analysed practices of contractual- regulatory arrangements of apprenticeship and access mechanisms: important issues for policy learning

The important issues for policy learning

A	Fit of the analysed apparent good practices to the context and conditions of the implementation and development of apprenticeship in Lithuania.
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Highly elaborated and comprehensive models of contractual and regulatory arrangements in Germany, France and the Netherlands are based on the active involvement of the state and agreements of the social partners. The effectiveness of regulatory arrangements depends on an active and open state policy approach to apprenticeship, where the state's responsibilities are mainly for coordination and initiation of various legal, contractual and regulatory arrangements. These arrangements are in turn developed, approved and implemented by all involved stakeholders (employers, trade unions, VET providers, government agencies) through processes of social dialogue and intensive cooperation. One of the most important preconditions of successful implementation of this measure is a coherent balance of power, rights and responsibilities of all involved stakeholders: government, employers, trade unions, VET providers, and the apprentices. This balance is based on effective matching of interests (interests of enterprises in the field of human resource management and development, interests of trade unions in the field of employment stability and quality, interests of the state in improving employment and the labour market situation, interests of apprentices in the field of employment and career, interests of VET providers in developing high quality training services), matching of capabilities (human resource and financial capabilities of enterprises, economic and administrative capabilities of state, institutional and expertise capabilities of trade unions etc.), and matching of responsibilities of stakeholders. This matching, at least to some minimal extent is needed for initiation and launching of successful social dialogue in the field of apprenticeship, where it can and should be further developed and strengthened. The absence or weakness of this matching due to lack of interest, capabilities and responsibility of stakeholders creates serious obstacles for establishing and implementing comprehensive models of contractual and regulatory arrangements, similar to those in Germany, France and the Netherlands.

Such a situation exists in Lithuania, where the interests of enterprises in the field of human resource management and development are often very weakly expressed; trade unions do not have sufficient experience and capacity to defend interests related to employment stability and quality; and weak financial capacities of enterprises prevent them from entering into agreements with VET providers and apprentices, etc. Development of matching interests, capacities and responsibilities of potential stakeholders of apprenticeship in Lithuania can be regarded as long-term objective, which can be achieved only incrementally, by using different tactical decisions according to the requirements of the existing situation. For example, it is possible to envisage providing additional support and assistance to the weaker stakeholders or (and) their temporary replacement by more capable stakeholders in the implementation of the

contractual regulatory arrangements. Trade unions can be provided with such additional support (for example, by training of their responsible staff) and some of their functions in the social dialogue over apprenticeship can be temporarily taken over by government (for example, responsibilities in quality control and access monitoring). Weaker enterprises can be temporarily replaced by sectoral practical training centres.

Open and liberal model of apprenticeship contracting in the UK at first glance presents a more adaptable case of policy learning for the implementation and development of apprenticeship in Lithuania, because the scope of contracting is strictly based on the existing skills needs of enterprises and their capacities to engage in apprenticeship. However, this raises other questions and problems related to adopting such an approach to contracting and regulation of apprenticeship in Lithuania:

- How to deal with the lack of interest, experience and know-how of many enterprises in the provision of apprenticeship and in signing bilateral contracts with apprentices? Bilateral contracting becomes very sensitive and dependent on the economic situation. In a context of general economic instability and an absence of long-term orientation of enterprises so far as human resource management and development is concerned, liberal bilateral contracting could hardly be developed to something more than separate and marginal cases of apprenticeship contracts.
- How to use the potential of apprenticeship development provided by the existing network of initial VET providers – VET schools, regional VET centres, sectoral practical training centres, etc.? Bilateral contracting and lack of statutory legal underpinning of apprenticeship do not necessitate nor enhance involvement of formal VET providers.

<p>B Extent to which the goals and objectives of analysed practices respond to the needs and aims of the introduction and development of apprenticeship in Lithuania. How the goals and objectives of analysed approaches of contracting and regulation of apprenticeship are comparable with the aims of introduction of apprenticeship in Lithuania (to increase flexibility of VET provision and matching between skills demand and supply, etc.)?</p>

The goals of contracting and legal regulation of apprenticeship in Germany, France and the Netherlands are strongly related to long-term harmonization of the interests and responsibilities between stakeholders – apprentices, employers, trade unions and VET providers. In Germany and in the Netherlands there can be noticed clearly expressed orientation to the goals and needs of sectors and development of human resources in the sectors, especially to the satisfaction of the skills needs of sectors (for example, setting of the contracting of apprenticeship in sector collective agreements between trade unions and employers associations in the Netherlands). In Germany and, especially, in France, contracting and legal regulation of apprenticeship is very strongly directed to widening access



to apprenticeship for different groups. These goals of apprenticeship contracting fit well with the long-term aims of introducing apprenticeship in Lithuania.

Meanwhile in England a clear long-term purpose for the contracting and legal regulation of apprenticeship is apparently absent, which leads to the domination of short-term operative goals and their diversification. These operative goals are mainly focussed on the short-term needs of the parties of bilateral contracting: enterprises and apprentices. However, it can also be noted there are certain attempts designed to widen access to apprenticeship (notably, the activities of trade unions and the introduction of the Young Apprenticeship Programme).

C Potential of analysed approaches and measures of contracting and regulation of apprenticeship to provide know-how needed for proposing original and innovative solutions of introduction and development of apprenticeship in Lithuania. To what extent and in what ways could the analysed approaches and measures of contracting and regulation of apprenticeship in Germany, France, England and the Netherlands contribute to the development and introduction of arrangements for contracting and legal regulation of apprenticeship in Lithuania? What innovative measures and instruments could be developed learning from the experiences and practices of the partner countries?

Looking to the approaches and instruments of contracting and legal regulation of apprenticeship in Germany, the following could inform the development of original contracting arrangements in Lithuania:

1. Standardization of the contents of apprenticeship contracts and their linkage to vocational profiles. This approach can be useful for assuring smooth management and quality of apprenticeships. The intention to establish a national system of occupational sectoral standards in Lithuania could be a significant supporting precondition for this initiative.
2. Differentiation in fixing the duration of apprenticeship in laws, foreseeing possibilities for reducing the duration of training depending on the progress of apprentices. This provision can be useful and effective given its implications for reducing the costs of apprenticeship.
3. Standardised and tariff based setting of wages and allowances for apprentices. This measure would help to avoid opportunistic behaviour of employers attempting to exploit apprentices as a major part of the workforce.

In terms of instruments of contracting and legal regulation of apprenticeship, France also potentially offers experience that could guide the development of original contracting arrangements in Lithuania:

1. Flexibility of the duration of apprenticeship contracts referring to the previous cycles of training and their outcomes. Like in the above described differentiation of

apprenticeship duration in Germany, this approach can help to reduce the costs of apprenticeship and so increase its attractiveness and accessibility.

2. Special apprenticeship contracts for handicapped persons and other specific groups. Such measure of accessibility can be helpful for using apprenticeship as a tool of social reintegration of disadvantaged individuals. Given the rather low effectiveness of current measures of social reintegration of handicapped persons, apprenticeship contracts offer an attractive alternative to school based training.
3. Variety of types of apprenticeship contracts depending on their goals and target groups. This approach can be useful and important considering the variety of potential target groups of apprenticeship in Lithuania: basic school leavers (after 10th grade), secondary school leavers, dropouts from the basic or secondary schools, unemployed youth, etc.
4. Reduction of taxes or provision of direct financial support to SMEs and enterprises in the rural areas and small cities. It is a very important measure to be considered when assuring coherent regional development of apprenticeship in Lithuania because of the different capabilities and readiness of enterprises to accept the status of training providers, especially considering SMEs and enterprises located in the provinces and small towns.

Considering the approaches and instruments of contracting and legal regulation of apprenticeship in the Netherlands, there is also experience that could be used in developing original contracting arrangements in Lithuania:

1. Duality of apprenticeship contracts - traditional apprenticeship integrating learning contract and employment contract and new style apprenticeship with only a learning contract. Such duality of apprenticeship contracts can be an attractive solution for apprenticeship in Lithuania, since there are currently few enterprises capable of providing 'traditional apprenticeship' in Lithuania. More enterprises are familiar with practices similar to new style apprenticeship, when VET schools send to enterprises their students for practical training. The main challenge here is to establish the bridges between two pathways of apprenticeship.
2. Apprenticeship contracts regulate the functions of supervisors from the school and training enterprises. Apprenticeship is a new practice and supervising apprenticeship will be a new type of function in the initial VET system. In these circumstances comprehensive and clear regulation of their functions and obligations can be very important supports for their preparation and work.

Approaches and instruments of contracting and legal regulation of apprenticeship in England may raise the following issues relevant to developing original contracting arrangements in Lithuania:



- Comprehensive description of the rights and responsibilities of apprentices in apprenticeship contracts. This approach can be very important because of the novelty of apprenticeship contracting for the future apprentices.
- Young Apprenticeships programme, enabling 14-16 year olds to combine the practical application of skills and knowledge in a vocational context by encouraging young people to consider non-traditional routes of vocational training. A similar measure of accessibility and promotion of apprenticeship could be useful and effective at the initial stage of introducing apprenticeship in the VET system of Lithuania, in order to attract the young people and raise their awareness and interest in this new VET pathway.
- Assistance of trade unions to apprentices, such as Unionlearn activities to persuade employers to offer more and better apprenticeship places. Such trade union activities could be very useful for the introduction of apprenticeship in Lithuania, especially considering the rather opportunistic behaviour and attitudes of many enterprises towards participation in initial vocational training.

3.3 Curriculum design, training time and progression

GERMANY

Analysing the different cases of curriculum design, training time, duration and progression in the dual apprenticeship model of Germany, there are many interesting materials for learning and know-how in these fields. Two innovative cases are considered that have considerable potential for the development of apprenticeship: a work process approach in curriculum design; and controversies between the standardisation/unification of curricula design and the diversity of skills needs in the enterprises.

The idea of orientation to the work processes in designing of occupational standards and training curricula is very important and relevant for the development of apprenticeship. Occupational standards and training curricula developed out of the analysis of the changing work processes can serve as instruments ensuring the quality of apprenticeship and its relevance to technological and organisational changes in the workplaces and work processes.

Work process based occupational standards and curricula are designed with intensive involvement of employers and employees through comprehensive research in real workplaces, applying a wide toolkit of research methods, from observation of work processes to in-depth interviews with the performers of work processes, their supervisors and managers. This work process research examines not only the present state of processes, but also their development patterns and future developments.

