



**Junta de  
Castilla y León**  
Consejería de Educación

Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



## **EU PROJECT**

Improving the  
implementation of work-  
based (dual) Vocational  
training policies through  
peer learning, experience  
and exchange

## **FINAL REPORT**

Key findings,  
recommendations and  
Inspiring experiences



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
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This document summarizes the conclusions and recommendations emerged from two years of work under the umbrella of the strategic partnership project funded by the Erasmus + programme.

The genesis of the project was carefully forged on a premise shared today, not only by the institutions who have been part of the partnership, but by all societies: Vocational education and training is a driver of economic growth as it produces a skilled human capital; nonetheless, it is also commonly agreed that the transition from school to the world of work is not an easy task if practical experience in the company is not provided along with theoretical training in the school. The key to overcome this obstacle is no other than the dual system, or a combination of learning that has proved successful in helping young people to enter an occupation in countries such as Germany and Austria.

In the region of Castilla and León we have worked hard for a quality and efficient dual system embedded in our extensive offer of Vocational Training and Education. In January 2017 we laid the legal foundations by means of the publication of the Decree 2/2017, which regulates the system in a coordinated manner. Thereupon, we deemed pertinent to create a flexible space for policy-oriented debate that would allow the transfer of knowledge at European level, directed at improving the implementation of dual policies and thus, the iidVET project was born.

During the project life, along with the institutions that make up the partnership, we have had the opportunity to discuss and obtain first-hand experience on the particularities of the Dual system in the five countries involved. In each workshop and study visit we have been able to fathom into revealing facts that will serve as inspiration to move forward on a path of excellence that prepares adequately young people and consequently strengthens their employability. This summary intends to help the readers approach the field of dual VET from three main angles: 1) Quality 2) Attractiveness and 3) Governan.

I wish to offer all people involved in the project my warmest thanks for their splendid contribution and high commitment. It has been an excellent lesson for me in how to coordinate an international project and a great pleasure to work with such constructive partners.



**Agustín Francisco Sigüenza Molina**

Director General de Formación Profesional, Régimen Especial y Equidad Educativa.

*Valladolid, 25th August, 2019*

## Context and objectives of the project

The European Union has repeatedly stressed the need to adapt training systems to the needs of a changing labour market in which, as a consequence of globalisation and technological developments, new professional skills will be required to enable companies to enhance their competitiveness in a global market. The 2020 Strategy, which aims to develop a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy, insists that the latter must be based on knowledge and high competitiveness, as essential conditions to maintain social protection systems and continue to grow in the future; this will not be possible if future workers do not acquire a high level of competence.

The need for the adaptation and qualification of workers for current and future jobs is particularly important in the field of vocational training. In 2017, the European Commission's Advisory Committee on Vocational Training highlighted two important challenges: 1) to strengthen reforms and the implementation of quality and effective dual training programmes; and 2) to improve the coordination and support of key stakeholders. The various reports published by the European Commission in the past years acknowledge the progress made, but emphasize the need to improve the quality and effectiveness of dual vocational training systems in many countries.

Some European countries, such as Germany or Austria, have a long tradition of vocational training systems that are closely linked to companies and to the needs and competencies that the latter require, while in other countries, such as Spain, Portugal or Italy, the partnership between VET providers and businesses needs to be strengthened, especially with regards to basic skills, since the education system is not always flexible and agile enough to adapt to the training needs of companies.

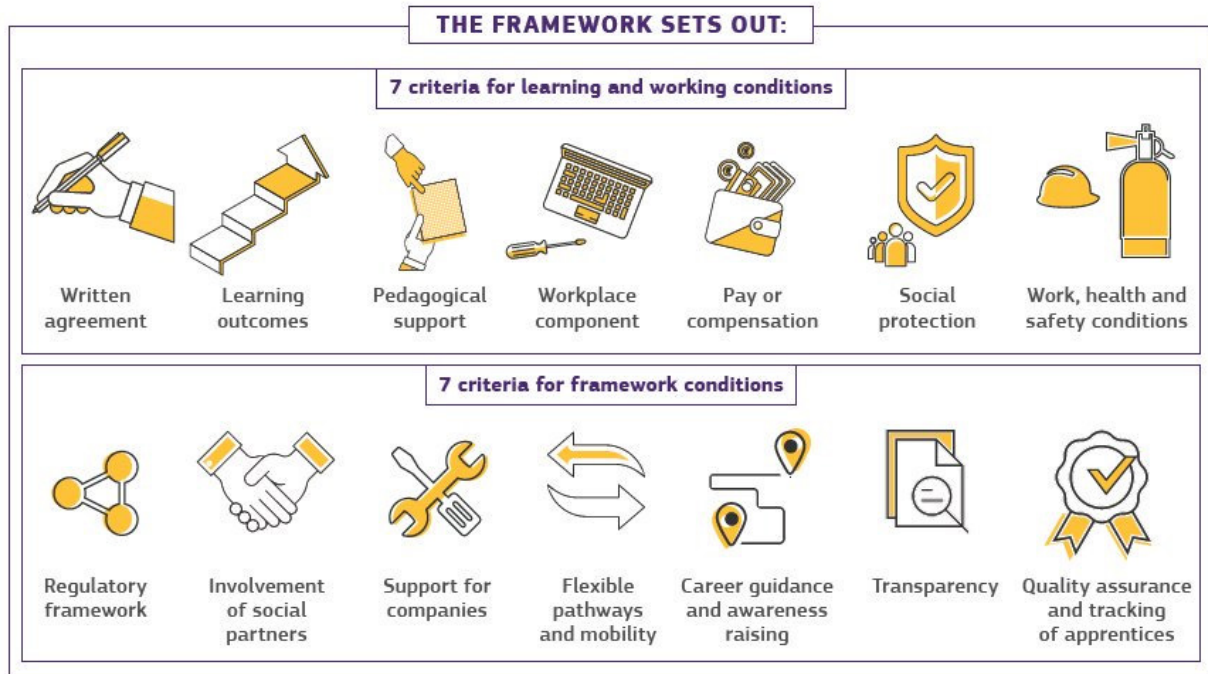
In 2017, the European Commission adopted a proposal for a **European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships**, adopted by the Council in March 2018<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32018H0502\(01\)&from=EN](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32018H0502(01)&from=EN)

## EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK FOR QUALITY AND EFFECTIVE APPRENTICESHIPS

"Making vocational education and training a first choice" is one of the 10 actions of the Skills Agenda for Europe. Vocational education and training, including apprenticeships, is an excellent way to develop skills and find a job in the future.

We want to make sure that apprenticeships are of high quality and reached the desired effect. The European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships sets out **14 criteria that improve the quality and effectiveness of apprenticeships**, to the benefit of learners, companies and society.



This initiative is part of the [New Skills Agenda for Europe](#)<sup>2</sup>, launched in June 2016. This initiative ties in with the [European Pillar of Social Rights](#)<sup>3</sup>, which foresees a right to quality and inclusive education, training and life-long learning. The Commission has identified 14 key criteria that Member States and stakeholders should use to develop quality and effective apprenticeships.

This project was designed precisely to establish a space for mutual learning, development and innovation of DVET implementation between five countries that are committed to improve the quality and effectiveness of DVET and their implementation mechanisms and tools with a special focus on the seven criteria for framework conditions, as it can be seen below:

QUALITY	ATTRACTIVES	GOVERNANCE
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Quality assurance and tracking of apprentices</li> <li>2. Flexible pathways and mobility</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Support for companies</li> <li>4. Career guidance and awareness-raising</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Regulatory framework</li> <li>6. Involvement of social partners</li> <li>7. Transparency partners</li> </ol>

To achieve this, several mutual learning activities were organised in 2018 and 2019:

<sup>2</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1223>

<sup>3</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/priorities/deeper-and-fairer-economic-and-monetary-union/european-pillar-social-rights\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/priorities/deeper-and-fairer-economic-and-monetary-union/european-pillar-social-rights_en)

# Learning activities

## Porto

20-22 March 2018

### **WORKSHOP ON QUALITY**

“How to ensure better quality, accreditation and evaluation systems”

## Friedrichshafen

26-28 February 2019

### **STUDY VISIT**

“The Dual VET model in Germany”

## Vienna & Lower Austria

6-8 June 2018

### **STUDY VISIT**

“The Dual VET model in Austria”

## Bologna

9-11 April 2019

### **WORKSHOP ON GOVERNANCE**

“How to improve Governance mechanisms in Dual VET”

## Valladolid and Burgos

9-11 October 2018

### **WORKSHOP ON ATTRACTIVENESS**

“Turning dual VET into a smart choice”

Additionally, partners addressed two cross-cutting topics in all activities:

1

### International mobilities

To improve current processes and systems as well as strengthen networks between the project’s partners in order to increase student and staff mobilities.