Industrial Technician is taken as an example of occupational standards designed by applying work process approach (Spöttl, 2010). The essential elements of the standard are core work processes and core competences. Core work processes are understood as in principle autonomous and essential processes or stages of work constituting the whole work process and leading to the achievement of the work objectives. For example, for industrial technicians the following work processes are outlined:

- Manufacturing Standard Work Pieces
- Manufacturing Mechanical Components
- Manufacturing, Fitting and Assembling Mechanical Systems
- Manufacturing and Assembling Metal-Sheet Work Pieces
- Fitting, Assembling, Maintaining and Repairing Mechanical Components and Systems
- Installing and Commissioning Power-Electric, Hydraulic and Pneumatic Components and Systems
- Programming and Maintaining Programmable Logic Controllers (PLC) and Industrial Robots
- Maintaining and Securing Automated Production Systems
- Conducting Preventive and Predictive Maintenance



The contents of each work process can have its own specific technological and organizational features and requirements ensuring certain autonomy of the work processes as well as their transferability and inter-changeability between the occupations. Orientation to such essential and autonomous work processes is very important for apprenticeship training, because such work processes are usually challenging and rich in learning potential – handling of the work process significantly adds to the autonomy of performance and capability of the learner to deal with higher complexity of activity. Dealing with work processes requires different combinations of knowledge and skills. For example, the work process ‘Manufacturing Standard Work Pieces’ requires ‘competence to read and understand detailed part drawings, shop material lists, and keep to geometric data’, all basic requirements for assuring quality work. Workers in this occupational field have to be experienced in using all kinds of hand-tools like different hand vices, saws, chisels, shears, marking devices, drilling devices, prick punches and thread cutting tools. They manufacture usual metal parts by applying manual working techniques, especially drilling, countersinking, reaming, scouring, bending, shearing, cutting and joining techniques line welding, soldering, gas torch cutting or carrying out bolting and riveting connections. Mastering of each work process requires the application of core competences: sets of knowledge, skills and generic abilities applied in the work processes.

Holistic design of core competences by integrating the application of knowledge, practical skills and generic abilities is of high relevance and importance for apprenticeship training, because such formulation of competences requires close integration of theoretical knowledge and practical skills in the learning and training processes. Furthermore, the standard provides comprehensive contextualisation of the work process by outlining the objects of skilled work, tools and methods used, organisation of skilled work and requirements in terms of skilled work and technology in use. The objects of skilled work define the main stages and features of skilled performance of work. This information serves as guidance for the apprentices, supervisors and assessors on what are the essential prerequisites in performing the work processes and ensuring skilled performance. The information on tools and methods used and on organisation of skilled work provides guidance on the main technological and organisational requirements of performance. Requirements in terms of skilled work and technology in use provide important guidelines for the assessment and quality assurance of work process performance. An example is provided below of contextualised description of the manufacturing of standard work-pieces.

DETAILING THE CORE WORK PROCESS:		
Objects of skilled work	Tools, methods used, organisation of skilled work	Requirements in terms of skilled work and technology in use
<p>Provide, check, complete and prepare all information and documents required for planning, carrying out and controlling the manufacturing process</p> <p>Determine and schedule all steps of manufacturing, provide, check and prepare all materials, hand tools and measurement devices needed</p> <p>Carry out all steps of manufacturing by applying appropriate manual working techniques and continuous measurement</p> <p>Carry out fitting, assembling of parts, if required conduct final measurement according to given tolerances and final functional and surface control</p>	<p>Detail drawings, assembly and function drawings</p> <p>Tables with tolerances and ISO fittings</p> <p>Workshop part and material lists</p> <p>Hand tools for marking</p> <p>All hand tools required for forming and separating, such as different types and sizes of hand files, vices, chisels, saws, shears, bending, forming, cutting devices</p> <p>All hand tools required for joining, screwing, pinning, riveting</p> <p>All hand tools, devices and materials required for gas- and arc welding and soldering</p> <p>All devices required for measurement and quality control: slide gauges, gauges, templates, micrometers</p> <p>Tables for measurement and functional controls</p>	<p>By customers</p> <p>Punctual delivery according to given demands and quality standards</p> <p>Cost efficiency</p> <p>By company</p> <p>Efficient time management</p> <p>Efficient waste management</p> <p>By worker</p> <p>Adherence to work safety</p> <p>Easy access to complete information</p> <p>Proficient co-operation and communication with customers and colleagues</p>

Table 10: CWP-01 = Manufacturing Standard Work-Pieces

Such work process oriented occupational standards and training curricula can provide highly work relevant, well structured and adaptable (to the external and internal changes of work processes) information for apprentices, supervisors and tutors.



The other interesting case is related to controversies between a certain extent of standardisation/unification of curriculum design and the diversity of skills needs in the enterprises. A popular VP is that of industrial mechanic (Industriemechaniker or IM). IMs are found in all industrial plants with automated production lines. IMs are not directly involved in production but in monitoring, maintaining and repairing these facilities. Such equipment is very expensive and time lost due to accidents, damage or interruption has serious financial implications for the enterprise, so the qualification of IM is inextricably stuck to modern technology of manufacturing showing a high degree of automation. In reality there is a conflict between two kinds of IM VP design. In the automotive sector the IM work place is situated in a milieu of mass production where many machines and facilities undertake the same activities concurrently. In a high tech industry like aircraft manufacturing, rather than mass production, the emphasis is on the complexity of machinery and procedures, where all effort is dedicated to quality and reliability. Though the IM as a single vocational profile seems to be a universal mechanical vocation, in reality work tasks vary substantially.

The VET regime of Germany insists on the one hand on ignoring the difference between an IM trained for 42 months in a Flensburg brewery and another one trained on ski lift facilities in Garmisch-Partenkirchen. They should have been trained using the same content and be able to solve the task of the final exam, which is the same throughout the country. This would conform to the idea of VET and to the leading principles of its practice. On the other hand no enterprise would accept a universal IM without any alternative. In that case branches and sectors would stipulate a mechanic of their own - with the consequence that there will be many more than 350 VPs.

Another specificity is the time frame approach of the apprenticeship curriculum: enterprise taking part in apprenticeship must train all fields (time frames) of a given VP, but are (within certain limits (e. g. 2-4 month)) free to adjust duration of training within time frames according to their needs and possibilities.

To cope with this apparent contradiction, beneath the surface of a VP like IM there are variations that can be called specialisations (*Fachrichtungen*). The IM renewed in 2004 had up to this time 4 specialisations: operating technology; instruments and fine mechanics technology; machinery and system technology; production technology. The automotive industry had an IM (production technology) matching their own purposes and the aircraft industry had a type of IM (machinery and system technology) which met their particular needs. The rigid concept of VET in Germany to have no more than 350 VPs to cover all labour market demands of qualifications had a mellow surface, offering some specialisations if the experts came to renew an old VP rather than create a specialised new one.

After the last renewal of nearly all metal and electric vocational profiles the flexibility of VET again has increased. Instead of specialisations (*Fachrichtungen*) now there is a separation between core and professional qualifications. In the case of a VP of 42 months duration, 21 months are dedicated to training for core qualifications and the other 21 months to the particular profession. For the first time such a model opened the VP to the real demands and specialised workplaces of the enterprises. Together with the possibility to find a task for the

final exam which is typical for the enterprise, the new structure of VPs gives more flexibility, even if this is at the cost of standardisation of VP qualification. Standardisation is no longer the priority for VET in Germany. Instead to ensure standards this reform gave priority to the criteria of matching the enterprises demand of qualification. The enterprises have to integrate training into work processes because of the new regulations concerning the subjects of the final exam. Especially the renewed VP offer sufficient space to do so and to organise training close to real work processes.

FRANCE

As in Germany, curriculum design in apprenticeship in France is based on the active participation of social partners and stakeholders. Employers and employees are represented at national and regional levels and additionally within sector-based bodies and corporations, which determine training contents. At national level, the National Joint Committee for Vocational Training has a decision-making role on the governmental contribution to apprenticeship funding and other matters related to education and training. This committee has counterparts at regional levels. Sector-based bodies such as consultative professional commissions (CPC-Commissions Consultatives Professionnelles) operate at national level (with correspondent CPCs at regional level) are consulted on decisions concerning introducing, updating or closing down apprenticeship programmes and on training contents for apprenticeship (as it is the case for full-time vocational training courses in schools). Employers are closely involved in off-the job training centres for apprentices (CFAs) through the Chambers of commerce and industry, chambers of trades and crafts and chambers of agricultures.

Although the CFAs (including their the educational and training staff) have considerable autonomy in choosing their own teaching/training methods and supporting instrument at all NQF levels, their degree of autonomy in designing educational and training programmes remains dependent on whether they are higher education CFAs or upper secondary ones. If higher education's CFAs are autonomous in designing and implementing their own educational and training programmes, the upper secondary apprenticeship centres have to implement the training programmes as they are set in the qualifications' related referential standards. In both cases, the programmes are composed of two categories of educational and training units: professional units and general/technical/vocational units. The latter is exclusively taken in charge by the CFA. As for the practical knowledge, skills and competences connected with the professional training units, they are basically acquired on-the-job within the enterprise. However, it is important to underline that the depth and the width of acquired practical knowledge and skills in the field of the targeted qualification are dependent on the size and the nature or range of the activity of the enterprises (i.e. the depth and width of its exercised activities/production processes and the degree of their concordance with the qualification's programme or its referential standards). For this reason, there are cases where these professional units are jointly taken in charge through a complement-based



alternating training within the enterprises and the CFA (as it is observed within certain CFAs within the construction and machinery sectors).

Off-the job training within the CFAs is shorter than that provided within the school-based IVET (in vocational lycées), conversely the time spent in the workplace within the enterprise is far greater (representing 3/5 to 3/4 of the whole apprenticeship time). Training time in the CFA is, for instance, about 900 cycle hours for the Professional Aptitude Certificate (CAP-Certificat d'Aptitude Professionnelle: NQF5=EQF3), 1000 hours for the Vocational Education Certificate (BEP-Brevet d'Etudes Professionnelles: NQF5=EQF3) and from 1350 to 1850 hours for the Vocational Baccalaureate (baccalauréat Professionnel: NQF4=EQF4) depending on whether it is a two or three-year process.

An interesting innovation in curriculum design is found in the VET programme Construction Technician Professional Baccalaureate: Organisation and Production of Structural Works (*Bac. Pro. - Technicien du Bâtiment: organisation et réalisation du gros-œuvres*) analysed by Dif (2011).

This level 4 (NQF and EQF) qualification can be acquired after completing the required formal education and training, with the curriculum involving alternance between VET within the CFA (*Lycée le Corbusier Illkirsh-Graffenstaden, 67400 Strasbourg*) and on-the-job training within an enterprise through the apprenticeship system. Integrated into the new professional baccalaureate, it is obtainable after 3 years for a candidate coming from the final year of the compulsory lower secondary education, and 2 years for someone already holding a CAP (a two-year-Professional Aptitude Certificate or *Certificat d'Aptitude Professionnelle*). The curriculum is designed to ensure individuals acquire the necessary skills and competences for organizing and carrying out (including implementation follow up), according to plans and/or directives, structural work on a construction site such as bricklaying structures, filling and distribution masonry, reinforced concrete structures, underground work (foundations, retaining structures, networks), finishing works (supports, thresholds, coatings, screeds). The training programme is based on respecting rigorously the contents specifications of referential standards established and updated every five years by the Professional Consultative Commission (CPC N°5), although the CFA and its teaching/training staff has a large autonomy in designing and implementing the used teaching methods and supporting instruments and tools. The programme is composed of 11 units (Us) distributed over two categories: 5 professional units and 6 general subject units. (For further details, see Dif, 2011).

The implementation of this training programme is organised through *alternance* between the CFA and the enterprise as follows: 32 weeks per year (including the apprentice's annual holidays as an employee) on the-the-job training within the enterprise and 20 weeks per year within the CFA. The general subject units of the programme are exclusively provided within the CFA, while for the professional units, training in the CFA and on-the-job training within the enterprise are complementary. Such shared responsibility and complementarity is necessary because the size of enterprises and the nature or range of activities (especially if the enterprise is small and/or has a limited range of activities connected with the professional

units) limit the possibilities for covering the professional units as programmed in conformity with the requirements of the occupational referential standards in the domain of the targeted qualification.