2

### Practical tools and inspiring experiences

To share existing tools based on inspiring experiences.

In practice, the project expected to achieve the following results:

- ✓ Develop networks to work transnationally
- ✓ Address barriers of DVET
- ✓ Develop guidance & recommendations
- ✓ Improve VET curricula
- ✓ Develop a new international mobility model
- ✓ Improve the quality of DVET

## Project's partners



## **PROJECT LEADER**

# General Directorate of Vocational Education and Training of the Department of Education of the regional government of Castilla y León

The General Directorate is responsible for developing and applying basic regulations as well as regulating non-essential aspects of the VET which account for 45% of the total programme (900 hours out of a total of 2000). Basic pedagogical aspects, objectives, core competencies, learning outcomes, content and assessment criteria, along with validity of diplomas are among the competencies of the Department.

Currently, there are 116 different degrees in vocational education (basic, intermediate and higher level) in Castilla y León (on-site and on-line) through 194 VET providers (public and private) with over 38.000 vocational training students and 3.264 teachers (private centres excluded).

During the last three years the dual VET system has been developed in the region through two specific instruments: 1) the training and apprenticeship contract; 2) a scholarship and learning agreement. For the 2017/2018 academic year, 129 projects of DUAL VET were in progress over the nine provinces.

In addition, we also promote the “Aula-Empresa Castilla y León” programme to foster joint work between the educational centres and the businesses of the region with the aim of improving the quality of education in vocational training and employability. The programme attempts also to boost the innovation, the knowledge transfer and the specialization in vocational training.

Finally, according to the Vocational Education and Training Plan 2016-2020, a new regulation was adopted by the regional government that includes an implementation plan in compliance with the *Decree 2/2017, of 12 January*, that regulates the Dual Vocational Education and Training system of the region of Castilla y León.

**PARTNER**

## Regional Council of Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Castilla y León

The Regional Council of Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Castilla y León is an advisory body of collaboration which represents and coordinates the network of 14 Chambers of Commerce and Industry operating in the region.

The Council, located in Valladolid, aims to promote the general interests of trade and industry and provides quality services to businesses. It plays an active role in improving the competitiveness, innovation and internationalization, particularly of SMEs, to encourage and coordinate the fostering of technology transfer, the implementation of the digital economy, energy efficiency and access to financing and the improvement of different factors of business competitiveness.

As an intermediary body between businesses and regional institutions, it plays an important part in implementing and promoting the Dual Vocational Training in the region. 12 out of 14 chambers of the region, along with the Regional Council, are included in the official register of entities promoting Dual VET.



*Workshop on Attractiveness “Turning dual VET into a smart choice”, Valladolid and Burgos, 9-11 October 2019*

**PARTNER**

## IEFP – Institute of Employment and VET, Portugal

The Employment and Vocational Training Institute (IEFP, I.P.) is the national public employment Service responsible for implementing active employment policies, defined and approved by the Government, including those related to vocational training. Its aim is to promote the creation and quality of jobs and to fight against unemployment, through the implementation of active employment measures, including vocational training.

**IEFP as the organism responsible for the execution of the employment and vocational training policies develops its activity through:**

- Central Services
- 5 Regional Services
- 30 Employment and Vocational Centres
- 23 Employment Centres
- 1 Rehabilitation VT Centre
- 23 Jointly Managed VET Centres (created by protocols between IEFP and the social partners – sectoral oriented)



*Transnational cooperation meeting, Lisbon, 29 September 2018*

## IEFP has the responsibility, among others, to promote:

- The organisation of the labour market with a view to direct adjustment between job supply and demand.
- Information, guidance, qualification and vocational rehabilitation, with a view to the placement and advancement of workers on the labour market.
- School and professional qualification of young people and adults, through the provision of dual certification and certified professional training, adjusted to the individual paths and relevant for the modernisation of the economy.
- The implementation, by itself or in collaboration with other entities, of vocational training actions appropriate to people's needs and the modernisation and development of the economic fabric.
- The development of craft trades and micro-enterprises, particularly as a source of job creation at local level.



**PARTNER**

## German-Portuguese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Portugal

The German-Portuguese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCILA/AHK) is the largest bilateral chamber in Portugal, with more than 1000 members that include companies in the field of industry, trade and services. This group includes the largest exporters of the country. Its headquarters is located in Lisbon, has a delegation in Porto, three Vocational Training Centers, located in Lisbon, Porto and Portimão. It has more than 40 employees.

It is part of a global network with a total of 120 Chambers of Commerce and Industry Abroad, Representations and Delegations of the Federal Republic of Germany in 80 countries. Its main objective is to promote and facilitate economic exchanges between Portugal and Germany, support German companies wishing to establish businesses and investments in Portugal and Portuguese companies wishing to export or establish contacts with companies in Germany.



*Workshop on Quality "How to ensure better quality, accreditation and evaluation systems",  
Porto, 20-22 March 2018*

The Vocational Training is an activity promoted and supported by the CCILA/AHK members for 35 years. To meet the needs of companies that could not recruit skilled employees for the labour market, in 1983 the CCILA/AHK created the Department of Vocational Training in collaboration with prestigious German multinational companies. In 2007, this Department was renamed DUAL (registered trademark).

The DUAL team consists of qualified employees in various areas: management, engineering, modern languages and literature, social sciences, pedagogy and project management among others, all of them with several years of professional experience. It started more than 30 years ago with the support of German and Portuguese companies in our dual vocational training.

From the start, all qualifications have been inspired by the philosophy of the German dual vocational and education. In 2016, DUAL conducted 63 training activities in several areas involving around 1,157 students.

**PARTNER**

Region of Emilia Romagna, Italy

Emilia-Romagna Region is responsible for the General Directorate of Knowledge Economy, Labour and Enterprise, in charge of:

- Defining EU Operational Programs for social and economic development (e.g.: ESF, EFRD, Community Initiatives).
- Defining systems for monitoring and evaluating the ESF projects.
- Defining European and national policies for social development, labour market improvement and vocational training programmes.

In 2010, Emilia-Romagna Region launched the educative platform “ER-Emilia Romagna Education and Research” followed by the Regional Law “Regulation of the regional system of educational and vocational training” adopted in 2011. The aim of these two initiatives is to build a VET system, addressed



*Transnational cooperation meeting, Emilia Romagna, 26 June 2018*

to young people, highly qualified, attractive and inclusive, to develop a more comprehensive plan that includes post-secondary education.

This is implemented through the creation of a strong network between education and VET providers to make the educational paths shared and reversible. This system is based on the idea that it is necessary to push the whole community to be innovative, through a systematic and systemic action on skills, to enhance the ability to critically evaluate and define the roles and the expectations in a new open context and to allow a significant broadening of businesses that can operate and compete globally.

The Plan for young people's access to the labour market, continuity of employment, support and promotion of entrepreneurship was designed to meet these requirements.



## **PARTNER**

# Camera di Commercio Italo-Germanica (AHK)

The aim of the German-Italian Chamber of Commerce (AHK Italien) is to support the economic activities between Germany and Italy. With around 700 members in Germany and Italy, the German-Italian Chamber of Commerce is a bilateral business association and a platform for networking, enjoying high consideration in the political and economic environment in both countries.

In 2015, AHK Italien founded its service company for vocational education Dual.Concept Srl with the aim of promoting dual vocational training in Italy and to support the development and implementation of this system in Italian companies. As a result of various pilot projects for the dual system and train-the-trainer courses, this project has gained practical knowledge in the vocational and academic field.



Sapere utile



## PARTNER

### IFOA, Italy

IFOA is a not-for-profit Training Centre, appointed since 1999 as a national VET center, with 16 sites all over Italy with 200 employees. Standing out as one of the leading private training centers in Italy, IFOA delivers traditional and b-learning post-diploma (EQF 5) and post-graduate (EQF 6 and 7) programmes for young unemployed, as well as life-long learning training, consultancy and technical assistance to individuals, businesses and public bodies. In 2018, 31,524 people were trained (7,240 apprentices) with a placement rate after 6/12 months of 81%.

Since 1993, IFOA has been active in multiple EU projects related with employability, international mobility, digital and 4.0 interculturality, recognition of non-formal learning, active citizenship and language learning as well as European and International networks: EU Chambers of Commerce, European Network EfVET, ULIXES (an EEIG involving training agencies, colleges, business schools and Chambers of Commerce in 10 EU member States), CISCO Networking Academy network for the digital development).