NETHERLANDS

The Netherlands offers different examples of curriculum design and training progression in apprenticeships. One such case is related to the introduction of the new learning approach, 'occupational task oriented learning' (*Beroepstaak gestuurd Leren*) described by Onstenk (2005), who analysed pilot projects with occupational task oriented learning in the lower level technical courses. The main goal of this approach is to increase the relevance of the school-based vocational training process to the changing needs of professional activities and at the same time activate and motivate learners.

Occupational tasks form the basis of the course, and can be realised either at school or in a company. These tasks form a coherent and consistent framework of work-based actions derived from practice. Different subjects are integrated in the occupational tasks, and students have to learn to work together, just as in the workplace. Innovation in VET should focus on the inclusion of work-based learning by establishing quality criteria for work-based learning places and by designing curricula which integrate learning places (Onstenk, 2005).

To ensure quality of occupational task-oriented learning measures were implemented directed to quality control of training workplaces inside enterprises:

From the start, formal requirements were established. Learning companies were registered, and were expected to answer demands like having the opportunity to do the work that the course was training for, making sure that there is a coach with some pedagogical skills, taking care of safety and communicating with the school about the performance of the student (Onstenk, 2005).

The implementation of this approach in practice raised several important problems and challenges related to coherence and compatibility of learning in the school and workplace of the enterprise:

- In many respects learning in work placements seems to take place incidentally to - rather than integrated with - learning at school.
- It appears to be difficult to guarantee quality standards for work placement companies.
- The connection between learning at school and learning in the workplace in many cases is not secured.
- The lack of co-operation and interaction among the parties involved.
- The insufficient organisation of the learning process itself (the relevance of learning assignments, the programming and the tuning of theory and practice).
- The lack of information (Onstenk, 2005).



An attempt was made to solve these problems by selecting work tasks and assignments formulated by the company according to their didactical potential, implementing additional guidance and more active involvement of VET teachers in guiding the students during their practical training at the workplaces:

Recent new projects take work tasks and assignments, as formulated by the company, as the starting point, provided that these fulfil requirements with regard to covering important learning objectives (relevance, complexity, developmental quality). Guidance in doing these tasks and reflection on the process and results are improved. Teachers can have an active role in this guidance, provided they regularly visit the company and the student and discuss progress and results, as well as have a more active use of reports, which students have to make anyway, but which are in many cases treated as a formal requirement, and not as a report on a learning process. Students can take their work assignments to school, rather than the other way around (Onstenk, 2005).

ENGLAND

Alisson Wolf (2011) in a Review of Vocational Education suggests that currently the curricula of the apprenticeship frameworks generally fail to allow progression to higher levels of study, because they ‘offer very little, or even no, recognisable ‘off the job education’ (Wolf, 2011). Another perceived weakness of curricula in apprenticeship frameworks is the impossibility of modifying the frameworks to take account of local conditions. Wolf (2011) suggests it is time to consider the extent to which the current general education components of apprenticeship frameworks are adequate for 16-19 year old apprentices, many of whom may wish to progress to further and higher education.

One recommended measure to expand the scope of curricula is the involvement of wider groups of stakeholders in designing and review of framework curricula:

It does not appear appropriate, given this Government’s commitment to progression through apprenticeship, that frameworks should, as at present, be drawn up entirely by SSCs, who conceive their role in relation to current employers, and current, occupationally-specific job requirements. The review of frameworks should also consider ways to increase flexibility and responsiveness to local labour markets and conditions.

Another urgent necessity related to curricula in apprenticeship frameworks is to increase the provision of underpinning knowledge and especially in mathematics and English:

Apprenticeships are, unlike other current 16-18 provision, programmatic:

Frameworks contain a number of different components. But the maths and English requirements are absolutely minimal. As noted earlier, a number of submissions to the Review argued that providers of specialised occupational training (e.g. in hair and beauty) should not and could not be expected to teach maths and English. This is absolutely true: but the answer is to ensure that apprentices receive the relevant teaching from qualified sources, not to continue with frameworks that require only the current key skills accreditation.

Curriculum design and provision in the apprenticeship models of England is currently undergoing important changes and shifts. One such shift consists of attempts to integrate apprenticeship with the provision of HE. An example of such an attempt is in the development of higher apprenticeships in engineering technology, which is considered below.

The idea of higher apprenticeship is based on the concept of classical dual qualifications, explicitly acting as a bridge between apprenticeship and HE in that they offer a work-based route, with part-time education provision (Brown, 2011). The HE qualification is pursued through part-time study while most of the work and training activities are based in the company: employees continue receiving a salary as they are engaged in relevant work experience alongside part-time academic study. Work and training in the company is explicitly drawn upon in the HE studies through work-based projects, learning logs and reflection upon workplace experience, offering complete permeability. Moreover undertaking the VET and HE programmes simultaneously is much quicker than doing the two programmes sequentially. Companies, training providers, further education (FE) colleges and HE institutions could all be involved in higher apprenticeship programme delivery partnerships.

The Higher Apprenticeship in Engineering Technology was conceived as a professional pathway providing the engineering and manufacturing sector with high grade technicians and engineers who possess practical skills combined with a HE qualification. It is intended to address the change in the labour market whereby the employment of professional engineers and higher-level technicians has been steadily increasing while employment in craft occupations has decreased. Changes in technology, increased quality requirements and the need to reduce costs have all been factors fuelling these trends. The programme was developed by the Sector Skills Council (SSC) for science, engineering and manufacturing technologies SEMTA with the aim of integrating the development of basic engineering skills and generic key skills found in standard apprenticeships with higher level vocational skills (NVQ level 4 in Engineering Leadership) and HE (with possible progression to a full honours Bachelor Degree). This single programme therefore offers completion of both a level 4 VET qualification and a level 5 sub-degree HE qualification, with a route to a level 6 degree qualification. The programme was considered suitable for high achieving young people who were looking for an alternative to full-time HE and for adults moving into professional engineering roles in companies. The programme was competence-based therefore there was no requirement to complete all the VET aspects prior to engaging in HE: the different aspects were completely permeable. That is, individuals were able to draw on their skills, knowledge and experience to get higher level qualifications from both VET apprenticeship and HE. Because the system is unitized all learners had to complete a minimum of 6 units from the Level 2 NVQ Performing Engineering Operations (PEO) or an equivalent programme. This meant that all learners had to cover aspects of basic practical training that are undertaken by all engineering apprentices. It was also possible to get Engineering Technician Professional Registration or Incorporated Engineer Professional Registration. Note therefore that the VET



programme comprised units from NVQ levels 2 (and 3) even though the final VET qualification was at level 4 and the final HE qualification at level 5.

Foundation Degree Forward (fdf), the national body which promotes Foundation Degrees with two year (level 5) HE sub-degree vocational programmes, was involved in the development of this scheme. All Foundation degrees have been designed to combine workplace training with HE learning. Foundation degrees in engineering are vocationally focused HE qualifications and are core to higher apprenticeships. They potentially increase the number qualified as Engineering Technicians and Incorporated Engineers. Foundation degrees in engineering are placed at intermediate level in the framework of HE qualifications (FHEQ) equivalent to level 5 in the EQF. They are accredited by the Institute of Engineering and Technology (IET) on the basis of providing entry, to the final years of Incorporated Engineer (IEng) accredited bachelor degrees. Foundation degrees are intended to develop work-based skills, relevant to a particular sector of industry; key skills, for example in communication and problem solving; and generic skills such as reasoning, professionalism and work process management. Work-based learning is a major part of the foundation degree but higher-level knowledge and understanding reinforces and supports the development of vocational skills. Foundation degrees are normally developed through a partnership between employers and awarding bodies, such as HE institutions.

Higher Apprenticeship programmes make clear the subsequent arrangements for progression to honours degrees and to professional qualifications or higher-level NVQs.

These programmes can be delivered over 2-4 years and learning time can be reduced through Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL): where learners provide evidence of relevant existing skills and knowledge (obtained from work, VET or elsewhere) credit can be given, shortening the time to obtain the foundation degree and the higher apprenticeship, and enabling learners to focus their study specifically on new learning.

The whole process of curriculum design in VET and HE in relation to higher apprenticeships has been strongly influenced by the programme requirements and how these in turn are articulated with particular qualifications, but the interesting point is that the programme draws on a range of different qualifications (in terms of level and type) in the construction of a holistic programme. Progression requirements and flexibility are also built in as the whole higher apprenticeship development is compatible with the principles of both ECTS (in HE) and ECVET (in VET) in that the system allows for the accumulation of both HE credit points and unitized vocational qualifications, with total permeability (including exemption following APEL) between VET and HE. This arrangement is possible because all the qualifications from both sectors are expressed in terms of learning outcomes ‘consisting of a coherent set of knowledge, skills and competences.’ There are also partnerships for credit transfer; learning outcomes could be used as the basis for mobility for either the HE or VET component; and the learning outcomes for the VET, HE and work components are all employer-based drawing on occupational profiles. The programme as a whole expressly delineates the required knowledge, skills and competences and the HE component uses credit points.

Comparison of analysed apprenticeship approaches and practices in curriculum design, training time and progression: important issues for policy learning

The important issues for policy learning

- | | |
|---|---|
| A | Fit of the analysed apparent good practices to the context and conditions of the implementation and development of apprenticeship in Lithuania. |
|---|---|

Analysing the compatibility of analysed apprenticeship approaches and practices in curriculum design and organisation of provision of training with the context and conditions of introduction of apprenticeship in Lithuania the following remarks can be made:

The current approaches of curriculum design are only partially similar to the work process approach used in Germany. VET standards are the basic referencing documents for development of VET curricula and assessment of learning outcomes of pupils and students.

VET standards cover professional activities and vocational training and learning outcome assessment requirements. The standard presents a brief description of professional activity, statement of the goal of the occupation, description of activity areas, list of competences for each activity area, training (study) objectives derived for each competence, competence assessment specifications for each competence, list of key general skills, description of final qualification assessment. Therefore from the formal point of view the VET standards, which are the main referencing documents for curriculum design reflect the contents and structure of work processes. Besides, the procedures of development of VET standards and curriculum design in Lithuania require participation of the representatives of employers and VET providers: the work group consists of representatives of VET institutions and employers who brainstorm the list of competences. Afterwards these lists are discussed with employers and employees in enterprises selected as representative (big, medium and small, different levels of technological development etc.) to establish the extent to which the competences reflect current work processes. Each competence presents by itself the generalised descriptor of the heterogeneous sets of knowledge, skills and key skills. Competences in the VET standards are split into more simple and homogenous learning outcomes called training objectives. These training objectives are described in terms of knowledge, practical skills or key skills and abilities. Therefore, it can be assumed that the structure and contents of current VET standards in Lithuania in principle reflects the holistic work processes.