**PARTNER**

## WKO (Economic Chamber Organisation), Austria

The legal representation of interests for Austrian business is handled by the Economic Chamber Organisation. It has been established by law and consists of the following autonomous bodies: the Federal Chamber (Austrian Federal Economic Chamber – WKÖ), 9 Regional Chambers in the federal provinces, Trade Associations (at federal level) and Trade Groups (at regional level). All the chambers and Trade Organisations are self-governing bodies by public law and represent their members’ interests.

In the transferred field of action of the state, apprenticeship offices have been established at the Regional Chambers. These have functionally authority character and act on delegated authority from the Ministry of Economics. The apprenticeship offices fulfil, among other things, the following tasks:

- Examination of the suitability of the training companies to provide apprenticeship training in subject-specific and staff-related respects; this is also referred to as “accreditation of training companies” and takes place with the involvement of the regional chambers of labour.



*Study visit “The Dual VET model in Austria” Vienna & Lower Austria, 6–8 June 2018*

- Examination, approval and recording of registered apprenticeship contracts.
- Monitoring the apprenticeship training.
- Providing wide-ranging counselling to apprentices and training companies in all matters concerning apprenticeships; in this work, they are supported again by the regional chambers of labour.
- Organisation and implementation of the final apprenticeship examination, especially appointment of the chairpersons of the examination boards on the basis of a proposal to be obtained from the Regional Advisory Board on Apprenticeship (the examination boards consist of representatives of the social partners).
- Issuing the examination certificate (awarding of the qualification).
- Granting access to the list of apprenticeship occupations, the training regulations and the examination regulations.
- Settlement of subsidies and financial incentives for training companies



**PARTNER**

## Bildungswerk der Baden-Württembergischen Wirtschaft e.V., Germany

Bildungswerk der Baden-Württembergischen Wirtschaft e. V. is the education and training organisation of employers from Germany’s south-western state of Baden-Württemberg.

Since it was established in 1971, the training institution has been a long-term and reliable partner for companies and their associations, for schools and universities, as well as for political partners and administration. Together with the Academy for Personnel and Organisational Development and our two subsidiaries Apontis GmbH and BBQ Bildung und Berufliche Qualifizierung gGmbH we work with over 600 employees in three training centres and more than 50 branch offices in all regions of Baden-Württemberg. We offer projects and services for different target groups.

BiWe has competences in the following areas:

- Technical and scientific education from early age to grown-ups.
- Vocational guidance, pre-vocational training and further training (e.g. modular VET).
- Organisation of and placement in dual VET.
- Advanced vocational training, qualification and retraining.



*Study visit “The Dual VET model in Germany”, Friedrichshafen, 26-28 February 2019*

- Seminars, courses and coaching.
- Organisation, consulting and restructuring.
- Recruitment of skilled workers, new placement and relocation service.

At international level, we support the development of structures in VET, professional qualification and personnel development. We support their implementation adapted to the local situation. In addition, our career-in-bw initiative takes into account the increasing shortage of skilled workers in the technology hub of Baden-Württemberg and the rising international mobility of young talents, skilled workers and managers. Our range of services supports companies in the search and recruitment from all over the world. For job searchers, we give access to our know-how and networks so that they can find vacancies in companies in Baden-Württemberg. We provide expert support throughout the application process with a proven range of tools.

# Key Findings and Recommendations

# Quality in dual VET

Quality assurance is directly linked to the learning and working conditions criteria established by the European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships. We include below the aspects that were addressed during the project.

## KEY FINDINGS

### Criteria 1 & 5.

#### Written agreement & pay or compensation

1. **Signing a specific apprenticeship agreement with apprentices clarifies their rights and duties, as well as the overall objective of the training and its specific contents.** The substance of the written agreement between apprentices and the companies – in some cases between apprentices and VET providers – marks a prominent opportunity to establish specific learning contents. By providing a meaningful contract, this legal security reaches the individual level. The written statement must include a clear task description and working conditions for the apprentice.
2. **The level of compensation to the trainees is related to the commitment of companies and the quality of DVET training though its cost should be shared between employers and public authorities.** It is both an incentive for companies to consider their return on investment as well as an indicator for the commitment towards the training process. The relationship to minimum wage legislation and apprentices' status compared to regular employees need to be taken into account. It is important to arrive at arrangements that are fair to both employers and apprentices.

### Criteria 2.

#### Learning outcomes

3. **Offering complementary training on basic skills and other key competences:** this is particularly important to guarantee professional and personal upskilling.
4. **Encouraging apprentices to get involved in the organisation of corporate activities** (education fairs, welcome events for new trainees, management of Facebook groups, organisation of Christmas events, etc.) can be an excellent way to learn and practice basic skills. Through these type of activities, apprentices have the opportunity to practice autonomy, independence and problem solving as they are totally responsible for these activities and have to deal with the entire process of organisation.
5. **Apprenticeship schemes need to have a good balance between personal development, general employability and specific job-related requirements.** They should ensure the acquisition of basic skills, such as languages, interpersonal competence, communication and the apprentice's orientation towards employability. Both dimensions – basic and professional skills – are however not separated and need close coordination and feedback-loops between VET providers and companies.
6. **Including digital competences in the training regulations of dual VET is crucial, especially taking into account the future needs and trends of the labour market** that will require human resources with a high level of digital skills.



7. **Having flexible programmes** that allow for an extension or reduction of the programmes' duration up to 3 years, depending on the situation and skill development of the student, can be an important factor for student's success and a good way to prevent early drop-out.

## Criteria 3.

### Pedagogical support

#### 8. **Trained, skilled and committed company tutors is vital:**

- ▶ Some Member States have established quality frameworks defining the minimum skill requirements for tutors and their cooperation with the apprentices and the schools. Nonetheless, in-company trainers should not be regarded as 'teachers' who have to pass pedagogical programmes equivalent to teachers at schools. The European Thematic Working Group on Trainers in VET did not advise on having a formal qualification as a requirement for trainers/tutors.
- ▶ In-company tutors should combine technical know-how with social skills related to creating learning environments and fostering motivation.
- ▶ The most important role/responsibility of in-company tutors are related with:
  - Planning;
  - Organisation;
  - Learning development;
  - Monitoring and evaluation;
  - "know how to"

In-company tutors should have the capacity to:

- ▶ Analyse and identify the activities and tasks inherent in their trade that can be part of the training.
  - ▶ Organise the tasks according to pedagogical objectives and plan the activities and tasks to be carried out by the apprentice in a progressive order of difficulty in order to build the learning.
  - ▶ Establish processes that record the learning process and promote a culture of rigor and compromise with the learning objectives that encourages autonomy and responsibility from the apprentice.
  - ▶ Guide and monitor training activities, adjusting them to the needs of the organisational learning.
  - ▶ Evaluate learning according to the expected results and give feedback to the apprentice, manage conflict and develop a problem-solving culture with the apprentice.
9. **Dual VET plays an important role as regards the social inclusion of disadvantaged young people who are often not in employment, education or training (NEETs), and in combating drop-outs and early leaving.** However, this may imply extra costs for companies providing apprenticeships, particularly for those who have learning difficulties.

## Criteria 14.

### Quality assurance & tracking of apprentice

10. **Starting age of apprentices:** countries with more developed schemes engage students in dual VET at 17-18 years old, generally when they finish secondary education. Experience shows it is generally the best age to start this type of programmes.
11. **Data collection systems should improve in the future so that more analysis can be made to improve the quality of apprenticeship, in particular the information that allows tracking graduates.** In May 2017, the Commission presented a **recommendation on tracking graduates**<sup>4</sup>, which aims to know systematically what happens to graduates after they finish their studies. Its underlying rationale is to inform and adapt learning programmes so they offer the best opportunities to future employment. The initiative is meant to guide Member State authorities to improve the quality and availability of information on what happens to their graduates. See the report on **VET graduate tracking systems**<sup>5</sup> published by the Commission.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### Criteria 1.

#### Written agreement

1. **The expected skills profiles, including basic and professional skills, of each training cycle need to be defined explicitly in the apprenticeship agreement.**
  - ▶ The formulation of binding training regulation should set out a defined profile of competences. These should be accompanied by a job profile which specifies the professional competences that the apprentice must be taught, as well as an in-company curriculum.
  - ▶ More effort is needed to establish commonly accepted formats that are useful for the purposes of the company and the apprentice. Binding training regulation, most likely set by industry sector in cooperation with the social partners, should foresee the requirements.
  - ▶ Besides the contractual component, the written statement should serve as a communicative tool between all stakeholders, namely educational policy makers, VET providers, companies and apprentices.

### Criteria 2.

#### Learning outcomes

2. **A set of comprehensive learning outcomes should be defined for each apprentice.** Specific job-related and key skills should be balanced. They should support both the personal and professional development of apprentices.