However, there are serious doubts about the adoption of a work process approach in the design of VET curricula and in the process of training. The work process approach, as it is understood in Germany, requires systemic and intensive application of theoretical knowledge in real work processes and, by corollary, it also requires the application of acquired practical experience in the acquisition of new vocational knowledge. It can be achieved only: a) with effective planning of apprenticeship training time and place, b) by alternating of theoretical and practical training referring to the specificities of work process, c) with the guidance of skilled and experienced mentors and tutors in the enterprises. All these components of work-



process oriented apprenticeship are insufficiently developed or even absent in the VET system of Lithuania. Looking to the future development of the VET curriculum design in Lithuania, there are certain questions on the compatibility of the planned VET curriculum reforms with the work process approach. First of all it concerns plans to introduce modularisation of the VET curricula on the national level. The main issue here is the scope and volume of the planned modules - whether these national modules will be based on work tasks, or work processes. The first case is incompatible with the work process approach in VET curriculum design. Another important issue is the necessity to have curricula integrating theoretical and practical training; German experiences show that separation of curricula in between the different learning places brings different inconsistencies in terms of mismatches between the learning activities at school and enterprise.

The achievements of France in curriculum design of apprenticeship and in provision of 'alternance training' are very much dependent on highly developed networks of cooperation between enterprises and the CFAs. Special attention should be paid to attempts to ensure coherence of the provision of theoretical knowledge and practical skills and use of complementarity-based alternance training within the enterprises and the CFAs in order to reduce the dependence of the depth and the width of acquired practical knowledge and skills in the field of the targeted qualification on the size and the nature or range of the activity of the enterprises. This experience can be implemented and developed in Lithuania by using the existing network of initial VET providers and newly established special providers of practical training, such as sectoral practical training centres. As mentioned above, these centres could play a very similar role to the CFAs.

The occupational task-oriented approach of curriculum design in the Netherlands is in principle compatible with the current content and structure of VET standards in Lithuania, where competences are also split to learning objectives based on tasks. However, in implementing this approach of curriculum design and provision in Lithuania we can expect similar or more difficult problems and challenges related to coherence and compatibility of learning in the school and the workplace. The incidental character of learning in work placements in enterprise, difficulties to guarantee quality standards for work placements, lack of connection between learning at school and learning in the workplace, lack of co-operation and interaction between schools and enterprises, are all questions to be addressed.

English experience in curriculum design presents certain compatibilities with the context of VET curriculum design in Lithuania. First of all, the important role played by the sectoral experts in curriculum design (Sector Skills Councils in the UK, expert groups of branches of the economy in Lithuania). The approach of higher apprenticeship curriculum can also in principle be implemented in Lithuania through cooperation between enterprises and higher vocational education colleges. There is an increasing number of successful cases of such cooperation between these stakeholders.

B The extent to which the goals and objectives of analysed practices of curriculum design respond to the needs and aims of the introduction and development of apprenticeship in Lithuania. To what extent are the goals and objectives of analysed approaches of curriculum design comparable with the aims of introducing apprenticeship in Lithuania (to increase flexibility of VET provision and matching between skills demand and supply, etc.)?

In principle the goals and objectives of all analysed approaches and practices of curriculum design responds to the needs and aims of the introduction and development of apprenticeship in Lithuania. The main difference between the goals and objectives of the approaches of apprenticeship curriculum design in Germany and France from the one side and the UK and Netherlands from the other side is the extent of orientation towards holistic, work process based as opposed task based provision of knowledge and skills: curriculum design in Germany and France is more oriented to the first type, while the UK and the Netherlands are more oriented to the second type of provision. Having in mind the current school based model of VET provision, existing capabilities of the VET system (institutional, human resources) and challenges of socioeconomic development (e.g., urgent necessity to improve workforce productivity and quality of employment in order to compete in the European labour market) the orientation to work process based apprenticeship curricula seems to be more the more suitable choice for Lithuania.

C The potential of analysed approaches and measures of curriculum design in apprenticeship to provide know-how needed for the proposing of original and innovative solutions of introduction and development of apprenticeship in Lithuania. To what extent and in what ways could analysed approaches and measures of curriculum design of apprenticeship in Germany, France, England and the Netherlands contribute to the development of curriculum design in Lithuania? What are these innovative measures and instruments that could be developed learning from the experiences and practices of the benchmark partner countries?

Looking to the approaches and instruments of curriculum design in Germany, France, Netherlands and the UK, the following know-how could be used for development of curriculum design in Lithuania:

- The ideas and know-how of work process approach in curriculum design, as the most pertinent approach for high-quality apprenticeship training. This methodological approach is very promising in terms of long term returns to the quality of apprenticeship provision, but also very challenging in terms of requirements to invest in curriculum design and training provision.
- The ideas concerning the assurance of coherence between theoretical knowledge and practical skills in curriculum design and in the provision of training, provided by the experiences of cooperation between enterprises and apprenticeship training centres



(CFAs) in France. This idea is very pertinent considering the problems related to the high differentiation of potential of enterprises to ensure the quality of workplace based training.

- The idea of higher apprenticeship curricula, provided by the experience of Higher Apprenticeship Programmes in England is interesting, considering increasing interest in higher vocational studies and growing demand of qualifications provided by higher vocational training.

3.4 Apprenticeship funding arrangements

GERMANY

Apprenticeship funding arrangements in Germany are based on sectoral and national agreements involving government institutions and stakeholders.

In Germany from the moment a young person is contracted as an apprentice they become an employee and any payment is judicially seen as a wage (or salary). The amount of the payment is negotiated between the trade unions and employers. What they fix is the valid tariff which all contracts have to respect.

For example in construction sector 2.3 % of the gross sum of wages is paid for the institutions (*SoKa: Sozialkasse*) which offer the 1st year of training for all enterprises belonging to this industrial sector — the sum is paid even by those who do not train apprentices (2010: 280 million €).

One of the most interesting and effective recent measures of the funding of apprenticeship in Germany is the Apprenticeship Pact concluded by the federal government and the employers in 2007. According to this Pact the employers offered an average of 60,000 new training positions per annum, making 30,000 places available for introductory prevocational training. This pact aims to involve 30,000 new companies in apprenticeships by 2013.

In October 2010 BDA reported that 58,400 new IVT positions, 21,000 prevocational introductory positions and 36,200 new companies were gained. The 2010 Pact extended the commitment to 2014. An additional 10,000 in-company introductory training measures shall be set up. Employers also intend to support disadvantaged pupils and trainees of migrant background. They will continue establishing school-business partnerships and will engage in further training of teachers and in school-quality management systems on career guidance. In 2008, long-term activities on school-business cooperation by BDA and the Cologne Institute for Economic Research (*Institut der Wirtschaft Köln*) were expanded in eastern Germany. Several regional networks were set up. The 2007 Apprenticeship Pact reached the set goals. By winning new employers the Pact managed to keep the overall percentage share of employers active in IVT provision at pre-crisis level (Kraemer, 2011).

In addition, there are many different agreements and tripartite apprenticeship pacts concluded at *Länder* and sectoral levels. The 2010 agreement by the Mining, Chemicals and Energy Industrial Union (*Industriegewerkschaft Bergbau Energie Chemie*, IG BCE) and the German Federation of Chemicals Employers' Associations (*Bundesarbeitgeberverband Chemie*, BAVC) includes a commitment to create 9,000 new IVT positions per annum from 2011 to 2013. For promoting employment after completion of training, a new scheme was introduced that is limited to the duration of the crisis. Companies in the industry make a one-off payment of €25 million into a new fund for supporting firms to employ apprentices after completion of training, which would otherwise not do so because of the economic crisis. Such companies will receive €1,000 a month from the fund for a maximum of one year, thereby reducing their personnel costs for the employee in question by about a third. As a result, around 1,000



apprentices will stay with their companies when they finish training. The fund will be jointly administered by the social partners (Kraemer, 2011).

Regional and sectoral agreements on apprenticeship funding foresee various measures facilitating employment and employability of apprentices:

The 2010 regional agreement packages in the metal and electrical industry stipulate that trainees shall be employed for at least 12 months after completion of training (DE1004029I). If the business situation does not allow for employment, management and works council shall consider employing the trainee on a part-time contract or on short-time work. Rights of the young worker on privileged access to an employment contract will remain in place for up to two years after completion of training.

In the Bavarian metal sector, the employers association and the Metalworkers' Union (*Industriegewerkschaft Metall*) agreed on a job transfer agency to operate as a temporary work agency. Young workers who are not employed on a permanent contract after completion of IVT may transfer to this agency and shall return to their former employer as temporary agency worker. They shall be employed on a standard contract as soon as possible. The model is co-funded by the Employment Agency and the Bavarian Labour Ministry (Kraemer, 2011).

There also apprenticeship funding agreements concluded between the enterprises and unions or their sectoral associations:

The 2010 agreement package by Volkswagen and IG Metall guarantees the provision of 1,750 IVT positions per annum (including 300 university student internships) at all German plants (till end of 2014). VW Financial Services will provide another 40 IVT positions per annum. After completion of IVT, all trainees, depending on performance, will be employed on a permanent contract (till end of 2011).

In a 2010 agreement with the United Services Union (*Vereinte Dienstleistungsgewerkschaft, ver.di*), *Deutsche Telekom* guaranteed to maintain IVT positions at a 2.9% share of overall in-company jobs in Germany from 2011 to 2013. In 2012/2013, 4,700 young workers will get permanent employment contracts at the German company sites (Kraemer, 2011).

There are also various measures of Federal government in funding apprenticeship training, such as JOBSTARTER and EQJ:

An example of this is the programme '*JOBSTARTER – Für die Zukunft ausbilden*' [training for the future], which was developed by the *BMBF* in 2005 to promote innovation and structural development in VET. The programme is aimed at improving regional provision of in-company training places for young people by increasing the number of training enterprises. The *BMBF* is making a subsidy of 125 million euro available to *JOBSTARTER* for the period from 2005 to 2010, and the programme is being co-financed with *ESF* funding.

Another important programme that is being implemented within the framework of the apprenticeship pact is the special programme for entry-level qualification of young people (EQJ programme), designed to create 25000 'enterprise entry-level qualifications' a year (see 4.3.3). In 2005/2006 this figure was considerably exceeded, with 31718 admissions. Owing to

its success, the programme has been extended by a year until the end of 2008, and as of 1 October 2006 the number of places was increased to 40 000 (Schneider et al., 2007).

Measures mentioned above were introduced due to social reasons and remain non-system. Ordinarily the apprenticeship system is self-financing, public money is only used for the schools' part (teachers) and non-personnel-costs (school building, teaching material).

FRANCE

The funding of apprenticeship in France comes from several main sources: funding from enterprises (mainly the salaries of apprentices, materials, salaries for supervisors etc.), public funding for the activities of apprenticeship centres (apprenticeship tax, regional apprenticeship funds) and contributions to alternance vocational training.

Like Germany and the UK, apprentices in France receive a salary, as they are subject to the same rules and regulations within employing organisations as other employees. Apprentices have the right to a minimum apprenticeship wage paid by the employer, which is calculated as a percentage of the minimum guaranteed wage (SMIC) in France. The wage varies according to the age of the apprentice and the year of the apprenticeship as described in the exemplary table below:

Apprenticeship year	Under 18 years old	18 to 20 years old	21 years and over
First year	25% of SMIC (about €335.95 per month)	41% of SMIC (about €550.95 per month)	53% of SMIC (about over 712.20 per month)
Second year	37% of SMIC (about €497.19 per month)	49% of SMIC (about €658.45 per month)	61% of SMIC (about €819.70 per month)
Third year	53% of SMIC (about €712.20 per month)	65% of SMIC (about €873.45 per month)	78% of SMIC (about €1048.14 per month)

Table 11: French wages

Wages of apprentices can be changed by collective agreements, which can establish higher wages for apprentices than the statutory minima described above.

Activities of apprenticeship centres are financed basically from the apprenticeship tax and the regional apprenticeship fund. These two sources are completed by transfers from financing alternance vocational training and the European Social Fund (ESF) in some cases.

With the exclusion of freelance professions (professions liberales) and agricultural occupations, the apprenticeship tax is levied on all enterprises exercising industrial, commercial, craft and service activities irrespective of their size. This tax amounts in total to 0.5% of each enterprise's gross wages bill for enterprises with fewer than 250 employees and 0.6% for those with over 250 employees. A quota of 52% of this tax is devoted exclusively to



apprenticeship financing and development: where 30% go to CFAs and 22% to the national fund for the development and modernisation of apprenticeship (FNDMA - *Fonds National de Développement et de Modernisation de l'Apprentissage*). The remaining 48% go to financing all other types of technological and vocational training within the IVET system. Exemption from the tax is conditioned by a specified number of apprentices recruited by the beneficiary enterprises. Although there is an apprenticeship tax collector, the firm can choose to pay the tax (or part of it) to an education establishment of its own choice (including universities). This is why there is a considerable competition among education and training providers for firms' contribution to this tax. To deal with this issue, one of the proposals put forward by the Apprenticeship Charter (signed in June 2005 by 1300 medium and large firms) is that apprenticeship tax has to be used directly to finance apprenticeship.

Regional funds for apprenticeship and CVT (*FRAFP – Fonds Regional de l'Apprentissage et de la Formation Professionnelle*) are managed by the regional councils. In addition to the resources of the regional council, these funds are provided with financial resources transferred by the State in conformity with the principle of transferring the necessary funds accompanying the transfer of responsibilities to regional authorities for VET and apprenticeship. This fund constitutes a financial instrument enabling the regions to implement their apprenticeship related policies and strategies. In this connection, the regional councils established a provisional apprenticeship programme specifying which CFAs can receive financial support. For a better coordination of their efforts in promoting apprenticeship, the state, regional councils and professional bodies and organisations conclude targeted contracts running over a period of three to five years, which fix objectives and lay down guidelines for their achievement.

Alternating vocational training contribution funds are collected by the joint funds collectors for financing alternance vocational training and can be used to finance operational expenses of the CFAs contracted by the state or the regions up to 35% of these collected funds in accordance with the sectoral collective agreement. This compulsory contribution (as alternance training tax) of enterprises, which are also subject to apprenticeship tax, amounts to 0.40% of the annual gross wage bill. Enterprises that are not subject to apprenticeship tax have to make a contribution to alternance vocational training amounting to 0.30% of their annual gross wages bill.

It is important to distinguish between two categories of CFAs in connection with direct state financing:

- CFAs created through regional agreements (which is the dominant category) are mainly, as explained above, financed through the apprenticeship tax completed by the regional subsidies (including part of the mandatory contributions to alternating training)
- The CFAs created through national agreements, they are partially or completely financed by the State (by the ministry of national education). Given that apprenticeship is decentralised, the state intervenes only exceptionally in cases where there is dispersion or a low number of apprentices requiring heavy and costly infrastructures or

in cases of specific type o apprenticeship such as CFAs in energy production and provision (including nuclear energy).

THE NETHERLANDS

In the Netherlands, the Adult and Vocational Education Act (*WEB*) governs the funding of adult and vocational education. The sources of funding include government, with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science funding vocational education courses directly, based partly on the number of students per course/learning pathway and partly on the number of certificates awarded per institution.

The Ministry similarly funds knowledge centres for vocational education and business on the basis of the number of qualifications devised, the number of training companies recognised as such and the number of practical training places (BPV places) filled. Central government budget for adult education is allocated to the municipalities on the basis of the number of inhabitants over the age of 18, the number of ethnic minorities and the number of adults with an educational disadvantage. The municipal authorities then buy in adult education courses by concluding contracts with the regional training centres (ROCs). Students on vocational training courses (BOL) pay fees and are eligible for student finance. Institutions also receive income from contract activities for companies and private individuals.

Some of the most prominent and effective instruments in co-funding of apprenticeship training of employees in the Netherlands are sectoral training funds established under collective (tripartite) industrial agreements in all the major sectors of the economy. Currently there are 66 Training Research and Development Funds (O+O Funds) operating in the Netherlands under 134 Collective Agreements. These funds are managed by collective bodies with employer and union representation.

The funds are based on levies of all firms covered by the collective agreement under which the fund is established. The levies vary by sector and range from 0.1 to 0.7 per cent of gross wages. Although there are no uniform rules by which the O+O funds are administered, there are three main ways in which funds tend expended (Waterreus, 1997):

- Awarding collective training days for a certain sector. In this case employers in the sector can bid for funds to support a number of training days which the employer then allocates amongst employees.
- The awarding of individual training days. This provision finances individual training leave and can be taken at the employee's discretion.
- Awarding funds to support training programs detailed in training plans submitted by employers. The fund may support up to 50 per cent of the costs of a training program (Smiths, 2005).



Apprenticeship training of youth is funded from the industry's Education and Development Fund:

Employers are partly compensated for the productivity loss they incur while employing an apprentice. They receive a subsidy from the industry's Education and Development Fund. All employers contribute to this fund by donating approximately 2.5 percent of their wage sum. Each year €60 million is spent on apprenticeships in the construction industry as 10,000 participants enrol in an apprenticeship program (Schaapman, 2011).

There are also apprenticeship funding initiatives of social partners targeted on the prevention of unemployment among school leavers:

At 25 March 2009, the national, bipartite Labour Foundation (Stichting van de Arbeid) stipulates that the prevention of youth unemployment is seen as an important objective by the social partners. The Foundation has agreed on the intention to offer every school-leaver that is unemployed for a period of more than three months a combined job – traineeship, a so-called XL-job. The Foundation also agreed on the intention that the sectoral social partners shall possibly make agreements on the continuation of the employment after the traineeship. (...)

The employers' organisations contributed to the execution of the Action Plan Youth Unemployment in the following ways:

- The creation of 25.000 so-called XL-jobs (a combined job – traineeship). An XL-job consists of a four-days-a-week job and vocational training modules.
- In 2009 VNO-NCW and MKB-Nederland point out that the creation of such a large number of jobs is quite a challenge for employers and needs to be financially supported by government. Especially for the smaller and medium-sized companies this will be necessary to get their participation.
- In 2010, the employers again point at the necessity of a good financial basis for the plans to counteract youth unemployment. They suggest creating a national budget to finance sectoral agreements on youth unemployment (Schaapman, 2011).

ENGLAND

In England, government funding agencies contract with learning providers to deliver apprenticeships, and may accredit them as a Centre of Vocational Excellence or National Skills Academy. These organisations provide off-the-job tuition and manage the bureaucratic workload associated with apprenticeships. Providers are usually private training companies but might also be Further Education colleges, voluntary sector organisations, Chambers of Commerce or employers themselves. The Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA), a non-departmental public body, provides funding to local authorities for the education and training of young people. The YPLA has intervention powers where local authorities are failing, or likely to fail, to perform their duties, and sponsors open academies.

The Skills Funding Agency (SFA) within the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills, has responsibility for training post-19 and for apprenticeships (both 16-18 and 19+). The SFA

sponsors general FE colleges, while the YPLA and local authorities have the power to notify the SFA where they have concerns about educational standards for young people attending a college.

One of the specific features of apprenticeship funding in England is the combination of approaches of ‘payment-per qualification’ and ‘payment-by-results’: training institutions are paid by qualification, not by student (though with upper limits on how much they can earn per student). Payments are also ‘by results’: if a student (or apprentice) does not gain their formal qualifications from an awarding body, the institution receives less money (Wolf, 2011).

The funding of apprenticeship on the basis of provided qualifications aims to enhance recruitment to apprenticeship, to reward successful provision of apprenticeship training and to regulate provision of qualifications according to labour market needs:

The current funding system offers rewards after the event for those who have recruited and retained students, and whose students have achieved qualifications successfully, rather than operating with individual advance contracts to colleges and providers under which they undertake to ‘deliver’ a given set of qualifications. It therefore gives incentives to recruit more and rewards recruitment success. In other respects, however, the system is unchanged – funding is based on individual qualifications and registered qualifications achieved. Qualifications which are classified as needing quite short amounts of teaching time attract small amounts of funding and vice versa (Wolf, 2009).

However, these funding approaches are criticised for some serious negative influences to apprenticeship: they force institutions to steer a high proportion of students into courses they are likely to pass easily, risk severe downward pressure on standards in teacher-assessed awards, encourage strong institutions to focus on qualifications that are well-funded but require less teaching time in practice than their value implies, do not encourage institutions to offer coherent programmes of study, do not respond flexibly to local labour market needs, and erode direct cooperation between training providers and employers (Wolf, 2009).

Alison Wolf in her report on VET identifies several major problems concerning funding of apprenticeship in the UK: high apprenticeship wages, excess demand for apprenticeships, absence of public funding and co-funding mechanisms directed to increase apprenticeship vacancies, lack of transparency in funding of existing apprenticeship schemes, when considerable numbers of apprentices are on ‘Business as Usual’ apprenticeship schemes, in which some people on a company’s normal training programme are apprentices, whereas others are not; but there are no differences in the training received. Another problem is an unusually large per head administrative expenses of apprenticeship because of its unique institutional set-up.

Under current arrangements, heavy use is made of ‘training providers’ who operate as brokers and middlemen between employers and trainers or assessors. Using a third set of institutions, with additional overheads, employees, etc, is inherently expensive and wasteful. It cannot make sense to run a system which involves large numbers of adults travelling constantly from place to place to interact with and complete paperwork for individual apprentices and their employers; and to talk to employers about how they might convert existing employees into



apprentices. Improving efficiency, and increasing the proportion of funding spent on first-line apprenticeship training are particularly important given that apprenticeship unit costs have been rising very fast in recent years (Wolf, 2011).

Alison Wolf recommends that employers, who take on 16-18 year old apprentices should be eligible for payments (direct or indirect) when they bear some of the cost of education for an age-group with a right to free full-time participation. Such payments should be made only where 16-18 year old apprentices receive clearly identified off-the-job training and education, with broad transferable elements (Wolf, 2011).