<sup>4</sup> [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32017H1209\(01\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32017H1209(01))

<sup>5</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=8073&furtherPubs=yes>

## Criteria 3.

### Pedagogical support

3. **Avoid excessive regulation, conditions and bureaucracy to become an in-company tutor:** regulating and overburdening companies with dispositions is not the adequate way to ensure quality training. Experience in different countries shows that when frameworks become too detailed, this could become a disincentive for staff to become in-company tutors.

## Criteria 7.

### Quality assurance & tracking of apprentice

4. **Establish different types of support measures targeted at disadvantaged groups to ensure they can enrol and be successful in Dual VET:**
  - ▶ Financial support measures: they can be used to compensate companies for the extra costs they may incur when taking in young people with special learning needs as apprentices.
  - ▶ Non-financial support measures:
    - Offer different levels and duration of apprenticeship with different curricula leading to different qualification levels.
    - Tailor goals, curricula, pedagogical approaches and materials and assessment methods to individual needs with particular focus on the learners' capabilities. Coaching or mentoring programmes have proven to be very effective.
    - Provide specific and specialised training to VET school trainers and in-company trainers and support staff to ensure the apprenticeship matches the capabilities of the apprentice.
    - Establishment of alliances with specialised organisations working with disadvantaged

## Criteria 11.

### Flexible pathways and mobility

5. **Design attractive education and training pathways that promote permeability between VET and other educational and career pathways (especially tertiary education) and that facilitate mobility of apprentices among sectors by:**
  - ▶ Including training content related with general knowledge and transversal skills in all apprenticeship programmes.
  - ▶ Establishing mechanisms that allow dual VET students to access higher education.
  - ▶ Developing dual education models in university studies.
  - ▶ Establishing mechanisms that can validate prior learning.
  - ▶ Enhancing transparency and parity of esteem, valuing the associated learning outcomes in a way that is comparable to general and higher education. Thus, a general education qualification may be placed at the same level as a VET qualification, and a VET qualification at the same level as a higher education qualification. This can enhance a parity of esteem between VET and other educational paths.

# Atractiveness

## KEY FINDINGS

### Criteria 10.

#### Support for companies

1. **Involving companies and chambers of commerce in the design and evaluation of dual VET is vital.**
  - ▶ It ensures that the requirements of the labour market are adequately taken into account when designing VET systems.
  - ▶ It also creates ownership and commitment for the system by employers. Companies must not be seen as an “add-on” to the system but as being at the heart of the system.
2. **Adequate financial support programmes are essential to motivate companies to invest in apprenticeships.**
  - ▶ Public subsidies can help increase the provision of apprenticeships. Empirical evidence shows that companies’ involvement is related positively to the size of the subsidy spent on apprenticeships.
  - ▶ Direct subsidies appear to be effective in encouraging firms to start training apprentices but do not increase the demand for apprentices in firms that already have apprentices.
3. **Administrative and bureaucratic procedures should always be clear and simple.**
  - ▶ It should be simple and easy for a company to register an apprentice and/or to understand the system (companies won’t hire apprentices, especially small and medium-sized which do not have a special human resource department).
4. **Providing specific support to address specific difficulties or barriers faced by SME:**
  - ▶ Staff motivation with their profession when they have made this choice at a very early age in life, in particular with the challenges that arise from economic and social changes.
  - ▶ Teaching basic and personal skills. This is the most difficult part with new apprentices compared to technical skills related with the profession or with digital skills.
  - ▶ Providing training on regulations (safety, hygiene, administration, etc.).
  - ▶ Integration of vulnerable groups (migrants, Roma, people with disabilities, etc.).

### Criteria 12.

#### Career guidance and awareness raising

5. **The role of local guidance and advice services is crucial** to ensure that the education and training paths are attractive and understood by companies and potential students and their families. This has to be done at a very early stage, between 13 to 16 years old. This requires the involvement of specialised and motivated staff. Promotion and marketing campaigns are useful to complement the work of the orientation services but without a good team of people involved in advice and guidance activities it is difficult to achieve good results.

6. **Organising awareness-raising activities aimed at potential students and their families** where they can get stimulated about the opportunities that Dual VET offers for the future of the young people and convey the message that VET is a great career path with a very low unemployment rate and good salaries and professional development (e.g. in smaller companies the path to leadership or management positions is shorter than in bigger companies). Having a network of VET ambassadors has proved to be very effective as a way to convey the message.
7. **Public Relations and social prestige activities are necessary to show the benefits of Dual VET** both among companies and students and their families, paying special attention to what can motivate students and families to choose this career option. For instance, in some regions/countries graduation ceremonies are very important and VET providers are starting to celebrate this in a similar format to universities. Another important factor is to show case role models, especially people that reach management level or become board members of important companies.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### Criteria 10.

#### Support for companies

1. **Grading the financial support to companies should be considered** i.e. starting with higher subsidies for companies that take on apprentices for the first time. The subsidy level for subsequent apprentices can then be decreased substantially year by year.
2. **Innovative approaches should be considered to lower the burdens for SMEs**
  - ▶ Grouping apprenticeships should be made possible in order to facilitate the participation of SMEs who cannot train across the whole apprentice skills set on their own.
  - ▶ Providing start-up information and tool kits that help SMEs.
  - ▶ Matching services (students/SMEs).
3. **Implement specific support initiatives to involve and attract companies, with specific actions targeted especially at SMEs.**

This may help new training companies with various formalities and administrative tasks to implement an apprenticeship. Many companies, especially SMEs with no apprenticeship experience, normally require external help for the following basic tasks:

- ▶ Accreditation as a training company.
- ▶ Identification of the company's skill needs.
- ▶ Recruitment procedures.
- ▶ Training and instruction of in-company trainers including the preparation of training guidelines.
- ▶ Administrative procedures.
- ▶ Assessment and the certification of apprentices.

## Criteria 12.

### Career guidance and awareness raising

#### 4. Establish and develop advice and guidance support services with adequate financial and human resources to carry out the following roles, among others:

- ▶ One-to-one and group activities targeted at young people and their families: one of their main role should be to convince parents that dual VET is a suitable option that can also lead to university studies.
- ▶ Advice to young people on identifying their strengths and interests (vocation) with one-to-one advice but also with on-line tests to help with career choice.
- ▶ Coordinate specific programmes aimed at disadvantaged groups.
- ▶ Visual and interactive instruments/tools and apps to interact with students if this is targeted at boys and girls in professions where there is under-representation. (between 13 and 16 years old).
- ▶ Examine the suitability of the training company together with the chamber of commerce. This office could also be in charge of examining and recording registered apprenticeship contracts.
- ▶ Counsel training companies (e.g. advice on legal issues).
- ▶ Advice and coach apprentices, especially with regards to the final apprenticeship exams as well as financial arrangements.
- ▶ Conflict management between training companies and apprentices (e.g. for students: late arrivals, addictions; within companies: not providing adequate training; “using” the student for tasks that are not part of the apprenticeship).
- ▶ Foster participation of trainees in orientation activities (fairs, school talks, etc.): peer interaction
- ▶ Advise and give support to international mobilities.

#### 5. Implement PR activities that attract companies and connect students with companies showing it can be a very good path for career development in professions with good salaries:

- ▶ Specific on-line portal or app to match demand of students with demand of companies: for students to be able to apply for an apprentice post and for companies to publish their vacancy (similar to LinkedIn).
- ▶ Sharing experiences events that make good practices visible.
- ▶ Apprentice award for companies.
- ▶ Education and career fairs with a focus on dual VET.
- ▶ Fostering and supporting the participation in Skills competition(s).
- ▶ Campaigns encouraging enterprises to provide or invest in VET

## ARGUMENTS TO ENGAGE COMPANIES IN DVET

### It makes companies more competitive

Apprentices can bring new ideas and innovation to the business and contribute to making the workplace more productive.

Apprentices are part of the workforce and as such they are productive if they receive the right training and are supervised correctly. In this case there is a quick return on investment.

### It reduces recruitment costs and makes it more effective

Apprenticeships allow the business to secure a supply of people with the specific skills and qualities that the business requires and that may not be available on the external job market.

Through dual VET, companies are able to recruit staff that have or can develop the skills that the company requires.

Apprentices are generally more reliable as they tend to be highly motivated.

In the long-term, companies generally feel it is an investment that pays off: time dedicated to orientation is generally lower than a higher degree student.

Generally, the selection process of young people is easier than older people at a later stage in life as they have different expectations (salary, professional expectations, etc.).

The average time that the person takes to become productive is lower with apprenticeships compared to students with higher education degrees.

Staff turnover and incorrect choices is lower.

### The cost of the training to develop the right skills is cheaper

Recruiting apprentices enables employers to fill the skill gaps that exist within their current workforce as apprentices begin to learn sector specific skills from day one. This is particularly applicable in companies that require very technical profiles.