COMPARISON OF ANALYSED APPROACHES AND PRACTICES IN FUNDING OF APPRENTICESHIP: IMPORTANT ISSUES FOR POLICY LEARNING

The important issues for policy learning

A	Fit of the analysed apparent good practices to the context and conditions of the implementation and development of apprenticeship in Lithuania.
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In the analysed cases of apprenticeship training in Germany, France, the Netherlands and England the funding arrangements are executed on the following levels:

1. National level - the state funding arrangements are mainly directed to the funding of the school based part of apprenticeship training (Germany, France, the Netherlands, England) and to the widening of accessibility of apprenticeship to the different groups of population with lower chances and possibilities to find and get apprenticeship placements (JOBSTARTER and EQJ programme in Germany). In some cases enterprises also receive public subsidies covering part of their costs incurred in the training of apprentices at workplaces (subsidies to companies from the industry's Education and Development Fund in the Netherlands). There are noticeable differences in the modalities of collecting state funding in the analysed countries: through tripartite pacts in Germany, special taxes levied on all enterprises in France and in the Netherlands. Having in mind the weakness of social partnership in the VET system of Lithuania, the alternative of collecting apprenticeship funds from levies and special taxes would seem to be more relevant. However, it depends on how an apprenticeship system is introduced. If it is introduced in an incremental way on the basis of separate initiatives and practices in the different sectors, collecting funds via levy based taxes may be inappropriate, because apprenticeship will not cover all sectors of economy.
2. Sectoral /regional level – the funding of apprenticeship at this level in most cases is based on tripartite agreements. Usually there is co-funding from the involved stakeholders: employers organisations, enterprises, state or regional budget). As good examples of such co-funding arrangements one can identify sectoral Training Research and Development Funds (O+O Funds) operating in the Netherlands, Apprenticeship Pact and sectoral agreements on apprenticeship funding in the chemical, machinery production and other sectors in Germany, regional funds for apprenticeship and CVT in France. Such co-funding initiatives require highly developed networks and experience of social partnership in the field of VET, as well as solid financial capabilities of the stakeholders involved, especially employers' organisations. These preconditions are almost absent in Lithuania. Most employers' organisations have very limited financial capabilities and cannot be autonomous actors in funding or co-funding.

The biggest challenges of the funding and co-funding of apprenticeship in the analysed countries are related to ensuring the positive impact of funding instruments on the quality and



effectiveness of training provision. There are quite big challenges related to side effects of public funding and co-funding, such as: overlapping of the different funding sources; encouraging a proliferation of different institutional-bureaucratic structures playing only an intermediate role and not contributing to the concrete tasks of provision of training; encouraging institutions to choose qualifications which are well-funded but require less teaching time, etc. Considering the transitional socioeconomic context of Lithuania and especially institutional changes incurred by VET reforms already underway, these challenges should be considered and taken into account very seriously.

B Extent to which the goals and objectives of analysed measures of funding and co-funding of apprenticeship respond to the needs and aims of the introduction and development of apprenticeship in Lithuania. How the goals and objectives of analysed measures of funding and co-funding are comparable with the aims of introduction of apprenticeship in Lithuania (to increase flexibility of VET provision and matching between skills demand and supply, etc.)?

All analysed measures of funding and co-funding of apprenticeship are directed to the following main aims:

1. to enhance accessibility of apprenticeship (priority of state funding measures);
2. to ensure high quality of apprenticeship provision and its alignment with labour market needs (priority to the sectoral stakeholders).

Both these aims are fully compatible with the aims of the introduction of apprenticeship in Lithuania. One more specific aim of apprenticeship funding in Lithuania could be to enhance attractiveness of apprenticeship pathways in acquiring qualification and starting a professional career. Different funding and co-funding instruments (subsidies, scholarships, exemptions) could support the increase the interest of youth in apprenticeship, as a new pathway of vocational training.

C Potential of analysed approaches and measures of the funding of apprenticeship to provide know-how needed for proposing original and innovative solutions for introducing and developing apprenticeships in Lithuania. To what extent and in what ways could the analysed approaches and measures of funding of apprenticeship in Germany, France, England and the Netherlands contribute to measures or mechanisms of apprenticeship funding in Lithuania? What innovative measures and instruments could be developed learning from the experiences and practices of the benchmark partner countries?

Looking at approaches and measures for funding apprenticeship in Germany that could provide useful guidance for developing original funding measures in Lithuania the Apprenticeship Pact concluded by the federal government and the employers in 2007 and different agreements and tripartite apprenticeship pacts concluded at Länder and sectoral levels are primary candidates for consideration. Training Research and Development Funds

(O+O Funds) operating in the Netherlands under 134 Collective Agreements also present interesting potential for policy learning in this field. An apprenticeship pact concluded by the government and employers and especially tripartite apprenticeship pacts concluded at regional and sectoral levels should be considered as potentially effective instruments of apprenticeship funding, because such pacts and tripartite agreements can be flexible and adjusted to the lower number of stakeholders involved in the initial stages of implementation of apprenticeship. Such pacts could be concluded only in those sectors of the economy exhibiting most interest and greatest need to introduce apprenticeships. Moreover, such pacts can also be sufficiently flexible in terms of contributions of partners to apprenticeship funding. For example, the contribution of the state can be made in the form of different tax exemptions to involved enterprises.

Looking at approaches and measures of apprenticeship funding in France that could provide useful ideas for developing original funding measures in Lithuania, the apprenticeship tax collected by levies from all registered enterprises stands out as particularly appropriate. Despite the above mentioned problems of using this source of funding at the initial stage of the introduction of apprenticeship (due to the comparatively small share of enterprises involved in apprenticeship), in the perspective of long-term development of apprenticeship the introduction of an apprenticeship tax has much potential. Such tax could also be applied to companies choosing to ‘import’ the workforce from third countries (not EU members), or for companies, that do not invest in other measures of initial and continuing VET. A levy-grant system would surely encourage employers not providing apprenticeship to consider doing so since otherwise they effectively contribute to the costs of employers that do offer apprenticeships.

Looking at UK apprenticeship funding measures as a source of inspiration for developing funding arrangements in Lithuania, the combination of approaches of ‘payment-per-qualification’ and ‘payment-by-results’ is interesting. However in implementing this approach special attention must be paid to the negative ‘side effects’ noted above (*forcing institutions to steer a high proportion of students into courses they are likely to pass easily, risk of severe downward pressure on standards in teacher-assessed awards, enhance institutions strong to choose qualifications which are well-funded but require less teaching time in practice than their value implies, do not enhance institutions to offer coherent programmes of study, do not empower and enhance to respond flexibly to the local labour market needs, erode direct cooperation between training providers and employers*). These side effects would be highly likely to appear given the opportunistic behaviour of involved stakeholders and lack of mutual trust between them.



3.5 Stakeholder roles

GERMANY

In Germany, the stakeholders play a vital role in the apprenticeship system. GVET is part of the economic constitution so both employers and employees must be involved. Both parties follow their interest to regulate the labour market in terms of wages, salaries, qualifications, etc. A small part of the responsibilities of the two so called tariff or social partners is in addition to co-operate in all questions regarding VET. The employers established a special institution in 1970, the *Kuratorium der Deutschen Wirtschaft für Berufsbildung* (Employers' Coordination Body for Vocational and Further Training) to agree and defend joint positions, initiatives and employers' interests in the area of vocational and further training. KWB represents employers' positions and interests in the area of vocational and further training in particular vis-à-vis the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology (BMWi); Federal Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF); Confederation of German Trade Unions (DGB); Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB); Standing Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK); Ministries of Education and Cultural Affairs in German *Länder*; Ministries of Economics in German *Länder*; Associations of Vocational Trainers (BLBS/VLW).

Employee interests in the apprenticeship system are represented by the trade unions, including the umbrella organisation DGB (*Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund*/The Confederation of German Trade Unions) and specific sector unions such as for the metals and electrical industries, *IG Metall*, for chemicals, including mining and energy, IG BCE. Although there are some concurrent trade unions, in every sector there is always one large dominant union so political power is not split. The same is true of employers' associations, which also exhibit a high degree of organisation. This ensures that any common vote demanded by the federal government will be accepted and come into effect by law. Employers and trade unions have to cooperate in establishing VPs (*Berufsbild*), which are defined by positions (*Berufsbildpositionen*). Both terms are rooted in a vocational training tradition that leads to an expected qualification that both parties consider to correspond functionally to labour market demands. If these positions are completed then a second element of the legal procedure is needed: a legal ordinance determining the final exam (*Prüfungsordnung*).

The Chambers of Commerce of Industry (IHK – *Industrie- und Handelskammern*) and Chambers of Trades and Crafts (HK — *Handwerkskammern*) play a role of coordination and surveillance. Their involvement in GVET is based on the BBIG and follows the principles of subsidiarity. To execute legal orders they need a special legal status known as corporate body of public law (*Körperschaften des Öffentlichen Rechts*). This includes a non-profit status. Membership of a chamber is compulsory for all enterprises of a region and every member has one vote. Thus, while Volkswagen has more than 50,000 employees at Wolfsburg, its role in the local chamber has officially no more weight than another enterprise employing only 10 workers. Their role is to help member enterprises relating to all questions of apprenticeship and further education. The chambers are not authorised to instruct or direct the enterprises and

the organisation operates on a bottom-up principle, so the engagement of an enterprise can be high or weak, even to the point of ignoring the local chamber.

If an enterprise takes part in apprenticeship then the Chamber becomes important as it is the only legal institution responsible for the final exam (*Facharbeiter- oder Gesellenprüfung*). This crucial element of GVET is regulated by law, the BBiG. The law says that the exams overall and in detail must be comparable and any result can be made subject to a judicial examination. The examinee can ask for verification of the accuracy of the exam procedure including the questions and task they had to answer or to work on. The critical point is that if an examinee doubts the result, the onus of proof is on the exam commission, responsible to the local chamber. This gives a very high weight to the role of chambers in the performance of GVET. In effect, this role is one of surveillance; it is more like a warden than an actor and may be likened, rather unflatteringly, to a system of policing.

As already mentioned, local chambers are represented in vertical organisations. All IHKs have established a roof called DIHK (*Deutscher Industrie- und Handelskammertag*). The HK have a similar organisation called ZDH (*Zentralverband des Deutschen Handwerks*). Again the important thing is that these organisations are controlled in a bottom-up way. They only exist as lobbies which means that they act to others as one vote of all members and that they act in a way that ensures members have to compromise and such a compromise then is the official opinion of the organisation. Of course the latter are powerful but the organisation's boards do not have any power in their own right to control the members.

Above all then there is a common organisation called KWB (*Kuratorium der Deutschen Wirtschaft*). It represents all institutions playing on the employer's side in all questions of GVET. The KWB is in contact to the federal ministries and as soon as the interests of the employers in GVET are touched, the KWB will delegate the problem or the question to the member responsible. So we can resume: the higher the level of organisation the lower is its authority against the basis. The German term for this is *Selbstorganisation* (self-organisation). It reflects the official and constitutional principle of subsidiarity. As the government should only act if no other party is doing so, stakeholders like the employers come together to establish an organisation that can act as a responsible body. Then the federal state meets a party it can negotiate with. If the principle of subsidiarity is matched the things which should be put to law then are found and can be defined. In brief, the chambers as employers' organisations are bound by law and they are always consulted when changes are proposed.



FRANCE

In France, apprenticeship is the second basic component of the IVT system and various stakeholders are directly involved (through a networking of cooperation and partnerships) in the qualification formation processes at national, sectoral, intersectoral and regional levels. The State is involved through the following ministries and inter-ministerial institutions:

The ministries they include:

- *The Ministry of National Education* which is responsible for the educational policy, governing education and training in schools and apprenticeship. The CFAs connected with this ministry are placed under its overarching pedagogical responsibility through an apprenticeship inspection department called SAIA (*Service Académique d'Inspection de l'Apprentissage*) at the level of the academy (*académie*) under the rector on regional level.
- *The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries* has a parallel responsibility for vocational education and training in agriculture and exercises also an overarching pedagogical responsibility over the CFAs connected with it through an apprenticeship inspection department (SAIA - *Service Académique d'Inspection de l'Apprentissage*) on regional level.
- *The Ministry of HE* which is responsible for general, vocational education (including HE apprenticeship centres) and research.
- *Other ministries* (such as the Ministry of the Economy, Industry and Employment and the Ministry of Youth and Sport) which are in charge respectively of vocational qualifications formation processes within VET in the areas for which they are responsible.