Apprentices are generally trained and highly motivated.

### Although it requires an initial investment it is cost-effective on the long-term

Apprenticeships can help secure a supply of skilled young recruits - especially important for the replacement of an ageing workforce.

### Apprentices tend to be more loyal and stay with the organisation as they tend to be more motivated and satisfied, which can reduce labour turnover.

Dual VET students can complement theoretical training with practical training more aligned with the company skills needs.

Establishing a Dual VET programme in collaboration with VET providers is very effective as it allows

companies to receive the support of VET providers especially in the initial phase of setting-up an apprenticeship programmes. By the same token, VET providers receive information on how they can adapt the content of the theoretical training to better prepare students to carry out the tasks within the companies.

### **It has a positive impact on the working culture: it can be an incentive for other staff to improve their own skills**

Apprenticeship training could increase interest in training among other employees and create a 'training culture'.

### **It gives the company a better social reputation**

Apprenticeship schemes could result in an enhanced reputation and a positive image for the business both within the industry and in the local community. Visible engagement in the training can help the company to be perceived as an organization that is concerned with the quality of its staff and thus, with its performance level. This is especially important for bigger companies or smaller companies at local level.

## **ARGUMENTS TO ENGAGE STUDENTS IN THE CRAFT SECTOR**

### **Lower levels of unemployment**

The craft sector generally has lower levels of unemployment, mainly due to a lack of skilled workers.

### **Quicker professional development**

It is often a sector that has more opportunities for fast responsibility and leadership. In addition, workers tend to have diversified activities with every-day customer contact, which gives the opportunity to carry out a wider variety of tasks.

### **Motivation**

It provides the opportunity to earn money from day one and reach higher salaries (often higher than with a university degree). In addition, this sector is generally composed by small companies, often family companies, with a more accessible value-set. Finally, seeing what one has created every day becomes an important motivating factor.



# Governance

## KEY FINDINGS

### Criteria 8.

#### Regulatory framework

1. **Having a clear and unequivocal regulatory framework is vital to create transparent and reliable conditions that allow businesses to commit to DVET:**
  - ▶ Effective funding schemes.
  - ▶ Harmonized curricular contents at national level.
  - ▶ Clear role of companies within the system as well as structures and processes that ensure their commitment and involvement. Companies should have genuine ownership in the design of the apprenticeship training as well as to be part of the recruitment process of the apprentice. In countries/regions where companies are at the heart of the model, the apprenticeship schemes are more effective and valued by the society.
  - ▶ Variety of sectors and occupations aligned with labour market demand (currently and on a future basis). Grouping the different Dual VET occupations according to industry sectors allows to be better organised and more efficient.

### Criteria 9.

#### Involvement of social partners

2. **Investing in coordination initiatives between educational institutions is crucial to developing proper and systematic education and training paths. This investment can produce the following results:**
  - ▶ Collaboration mechanisms between educational institutions to reduce duplicities.
  - ▶ Attractive paths for students and companies.
3. **Involving big companies as well as SMEs is vital:** VET providers should invest in building relations with global players (companies with world wide presence, recognized as leaders in their market segment) and also with small players as they both offer different learning opportunities: bigger companies offer broader opportunities for students and often more time to study in the working hours whereas within smaller companies students have the opportunity to have more working and hands-on experience.
4. **A good balance between the needs of companies with the professional development of trainees is important for business commitment:** work-based learning provides a prominent springboard to acquire skills and enter into employment. Job-related learning has to be balanced with the acquirement of broader skills for future employability as well as personal development. Training providers and companies, in close cooperation with government and the social partners, have to ensure they are able to establish a framework that allows to offer motivating training pathways for students at the same time as meeting the needs of companies.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### Criteria 8.

#### Regulatory framework

1. **Establishing common protocols and tools that reduce bureaucracy** is an important aspect when developing governance mechanisms.

### Criteria 9.

#### Involvement of social partners

2. **Ensuring government departments of employment, education and economy cooperate to make of dual VET an attractive choice in a student training path and to foster school-to-work transition.**
  - ▶ Efforts should be put in ensuring training contents are up to date to skills requirements of the labour market. Joint governance structures with industry clusters, chambers of commerce and business associations can be an interesting way to harmonise training standards and pooling resources to generate a common view and voice.
3. **Foster and promote the mobilisation of public and private funds to develop up-to-date and innovative Dual VET programmes.**
4. **Fluent relations between companies and VET providers should be encouraged and supported by mutual and regular feed-back mechanisms:** these entail respect for the corresponding skills profile and a mutual recognition of each other's roles, both by the teachers in education centres and by the in-company trainers.
5. **Implement sector-based qualification frameworks** by prioritising certain sectors and involving businesses in the design of the programmes.
6. **Invest in up-to-date equipment and technology:** VET providers should be assigned an annual budget for equipment and technology to ensure that students' learning and practice at the school is directly connected with what they will have to do in practice at the companies. When additional equipment is required and funds are limited, counting with the support of companies in giving equipment or access to technology in kind or give a discount for its purchase can be a solution.

# Mobilities

## KEY LEARNING

### 1. Partners share common barriers when it comes to promoting international mobilities among VET students:

#### Organisational aspects

- ▶ In some cases, no financing is available to cover management costs in the host country for VET providers involved in the mobilities: this aspect is particularly relevant at the initial phase of the mobility, where the student needs a stable contact person in the host country.
- ▶ Administrative and bureaucratic procedures are generally excessive and with little additional support.
- ▶ The selection of companies is mainly based on personal contacts of VET teachers in foreign countries.
- ▶ Difficulties to find companies in certain sectors are many time unsurmountable.
- ▶ The current model of VET mobilities in many countries is based on the direct relationship between VET providers from the sending country with companies based in the host country, a model that does not foster strategic, efficient nor sustainable partnerships as it is based mostly on personal efforts and will from the key actors.

#### Personal & socio-economic context of students

- ▶ Language skills of students: students may have a low level of English and sometimes even lower of other languages that may be required to be able to adapt to a business environment.
- ▶ Immaturity of students and overprotective families.
- ▶ Risk of failure of exams because of not attending the classes and follow the courses in their country of origin.

#### Unawareness of the different vet models in the eu countries

- ▶ Poor knowledge of the differences and particularities of the different systems.
- ▶ Difference of VET models that are not compatible makes recognition of skills/qualification difficult if not impossible. As a result, students can only opt for mobilities related to work experience but not related with the educative/training component.

### 2. The current model of mobilities of students (3 months) is based on the direct relationship between the VET provider and the hosting company in another country or region. In the future, Castilla y León would like to base it on a partnership relationship between VET providers based on reciprocity.

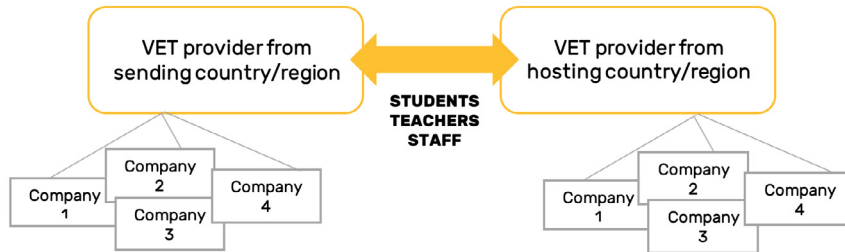
This model requires that VET providers comply with certain conditions:

- ▶ VET providers from both countries need to be from the same sector.
- ▶ VET providers from both countries need to be interested in mobilities among the countries/regions and have certain experience with mobilities.
- ▶ VET providers need to be interested in internationalisation and in strengthening strategic partnerships with certain countries/regions.

### CURRENT MODEL



### FUTURE MODEL



## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Promote strategic sectoral alliances among the project's partners, giving priorities to the following sectors:**
  - ▶ ICT and industry 4.0 (mechanics, mechatronic/robotics)
  - ▶ Handicraft
  - ▶ Commerce and retail
  - ▶ Food industry
  - ▶ Tourism and hospitality
  - ▶ Administration and management
2. **Carry out pilot experiences that use new technologies to address language barriers (for English and other languages).**
3. **Encourage teachers/staff mobilities to strengthen strategic partnerships among VET providers from different countries thus foster more students' mobilities. These mobilities include the following agenda:**
  - ▶ Getting to know the VET provider and its staff, especially those responsible for mobilities and relations with companies
  - ▶ Learn about the VET system of the country/region
  - ▶ Learn about local culture and traditions
  - ▶ Find out about local arrangements for accommodation
  - ▶ Assess the possibility of establishing a peer mentoring programme for mobility students
  - ▶ Assess the possibility of establishing a stronger partnership through a KA2 project
  - ▶ Meeting with key actors:
    - Voluntary organisations
    - Possible companies that will host students
    - Erasmus+ country offices
    - Chambers of commerce
    - Public employment centres

Inspiring  
experiences

# Austria

## QUALITY

### Graduate tracking

In Austria, since the school year 2008/09, Statistics Austria (the Austrian statistical office) together with the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Labour Market Service is carrying out the “education-related employment careers’ monitoring” (“bildungsbezogenes Erwerbskarrierenmonitoring”). It provides information on the employment careers of youth or young adults who acquired a formal education qualification.