The National Commission for Vocational Qualifications (CNCP- Commission Nationale de la Certification Professionnelle) created by the Social Modernisation Act in 2002 to deal with:

- Creating, managing and maintaining updated the NQF repertory for vocational qualifications and related certifications (including those delivered through apprenticeship) called RNCP (Répertoire Nationale des Certifications Professionnelle, created as well in 2002). For each deliverable qualification/certification through the VET system (including apprenticeship), there are two types of documents (which can be consulted on the website of the CNCP-RNCP): the “*RNCP-Fiche*” (the registered qualification/certification-sheet) and a Europass Certificate Supplement (*supplement descriptif du Certificat*) in French and in some cases in other European languages (basically in English, German, Spanish, etc.).
- Incorporating designed vocational qualifications in the NQF repertory and securing their coherence and best fit with labour market skill contents and needs.

- Keeping pace with the European developments concerning “qualification transparency” and building a new qualifications classification grid.

The National Council for Lifelong Vocational Learning (CNFPTLV-Conseil national de la Formation Professionnelle Tout au Long de la Vie) which was set up in 2004 with the aim of:

- Promoting cooperation at national and regional levels between involved stakeholders;
- Acting as an advisory institution about legislations and regulations concerning lifelong vocational training and apprenticeship;
- Assessing regional policies for apprenticeship and lifelong learning and training;
- Compiling related data and annual report to the parliament on financial uses for lifelong VET and apprenticeship development.

In cooperation and partnerships with all other involved stakeholders, the social partners play an important consultative and decision making role in the qualification formation processes (including the design/updating of qualifications’ and their occupational and certification referential standards) and their implementation on national, sectoral, inter-sectoral and regional level within both the initial vocational education and training (IVET including apprenticeship) and continuing vocational training (CVT) through basically the following institutions (CEDEFOP, 2008 & 2009; OECD, 2003; Dif, 2011):

- Vocational Consultative Commissions (*CPC- Commissions Professionnelles Consultatives*) attached to different ministries awarding national qualifications through VET (including apprenticeship) in the upper secondary vocational certifications (such CAP, BEP, BTn, BT and Bac Pro.) including BTS (Bac + 2: a two-year university level diploma). For the ministry of national education alone, there are 14 CPCs which are in charge of the development (creation and updating, including the design/re-design of related “referential standards”) of over 700 certifications connected within about 14 sectors of activity.
- *The Commission for Engineers' Grades (CTI-Commission des Titres d'Ingénieurs)* which is an independent body, mandated by French law since 1934 to accredit all engineers’ qualifications (including those obtained through apprenticeship), to develop the quality of training and to promote the engineer's grade and profession in France and abroad. About 800 specialties are taken in charge by it.
- Boards of Apprenticeship Training Centres (*CFA-Centres de Formation d'Apprentis*): the social partners are fully represented within these boards.

Since the launch of the decentralisation process in the 80s leading to the creations of 26 regions, each region is run by a regional council composed of political representatives directly elected by the population of the region. In order to implement their responsibilities as regional public authorities responsible primarily for vocational training (for young people and job-seekers) and apprenticeship management and funding, the regions have created their own dedicated administrative structures and instruments in the form of vocational training



committees, departments/directorates and vocational training development plans, namely the following:

- The Regional Employment and Vocational Training Coordination Committees (CCREFPs)-*Comités Régionaux de l'Emploi et de la Formation Professionnelle*) responsible for coordinating vocational policies and measures in coherence with employment policies, and promoting cooperation between different actors involved in vocational training and apprenticeship. Specifically, their functions include the policy analysis, research, monitoring and evaluation activities. They are made up of representatives of the following involved stakeholders: The Government, the regions, the social partners (employers' and employees' organisations) and the regional chambers of agriculture, industry, commerce, trades and crafts.
- The Regional Economic and Social councils (*CESR-Conseil Economique et Social regional*) which act as consultancy bodies for the regional policymakers. In this connection, they are consulted within the process of preparing the regional plans for vocational training and apprenticeship development.
- The Regional Vocational Training Development Plan (*PRDFP-Plan Régional de Développement des Formations professionnels*) with the aim of coordinating various strands of VET provisions such as initial and continuing vocational training for young people and job-seekers. Its preparation is based on the concept of active cooperation and partnership between all involved stakeholders: the Government, the Social partners, the regional education-authority chief administrators (*recteurs d'académie*) and employment insurances agencies.
- Regional Employment and Training Observatories (*OREF-Observatoires Régionaux Emploi-Formation*): The regions rely on these observatories to carry out the necessary prior analysis of the main employment and training issues on the ground (including their likely developments in the future), which is needed for the preparation, implementation and follow-up of The Regional Vocational Training Development Plan.

The Chambers of Commerce of Industry (CCI – *Chambres de Commerce et de l'Industrie*), Chambers of Trades and Crafts (CMA – *Chambres de métiers et de l'Artisanant*) and Chambers of Agriculture (*Chambres de l'Agriculture*) are highly involved in apprenticeship connected with their domains/sectors of activity as they intervene in validating apprenticeship contracts and other issues connected with the follow-up of apprenticeship in cooperation with the employers, the CFAs and the regions (as the regions are involved in funding and undertaking decisions concerning apprenticeship opening and organisation).

In conclusion, it can be said that the structures of social partnership in France are more complex and hierarchical compared with the case of Germany. State involvement and influence in the field of management and regulation of social partnership in apprenticeship is also stronger. Another distinctive feature of the organisation of social partnership over apprenticeship in France is a very network (even omnipresence) of various agreement-based committees and structures responsible for different aspects of apprenticeship training.

NETHERLANDS

Employer and employee organisations in the Netherlands are organised by sector and/or region. The biggest employer organisations are *VNO-NCW* and *MKB-Nederland*. The national association VNO-NCW is the umbrella organisation for the bigger companies. It has five regional departments and around 170 (branch) member organisations in a wide range of economic sectors. MKB-Nederland is an umbrella organisation for around 125 branch organizations in the small and medium sized enterprises sector. Both organisations work together in one office with has a combined staff since 2010.

The most important employee organisations are *FNV*, *CNV* and *De Unie*. A number of economic sectors are represented by specialised departments (construction, government, services, transport, sport, catering and hotel, arts, police, etc.). These departments sometimes also represent their members on regional basis.

In the Netherlands collective agreements (single employer and multi-employer) play an important role in promoting apprenticeship and youth employment.

Its data shows that, in each six-month period, agreements covering around 44% of the workforce contain provision for promoting employment among particular target groups. Young unemployed people and students (these two groups are treated separately) are explicitly covered in around 15% of these agreements. Examples of provisions targeting these groups mainly concentrate on increasing the number of training opportunities.

- In autumn 2009, the collective agreement in the painting, finishing and glass setting industry included a commitment to retain 500 young trainees in employment.
- In the 2010 agreement for the recreation sector, there was a clause committing employers to offer as many trainee positions as possible.
- In the woodworking industry, a budget was created to create extra traineeships specifically intended to encourage more highly skilled young workers into the sector (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2011).

Collective agreements play a major role in promoting and developing apprenticeship in the sectors. The construction sector presents a very good example. In the Dutch construction industry apprenticeship and VET questions are very much promoted by the articles of Collective Labour Agreement concluded between two employer organisations and two trade unions of the sector. This agreement is approved by the state and is generally binding all enterprises in the sector, with the exclusion of self-employed persons. One of the issues covered by this agreement is funding of apprenticeship in the construction industry. The Construction Industry Training and Development Fund is raised by the employers and trade unions of the sector and used for funding apprenticeship and continuing training.

Employers and trade unions of this sector are also actively involved in the organisation and development of apprenticeship.

In the Netherlands, national expertise centres for vocational training and the labour market (*Kenniscentrum Beroepsonderwijs Bedrijfsleven*) are intermediary organizations organised on



a branch or sectoral basis. Each of the 19 has a board consisting of representatives of both employers and employees and (in most cases) education. These institutions are unique and have no equivalence in other countries. The association *Colo* was established in 1954, and the 1996 Adult and Vocational Education Act (*Wet educatie enberoepsonderwijs, WEB*) refined the tasks and legal framework of the predecessors of the national expertise centres. As intensive cooperation between the organized labour market and education is central to the concept of VET in the Netherlands, the expertise centres form the essential link between them.

The following tasks are formulated by law (Adult and Vocational Education Act):

- to develop and maintain the qualifications for senior secondary vocational education (MBO);
- to recruit a sufficient number of (new) companies offering practical training places and to monitor the quality of these companies (in senior secondary vocational education, HBO and, additionally since 2003, in preparatory senior secondary vocational education, VMBO).

The aim of each expertise centre is to increase quality and professionalism in their branch by providing advice, information and training. Expertise centres also have a role in quantitative staffing in their sector and learning to work trajectories in preparatory senior secondary vocational education. At meso level, these centres define occupational profiles and work together with educational representatives to translate these profiles into competence requirements. The introduction of the quality centre for examinations changed the roles of the actors with respect to examinations. Expertise centres are no longer responsible by law for the quality of the examinations although all 19 expertise centres are now, each in a different way, involved in ensuring the quality of examinations. The expertise centres also act internationally, for example in projects on comparison of qualifications. National expertise centres for vocational training and the labour market also certify companies to provide apprenticeship and train the ‘masters’ of apprenticeship in the companies. For example, one such centre in the construction sector - Fundeon, spends annually about €50 million on these activities. It also distributes funding to enterprises for each apprentice: an enterprise can receive in 2 years up to €25 thousand per apprentice.

ENGLAND

In England, the learning and skills system is under-going a major transformation as the Learning and Skills Council, formerly responsible for all post-compulsory education except HE, has been dissolved and replaced by, amongst other bodies, the Skills Funding Agency (SFA), the Young People’s Learning Agency (YPLA) and the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS). Noting that the learning and skills system has been subject to much institutional change over the past 30 years, stakeholders argued that the system could benefit from a period of consolidation with settled institutional arrangements. Moreover, stakeholders demanded that the roles of the various actors in the new apprenticeship system are clearly

defined to avoid duplication of effort across agencies. The key partners and stakeholders involved in apprenticeships are identified as employers, training providers and the apprentices themselves, each having clearly defined roles in relation to the selection of apprentices, the process of apprenticeship and the expected outcomes. Agencies involved in apprenticeships, especially NAS, SFA and YPLA, also have clearly defined roles in the process, while other bodies are seen as important for providing IAG to young people contemplating an apprenticeship route.

The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS), launched in April 2009, has total end to end responsibility for the delivery of apprenticeships, including: Employer Services; Learner Services; and a web-based system where employers and training providers advertise Apprenticeship vacancies for which interested applicants can apply. Skills Sector Councils (SSCs), employer-driven organisations responsible for identifying the vocational qualifications needed by employers, develop Apprenticeship frameworks and work with other organisations that want to develop frameworks including employers, learning providers and awarding organisations. The SSCs work together with Sector Skills Bodies (SSBs) to develop apprenticeship programmes, specifying the content (within set criteria) so they meet the skill needs of employers and employees.

The Skills Funding Agency (SFA), which funds and regulates adult further education and skills training in England, houses the NAS, with a field force located across the country, working to develop the relationship with business to drive forward the government's ambition for increasing apprenticeships.