Details on this project can be found in German language through this [link](#)<sup>6</sup>. Occasionally, there is also a survey about graduate tracking of educational research institutes.

### Introducing digital skills in Dual VET

In view of the increasing digitalisation of the economy, in 2018 the Ministry set a target of revising around 80 DVET job profiles. This negotiation is part of the role of the Austrian Federal Advisory Board on Apprenticeships. Companies that might have difficulties complying with the adopted modifications and amendments of training regulations can turn to the apprenticeship offices in the Regional Chambers for advice and assistance. Digital aspects that are being included in the revision are e.g. topics related with the safety and management of data, e-commerce, 3D printing, management of digital communication and PR.



*The Dual VET model in Austria” Vienna & Lower Austria, 6-8 June 2018*

## ATTRACTIVENESS

### Establishing financial support programmes

Austria has a number of public subsidisation options for apprentices and training companies. All companies contribute with a small percentage of the wage bill to a specific fund through the tax system. Through this fund, companies can receive a variety of support services (especially subsidies). More information can be found at [www.lehrefoerdern.at](http://www.lehrefoerdern.at).

In addition to that, there is also a subsidisation by the Public Employment Service (AMS). These subsidies given for specific purposes are financed from the labour market policy budget ([www.ams.at](http://www.ams.at)).

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.statistik.at/web\\_de/statistiken/menschen\\_und\\_gesellschaft/bildung/bildungsbezogenes\\_](http://www.statistik.at/web_de/statistiken/menschen_und_gesellschaft/bildung/bildungsbezogenes_)

## GOVERNANCE

### Involvement of stakeholders

Based on legal provisions, Austria has established the Federal Advisory Board on Apprenticeships, which has the main task of designing, reviewing and modernising the training regulations which are issued for each apprenticeship occupation by the Ministry of Economy and are binding for the training provided in training companies. Training regulations stipulate the job profile specific to the respective apprenticeship occupation. The board consists of representatives of the employers' side and the employees' side (social partners) as well as of co-opted part-time vocational school teachers as advisory members. It submits statements and concepts to the Ministry of Economy which need to be considered when adopting or amending training regulations. As a rule, the ministry approves the suggestions of the Advisory Board and adopts the modified or new regulations by decree.

### Grouping apprenticeships according to the chamber structure

The Federal Economic Chamber and the Regional Chambers are divided into seven industry sectors: which also serve to assign the apprenticeships:

1. Crafts and Trades
2. Industry
3. Commerce
4. Banking and Insurance
5. Transport and Communications
6. Tourism and Leisure
7. Information and Consulting

These industry sectors provide a link between the respective chamber and the trade organisations found in the sector. Though it is the common way of grouping the overall apprenticeships they can of course also be assigned to the trade organisations, both at regional and federal level, so that each trade knows about the current numbers and the development of "their" apprenticeships. If needed, targeted advertising measures can be deployed.

## MOBILITIES

- ▶ A collaboration programme took place with South France to reinforce mobilities in different sectors, mainly in the hotel and restaurant sector and in the bakery industry. The programme organised 4-week mobilities where one week was dedicated to learning the language and three weeks to work-based learning. The experience was positive although it took some time to organise it. About 10 apprentices travelled to the other country in either case. Also for Austrian and French teachers and trainers a programme was organised for about a week in the other country respectively
- ▶ A specialised agency to promote the mobility of skilled workers was founded in 1995 and is called IFA ([www.ifa.or.at](http://www.ifa.or.at)). The IFA association opens mobility opportunities for Austrian apprentices twice a year (autumn and spring). IFA stands for "International Young Workers Exchange".
- ▶ There is a remarkable network of part-time vocational schools for apprentices in the province of Styria to encourage apprentices mobility.

# Castilla y León, Spain

## QUALITY

### Guidance on how to evaluate skills in Dual VET

In 2018, the Foundation Bankia for Dual VET in collaboration with the VET Directorate General of the Department of Education of Castilla y León published a manual on how to evaluate skills in Dual VET. It defines what a professional skill is, what a professional qualification is and how to monitor and evaluate dual VET students' skills, providing criteria and practical tools for the evaluation.

[Link<sup>6</sup>](#) to consult and download the publication.



*Workshop on Attractiveness "Turning dual VET into a smart choice", Valladolid and Burgos, 9-11 October 2019*

## ATTRACTIVENESS

### Involvement of companies in the design and evaluation of dual VET

The aim of the Bankia Foundation for dual VET is to promote dual VET in Spain, increasing its prestige among society. To do so, it carries out the following actions:

- ▶ Promote dual VET projects aimed at young people who are in the compulsory education.
- ▶ Collaborate in the implementation of dual VET in the education system.
- ▶ Define and implement dual VET programmes also in research institutions (technology centres, R&D departments of companies).
- ▶ Collaborate in projects aimed at students who have abandoned the educational system prematurely in order to promote their return to education.
- ▶ Promote the transfer of knowledge between institutions or educational centres and companies.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.educa.jcyl.es/fp/es/formacion-profesional-dual/formacion-profesional-dual>



In Castilla y León, the foundation has implemented the following activities:

- ▶ First report about Smart Productive Specialization in Castilla y Leon
- ▶ Clinical investigation in public hospitals through 'Sanec' programme
- ▶ Foreign trade training, Segovia
- ▶ Digital skills training, Aranda
- ▶ Lean methodology, Burgos

## GOVERNANCE

### On-line tool to manage Dual VET programmes

Cicerón Dual is a web tool for the management of Dual VET designed by the Government of Castilla y León:

- ▶ Companies take part in the process of creation of apprenticeships.
- ▶ VET providers are responsible for the reservation of apprenticeships and generate the project through the tool.

[Link<sup>7</sup>](#) to the tool.

## MOBILITIES

### Involvement of stakeholders

- ▶ The region has promoted the creation of a consortium of schools to manage VET mobilities. Under this consortium there is one person designated to deal with the bureaucratic/admin part.
- ▶ Schools foster teacher mobilities in the regions where there is more interest to send students. During these mobilities, teachers are encouraged to make contacts with local companies.

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.educa.jcyl.es/fp/es/formacion-profesional-dual/empresas-entidades-promotoras-ciceron-dual>

# Emilia Romagna, Italy

## QUALITY

### Training company tutors

The QUALIT Project, co-financed by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and conducted by the Italian-German Chamber of Commerce with a consortium of German and Italian partners, has the following main goals:

- ▶ Building a standard and sustainable qualification and certification system for all professionals working in the dual VET sector in Italy, thanks to the support of institutional partners.
- ▶ Qualifying and certifying in-company and VET-school tutors in different regions of Italy, providing them with pedagogical skills and advanced competences in the dual vocational training sector.
- ▶ Creating a wide network of qualified Mastertutors throughout Italy as dynamic multipliers for the further development of the system.

### Addressing up-skilling

The digITALIA Project, co-financed by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), is a biennial project (2018-2020) aimed at developing and piloting both vocational training and up-skilling models in the key sectors of Industry 4.0 in Italy, with a particular focus on mechatronics and IoT. Its main goals are to

- ▶ Identify the needs of the Italian manufacturing industry in terms of profiles and skills 4.0.
- ▶ Develop pilot models of dual vocational training that meet the needs of the Italian manufacturing industry in terms of new skills and profiles in the Industry 4.0, focusing on Mechatronics, Industrial IoT, digitalization and the smart factory.
- ▶ Develop pilot models of upskilling and digital reskilling of professionals (both soft and hard skills) as "Industrial IoT Specialists".
- ▶ Exchange best practices and cooperating with other German Chambers in Europe for a possible transfer of the pilot models.

## ATTRACTIVENESS

### Setting up a Dual VET programme in the automotive sector

The project 'Dual Education System Italy', launched in 2014, started with an agreement with two companies in the automotive sector, Ducati and Lamborghini. It provides for two-year work-school courses during the fourth and fifth grades of two Bolognese schools.

Students attend 1,400 hours each year: 640 at the company training centres and 736 at educational institutions. Students acquire technical and professional skills that are highly qualified and innovative, with an experience in leading global companies.