Apprenticeship Training Agencies (ATAs) work as employment agencies for apprentices, directly employ and manage individuals who undertake their apprenticeship with an approved training provider whilst being hired out to 'host employers'. The ATA outsources the training activity for the apprenticeship to training providers.

Due to the casual nature of the relationship between the employer and the apprentice, ATAs are a cause for concern for many unions. The TUC has been working with the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) to ensure that the ATAs which have received government funding are properly monitored and evaluated and offer a good deal to apprentices in terms of pay, conditions, job security and employment prospects. TA is an employment agency for apprentices.

Employers have a key role since they run the apprenticeship programmes, usually in partnership with a learning provider. Employers must ensure the apprentice receives on-the-job training from someone considered highly skilled in their occupation, and should mentor, coach and support an apprentice. The employer must also offer the apprentice the time to study 'off the job', otherwise the full potential of the apprenticeship will not be realised. Training providers deliver the 'off the job' training in an apprenticeship. Sometimes, large employers will have their own training arm and will therefore be the training provider. It is often the training provider that will make the initial contact with an employer, offering the apprenticeship programme as a way of addressing skills gaps. Training providers are usually



the organisation that receive the government funds from the funding agency, on behalf of the employer and are contracted to deliver the training.

Trade unions also play very important role in organisation and provision of apprenticeships, but their involvement is more operative and concerns enterprise and workplace levels, differing from the involvement of trade unions in the decision and policy making activities in Germany, France and the Netherlands. For example, the Trade Union Congress (TUC) usually plays the role of advisor or supporter of different government initiatives in the field of apprenticeship without being actively involved as a decision maker in preparing such initiatives.

Union negotiators and representatives – including learning representatives, equality representatives and safety representatives – can, through collective bargaining, encourage more employers to establish quality apprenticeships, allowing underrepresented groups to access them and ensuring that all apprentices receive good training, decent pay and a safe working environment.

A distinctive element is the role and impact of trade unions in supporting and developing the quality and provision of apprenticeships in the UK. There are many organisations that oversees the apprenticeship programme, these concentrate on legal requirements of training, the content, delivery model and in some cases the cost of qualification and training. The trade union perspective is to ensure that the training is fit for purpose but also to deal with employment status and rights of the apprentice. How this is done can vary between trade unions and vocational sectors, as well as depending upon commitment of other key partners. Ideal scenarios exist within established sectors like engineering and construction, which broadly operate in the following way:

- The union and employer negotiate an apprenticeship opportunity ensuring that the opportunity exists, is sustainable and is not substituting an apprentice for an existing member of staff.
- The employer and the union engage in a joint recruitment process utilising other agencies such as the young person's careers and guidance service (connexions), the NAS job matching website or local media. The interview would include an employer, trade union representative and potentially the training provider,
- During induction the apprentice fulfils an individual learning plan which is committed to by the apprentice, employer, trade union and vocational training provider.
- The trade union representative will spend time during the induction to explain the role of trade union and the individual roles and responsibilities of the site representatives (industrial, health and safety and learning)

This model shows a genuine partnership between the constituent partners for the delivery of a quality vocational route.

The overall strategy is for trade unions to play a proactive role in encouraging employers to engage with the apprenticeship programme in the UK. This will present itself in many different ways and although no legal right exists unions would like to include apprenticeships

within collective bargaining agreements (this does exist in some traditional industries and large workplaces, especially in engineering where unions have negotiated agreements for many decades). Although on completion there is no guarantee of sustainable employment, wherever possible unions will support apprentices to gain full-time, permanent employment and negotiate with the employer for this outcome. This brings additional value to the role of the union and is part of the core values of the labour movement in delivering good quality proper jobs.

The final strand of work that trade unions are doing to support apprentices is to promote 'apprentice voice': this is about developing a forum independent of the workplace and vocational training provider where apprentices can talk about good and not so good aspects of employment, training and their whole introduction to the workplace. Such fora have started to function in several places in England and have begun to influence how organisations such as NAS engage with apprentices giving a direct opportunity for young people to express their views about their training and how changes and improvements could be made. Other key elements include young workers exchanging information, good practice and inviting key external agencies to talk about issues particularly relevant to apprentices. Such topics include financial advice on best utilisation of money, independent pensions advice and ways of negotiating group discounts for things such as driving lessons. It is hoped that these fora will become self sustaining and continue to enable apprentices to raise issues and challenges and offer a direct voice to key decision makers.

Union learning representatives (ULRs) have statutory rights to promote learning or training within the workplace and to work with employers and local providers to ensure all the workforce can take up learning opportunities. ULRs should work closely with the senior shop steward in a workplace and it is appropriate for a ULR to undertake a mentoring role within the apprenticeship system. If ULRs do not already exist in a workplace, the introduction of apprentices represents both an opportunity and a necessity to create a ULR position to support apprentices.

Union negotiators will want to ensure that apprenticeship programmes in their workplace identify a clear programme of training, including sufficient time spent off the job, such as in college, in dedicated training centres at the workplace or in private study.

Many experts agree that the British model of the social partnership in VET is largely dominated by employers and neither trade unions nor government provide sufficient counter-balance to the influence of employers in the field of apprenticeship. Alison Wolf states: With only a very few honourable exceptions, mainly in the “traditional” sectors such as engineering and electrical contracting, trade unions have done nothing to protect the interests of young people entering apprenticeship (Wolf, 2011).



Comparison of analysed approaches and practices of stakeholders involvement in apprenticeship: important issues for policy learning

The important issues for policy learning

A Fit of the analysed apparent good practices to the context and conditions of the implementation and development of apprenticeship in Lithuania.

The networks and structures of cooperation and partnership of stakeholders in Germany, France and the Netherlands are based on long historical traditions of social partnership and cover very wide fields of apprenticeship training, starting from the development of vocational profiles and curricula and ending with issues of funding and quality assurance.

Each of these countries has their own specificities concerning involvement of stakeholders: in Germany and the Netherlands sectoral collective agreements predominate, based on the principles of self-organisation and subsidiarity and thus ensuring a coherent shared influence between the state authority and labour market stakeholders. In France state involvement and influence in the field of management and regulation of social partnership in apprenticeship is stronger. However, in all these cases labour market stakeholders have real representative power and real, clearly expressed interests in the field of apprenticeship. The context of Lithuania in this respect is rather different – stakeholders often lack representative power and resources, their interests in the field of apprenticeship are not so explicit and firm. Profound institutional and socioeconomic changes prevented a smooth, coherent development of traditions of social partnership in the field of VET.

It appears that in such conditions the possible alternative could be a more liberal approach towards stakeholder involvement in apprenticeship, as in the UK, which does not include complex collective agreements or sophisticated tripartite bodies. However, this model also presumes a high level of activity of employers and trade unions at the enterprise level, especially with respect to the organisation of apprenticeship training. Here the biggest problem for development of apprenticeship in Lithuania is the weakness of the trade unions and the underdeveloped nature of social dialogue, including at the level of enterprises and workplaces.

B Extent to which the goals and objectives of stakeholders involvement within apprenticeship respond to the needs and aims of the introduction and development of apprenticeship in Lithuania.

This issue is not applicable, because the involvement of stakeholders and their roles in the apprenticeship system are very individualised and diverse and it is not possible to learn from the needs neither transfers the needs of stakeholders from the other countries.

C The potential of the analysed approaches and practices of involvement of stakeholders in apprenticeship to provide guidance in proposing original and innovative solutions for the introduction and development of apprenticeship in Lithuania. To what extent could experience from analysed approaches and practices of stakeholder involvement in apprenticeship in Germany, France, UK and the Netherlands contribute to developing models and mechanisms for their effective involvement in the apprenticeship in Lithuania?

One of the most striking features of the experience of Germany in the development of involvement and cooperation of stakeholders in apprenticeship is the bottom-up approach and subsidiarity in organisation. Self-organisation of involvement and cooperation of stakeholders should become one of the grounding principles in the long-term development of an apprenticeship system in Lithuania.

The experience of France, in terms of the diversity and plurality of institutional structures for involvement and cooperation of stakeholders in apprenticeship, can help establish a clear view of the division of rights, roles and responsibilities of stakeholders in the initial stages of introducing apprenticeship in Lithuania. However, unregulated and excessive diversity and plurality of institutional settings can lead to over-bureaucratisation and significant increase in costs.

The Netherlands provides interesting and useful know-how for the establishment of tripartite agreements of stakeholders at sector level. While such arrangements could be important for the successful introduction of apprenticeship in Lithuania, it should be remembered that all economic sectors in Lithuania are dominated by SMEs, so there is a clear need for consolidation of employers' associations and trade unions at sector level.

The experience of the UK can be interesting for informing the development of trade union capacity, enabling the unions to become more actively involved in the development of apprenticeship at the level of enterprises through lobbying activities, support to apprentices and in other ways.



4 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Introduction and development of apprenticeship in the transitional school based initial VET model of Lithuania present by itself very original and complex process demanding to consider the existing historical, socio-economic, institutional and political preconditions of the country, as well as directions and trends of the VET development policies and strategies. For this reason the approach of policy learning is probably the most useful for this undertaking. This research provides comparison of the different aspects and approaches of apprenticeship and its development in Germany, France, UK and the Netherlands.

Comparative analysis of the development of apprenticeship can be useful for policy learning in this field in several respects:

It provides positive and successful practices, experiences and measures, explaining the main factors of their success and effectiveness, as well as failures and shortages in the development of apprenticeship, explaining their reasons.

It permits to notice and understand the general principles and trends of the development of apprenticeship which are common for the different VET systems and models (cooperation, coherence and fit of interests, importance of economic effect to the motivation of stakeholders etc.), as well as to notice the potential risks and problems, caused by apprenticeship (issues for permeability, access to training, exploitation of trainees, etc.).

Approaches and practices of apprenticeship development in the above mentioned countries provide the lessons and ideas, which can be used in the different periods of the introduction of apprenticeship in Lithuania. This process of introduction of apprenticeship and related policy learning can not be considered as filling in the empty space or 'tabula rasa'. Despite the fact, that many analysed experiences, approaches and mechanisms of the development of apprenticeship seem to go in line to the aims and objectives of the introduction of apprenticeship in Lithuania, local context and conditions very often present serious limitations for the simple transfer of foreign practices or quick policy learning when the new solutions are developed just by some simple and 'cosmetic' adjustments of the ideas and approaches used in the other countries. Sometimes these limitations are too challenging and depending on the complex of social, economic and cultural problems, which can not be solved quickly and require long periods of time, for example, difficult economic situation of enterprises, or deficit of mutual trust and organisation of social stakeholders on the sectoral, regional or national levels.

Again, compared countries have very different experiences and their approaches can be useful for learning in the different stages and periods of the introduction and development of apprenticeship. For example, the experiences and approaches used in the UK could present bigger interest for policy learning needed on the short term perspective of the development of apprenticeship, because they deal more with the organization and provision of apprenticeship on the level of enterprises and providers of training. Policy learning in this field could facilitate more active and effective involvement of enterprises in the implementation and

development of apprenticeship. Many experiences of Germany, France and the Netherlands present very important policy learning material for the long-term perspective of apprenticeship development, because development of similar approaches and their practical implementation today would face very important obstacles in the local context and would not be feasible for example, due to the economic and financial weaknesses, undeveloped institutional framework, lack of cooperation between stakeholders, etc..



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