### The VETBUS Project aimed at improving guidance activities

VETBUS, launched in 2011, focuses on guidance activities for students and their families in choosing the right education and training path, particularly VET schools in line with market needs and skills demands by companies. It involves not only young students but also their parents/families, because of their importance in the election of the future training path of the student.

Based on this experience, a best practice exchange project was set up with the support of Erasmus+ focused on improving the attractiveness and image of vocational education and training, as well as creating effective local partnerships among education and training key actors, public authorities, companies and social partners.

Some of the inspiring practices detected in the VETBUS Project are ‘El Baúl del Estudiante’ from Spain, ‘Fashion and Design Skills’ from Romania, or the ‘Sectoral Council for Competence’ from Poland.

### The SET-APP<sup>8</sup> project aimed at business involvement

This project, led by IFOA in partnership with Unioncamera Emilia-Romagna and other international partners was implemented between 2016 and 2018 with the aim of developing a supportive business environment, offering practical assistance to SMEs, by involving chambers of commerce, employer organisations and trade unions, sectoral federations, VET providers and public employment services.

The project had three key objectives:

- ▶ Improving competences of partners and intermediary organisations, through sharing, exchanging practices, training, improving social visibility and knowledgeability of apprenticeship.
- ▶ Providing partners and intermediary organisations with tools supporting their role (like a web platform for matching demand and supply, quality measurement tools, etc.).
- ▶ Providing for sustainability and “critical mass” to intermediary organisations action, through local agreements in favour of apprenticeship.

In order to achieve this, the project has developed:

- ▶ A series of local agreements in favour of apprenticeship among stakeholders, including commitments to promote Dual VET and reducing bureaucracy to implement it in each participant region.
- ▶ A set of training material to favour engagement of SMEs in apprenticeship, including guidelines for in-company tutors, online videos with testimonials of former participants in Dual VET, etc. (all accessible through the [dedicated section of the website](#)<sup>9</sup>).
- ▶ A web platform to give visibility to companies wishing to train and employ apprentices.
- ▶ A number of promotional events, activities, and awards for companies and apprentices, to engage SMEs in using apprenticeship.

The project covered all sectors in Italy, focused in two specific sectors in France, and concentrated in Austria and Germany in those in which more awareness raising was required by students which were not demanding Dual VET.

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.projectsetapp.eu/about-the-project/>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.projectsetapp.eu/activities-and-outcomes/>

## GOVERNANCE

The regional educational and research structure is based on interinstitutional cooperation and integration between training providers and enterprises.

Two initiatives are worth highlighting:

- ▶ Education and Vocational Training system (EaVT): addressed to young people leaving first level secondary schooling. The system implements different models of learning for inclusion with no discrimination, thus extending opportunities and prospects for young people. It provides very young students with new training opportunities that allow them to achieve vocational qualifications in a three year-long course or a vocational diploma in a four-year-long course. The Region has funded different initiatives aimed at preventing dropping-out in school or VET experiences for 18-24 years old young people.
- ▶ Employment and skills: the Region funds personalised pathways, in collaboration with businesses, made up of various actions, such as guidance, classroom and workplace learning, and assistance in starting a job. These opportunities are also structured as a response to situations of corporate or sectoral crisis, such as the building industry crisis. This includes traineeships and apprenticeships. The Region has chosen apprenticeship contracts, on the grounds of their considerable educational value, as the best way of encouraging high-qualified entry for young people into the labour market. There are three different forms: apprenticeships for qualifications, apprenticeships for vocational purposes, and higher education and research apprenticeships. The Region supports apprenticeship contracts enabling young people to obtain a qualification while working: from a vocational qualification to a diploma, degree, master's degree and Ph.D. There is a two-fold benefit: young people are assisted in gaining further qualifications, even at the highest academic level, and strategic skills for innovation reach the SMEs.

## MOBILITIES

- ▶ The region has developed a strategy to support mobilities by giving assistance to schools and VET providers on finding companies. It also encouraged to host students from abroad.
- ▶ Emilia Romagna was a promoting partner of the experimental project <http://www.imovenetwork.org>, a platform of chambers of commerce, VET schools, university, regional administration that aims to reinforce long-term collaboration to foster mobilities among its members (e.g. IFOA is a member). The project is based on reciprocity of mobilities among partners (if an organisation receives two students, it can send two students in return). This network is open to register new members. When you become a member you have to agree to share your database of contacts with its members. The project is also connected with the EURES system.

Strengths of this Platform:

- It encourages collaboration between VET provider's/schools who serve as contact point for students. Each school has a contact point for mobilities that support students at the initial phase of the mobility.
- It facilitates contacts with companies through the contacts of the VET provider/school.
- As it is based on reciprocity, costs not covered by Erasmus financing are compensated.
- It also reinforces commercial relations (industrial policies) with the countries that are involved in this network.

# Germany

## QUALITY

### Promoting the access of disadvantaged students in Dual VET

Stiftung Liebenau is a foundation specialised in promoting education and training to young people with special needs in a real working environment. They manage a VET school and cooperate with companies from mainstream market to offer ten different professions from the crafts, retail and hospitality sectors (catering, IT, woodwork, farming, gardening, etc.).

They offer tailor made apprenticeship of 52 recognised professions for young people with special needs aged between 16 to 18 years old. In addition, the school counts with a team of teachers specialised in training aimed at students with special needs.

This model has proven to reach good results: out of the 400 apprentices they teach every year, around 70% find a job when they finish their studies. Factors of success of this experience is based on the following aspects:

- ▶ Learning work competences and basic skills: the schools combines school learning with practical learning in a workshop surrounding. The first year the training is carried out in the school premises but the second year the training is carried out within the companies with whom they have agreements. The third year students have the opportunity to have the experience of working within a mainstream company.
- ▶ Working in collaboration with employment services: students are referred by the employment services.
- ▶ Involving specialised and trained staff: all teachers have carried out a specialised training to teach students with special needs and support students based on a coaching/mentoring approach and methodology. The school also counts with a specialist service to address specific psychological needs
- ▶ Complying with the same education standards with enough flexibility to adapt learning to the needs of the students (these adaptations are often towards a more practical approach).
- ▶ Providing housing solutions for students that are not from the area to support and promote independent living.

## ATTRACTIVENESS

### Setting up and manage advice and guidance support services

In Germany, employment agencies have a career counselling service they have been offering for over 40 years with 4 main functions: 1) information and orientation; 2) consultation; 3) placement; 4) assistance.

These services offer:

- ▶ Lessons on “planning my vocational future” at school
- ▶ Visits to the job information centre (BIZ) with school classes
- ▶ Face-to-face conversations with pupils (& parents) at school & in the agency
- ▶ Vocational training offers from BA’s job platform (Jobboerse)
- ▶ Participation of the service in training / job fairs
- ▶ Special services concerning physical or learning disabilities
- ▶ Support programmes (e.g. coaching, assistance, long term internship)

Factors of success of this experience is based on the following aspects:

- ▶ Having one-to-one contact with students and their families at a young age.
- ▶ Fostering participation of trainees in orientation activities (fairs, school talks, etc.).
- ▶ Involving the parents in the counselling activities.
- ▶ Carrying out activities where young people can identify their vocation, strengths and interests thus helping with their career choice through one-to-one advice but also with on-line tests.
- ▶ Adapting programmes to young people with physical or learning disabilities or special needs.
- ▶ Using visual and interactive instruments/tools to connect with the students.
- ▶ Fostering internship experience (few days) in companies to get to know the professions. If this is targeted at boys and girls in professions where there is under-representation (between 13 and 16 years old).
- ▶ Combining group activities at the schools with one-to-one counselling.
- ▶ Convincing good students that Dual VET is a good education and career path.

## GOVERNANCE

### Mobilisation of private and public funding

The VET Provider Elektronikschule led a project whereby young talents can learn future technologies in actual practise. An industry 4.0 training system sponsored by the State of Baden-Württemberg, the Lake of Constance District and various industrial partners (1.1 million) was designed by the school teachers with the support of the companies. The State of Baden-Württemberg is sponsoring 16 different i-learnfabrics with 6,8 Millionen Euros to prepare specialists and junior staff for the requirements of digitization.

wenglor - partner of the ‘iLernfabrik 4.0’ Electronics School Tettang: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qADUxPwFEmg&feature=youtu.be>

## MOBILITIES

- ▶ The project “Go for Europe”<sup>10</sup> provides a number of work placements in Baden-Württemberg for a period of two to four weeks.
- ▶ A local mentor is always assigned to each student to ensure the success of the mobility. This mentor is not from the company hosting the students. Previous experience showed that putting in contact students directly with the company was not being effective.
- ▶ **Imove**<sup>11</sup>: iMOVE is an initiative of the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and is part of the international division at the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB) in the Federal City of Bonn. Their objective is to promote international collaboration and the initiation of cooperation and business relationships in vocational training and continuing education.

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<sup>10</sup> <http://www.goforeurope.de/internship-in-germany/>

<sup>11</sup> [https://www.imove-germany.de/cps/rde/xchg/imove\\_projekt\\_international/hs.xsl/about\\_imove.htm](https://www.imove-germany.de/cps/rde/xchg/imove_projekt_international/hs.xsl/about_imove.htm)

# Portugal

## QUALITY

### Graduate tracking

In Portugal, IEFP has a mechanism that assesses the impact of employment and training measures on the employability of enrolees six months after their completion. This is an objective of the Institute, which in 2016, was exceeded, with an achievement rate of 105.5%.

IEFP measures the proportion of trainees that increased their competencies through the certification of vocational training with the following indicators:

- ▶ Certified trainees in measures of long duration.
- ▶ % of trainees in modular training.

### Quality assurance

The implementation of quality assurance systems by the network of vocational schools is a strategic commitment undertaken at national level, as a result of the commitments made by Portugal within the partnership framework established under Portugal 2020. It should be aligned with the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET).

Decree-Law no. 92/2014 establishes the legal framework for vocational schools, which stipulates that vocational schools should implement quality assurance systems in line with the EQAVET framework.

On the other hand, the implementation of EQAVET quality assurance systems is an evaluation criterion for the definition of the training supply network since the 2017/2018 cycle.

### Training of Tutors and Tutor Trainers

Considering the particular conditions and characteristics of training in a work environment, the IEFP created the **Reference Framework for Tutors Training** with the aim of qualifying tutors ensuring they effectively acquire the knowledge and skills needed to support, develop and evaluate the training activity, to follow-up of trainees and to contribute to their integration and learning.



## Apprenticeship Valorisation Strategy

As part of the IEFP's Apprenticeship Valorisation Strategy, a pilot project "**Learning gives employment**" is underway, which aims to implement a set of training actions in partnership with some training providers and reference business associations, introducing innovative aspects in the way learning courses are developed and contributing to a greater visibility and attractiveness of these courses among civil society, young people, families and companies.

This experience focuses on greater involvement of companies in the training process of young people and in the creation of mechanisms to enhance their employability and therefore aims to test innovative solutions in the organisation and development of these courses, reinforcing the articulation with companies and the labour market, and is based on the following principles:

- ▶ Curriculum flexibility: adaptation of the curricular plan to the needs of companies, allowing greater flexibility in the organisation of training periods corresponding to theoretical/ technological training and practical training in a work context.
- ▶ Practical Training in Work Context grant: the companies award a grant of 300€ to the trainees during the 3rd period of practical training in a work context and which should complement the grant of payment to the trainees provided for under this modality.
- ▶ Commitment to employability - guarantee of employability to at least 80% of the trainees who complete the training successfully.

The implementation of the training actions to be developed is done in partnership with training entities and reference business associations, with which a cooperation agreement will be signed.

## ATTRACTIVENESS

### Communication campaign on Apprenticeship Courses

The "Generation Pro" campaign, was launched in 2017 for the dissemination of apprenticeship courses in various media (television, Radio, Press, Social Networks and Youtube) aimed at young people and their families, considering the fundamental role that parents play in choosing the pathways of education and training of their children.

### Network of Excellence Partners for Apprenticeship

The Network of Excellence Partners for Apprenticeship awards a certificate of recognition to organizations that offer practical training in high quality work environments in accordance with the structure of the apprenticeship programs, thus promoting:

- ▶ The visibility and public recognition of companies and employers that invest in qualifications of young people and their employability.
- ▶ Good practices of the entities that support alternance training, recognizing them as dynamic and integrated spaces of training and qualification.
- ▶ Brand image that certifies the quality of the work done by the entities that support alternance training, and raise awareness in companies and other employers of the need for investing in training.

## WorldSkills Portugal

In IEFP, I.P. is integrated in the structure of WorldSkills Portugal, representing Portugal in WorldSkills Europe and WorldSkills International. IEFP, I.P. is responsible for organising and holding the Professional Championship at national level and assuming the Portuguese representation in international championships aimed at young people between the ages of 17 and 25, who have completed or are attending a qualification course, in dual education and professional training modalities.

The aim of these Championships, which are intended to be widely attended, is to measure the effectiveness of the vocational training provided by the different operators, and at the same time to induce increasing quality, innovation and creativity factors in the teaching-learning processes.

The Championships take place every two years and bring together the top-ranked runners in the pre-selection phase, who compete among themselves for the title of national champion in each profession.

The national champions apply to participate in the European and World Championships of the Professions, organised by WorldSkills Europe and WorldSkills International respectively.

## GOVERNANCE

In Portugal there is a diversification and consolidation of the Dual training offer supply, with the development of new qualifications and the updating of existing ones, taking into account the needs of the labour market and the principle of diversification of supply that is foreseen within the scope of the National Qualification System through the Sectorial Councils for Qualification (CSQ). There is a large public investment in the Training modality of Apprenticeship Courses, developed by IEFP.

In 2013, a Memorandum of Understanding between the Portuguese Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany was established with the aim of strengthening and developing a framework for cooperation to develop the employment market and strengthen the skilled labor market.

In 2017, IEFP, I.P., in partnership with the National Agency for Professional Qualification and with the support of German partners - The Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB) and German Office for International Cooperation in Vocational Education and Training (GOVET) - defined to develop a set of activities in the scope of Dual Vocational Training, structured around 4 main axes:

1. Training of education-training of Dual VET actors.
2. Increased participation and commitment of the social partners in the development of education and training frameworks.
3. Student / trainee of Dual VET exchange (Mobility) between Portugal and Germany.
4. Knowledge sharing through Study Visits / Workshop on Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competencies.

## MOBILITIES

There are several intermediary agencies that assist in the process of hosting students with their mobility. Under the Erasmus+ Programme, IEFP prepared an application for international mobility, in a work context, for trainees from the Direct Management Centres and staff.

This project should contribute to various objectives, some of them directly connected with VET: To support trainees in the development of their personal skills;

- ▶ To support the professional development and employability of IEFP trainees.

- ▶ Promote the attractiveness of dual-certification Vocational Training (Apprenticeships).
- ▶ Promote, after three successive successful applications, the achievement by IEFP of the “VET Mobility Charter”.
- ▶ To increase the involvement of the members of the Advisory Council of the Centres in the dissemination of the activities and in the improvement of the attractiveness of VET.
- ▶ To promote the creation of lasting mobility networks and the dissemination of good practices in Vocational Training.

# Results and impact of the project

# Project's objectives and impact

## Extent to which the general objectives have been met

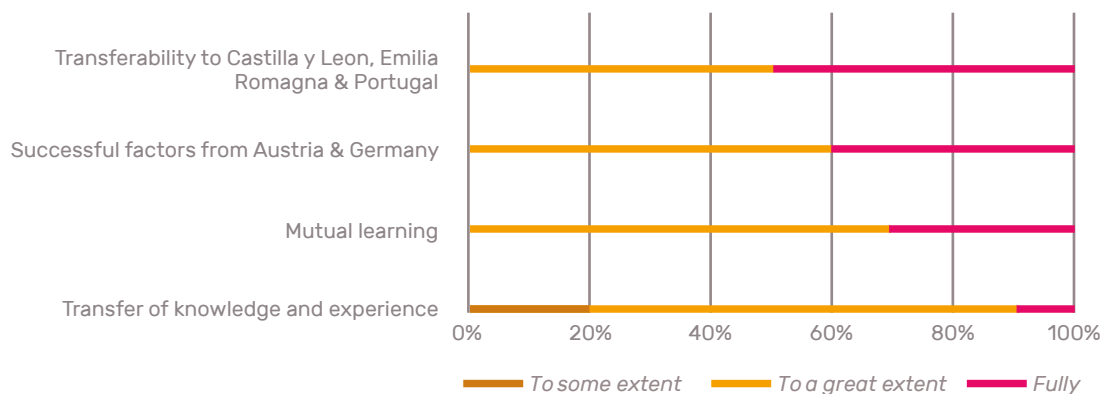
The project had the following general objectives:

- ▶ Transfer of knowledge and experience between countries with advanced DVET models and countries with less experience.
- ▶ Mutual learning among all members of the Partnership.
- ▶ Identification of elements that have been instrumental in the successful implementation of the DVET in Austria and Germany.
- ▶ Drawing lessons that are transferable to Castilla y León, Emilia Romagna and Portugal.

The project had the following general objectives:

Partners consider that the objectives that have been met to a large extent are related with:

- ✓ Transfer of knowledge and experience
- ✓ Key success factors of the DVET models in Austria and Germany.



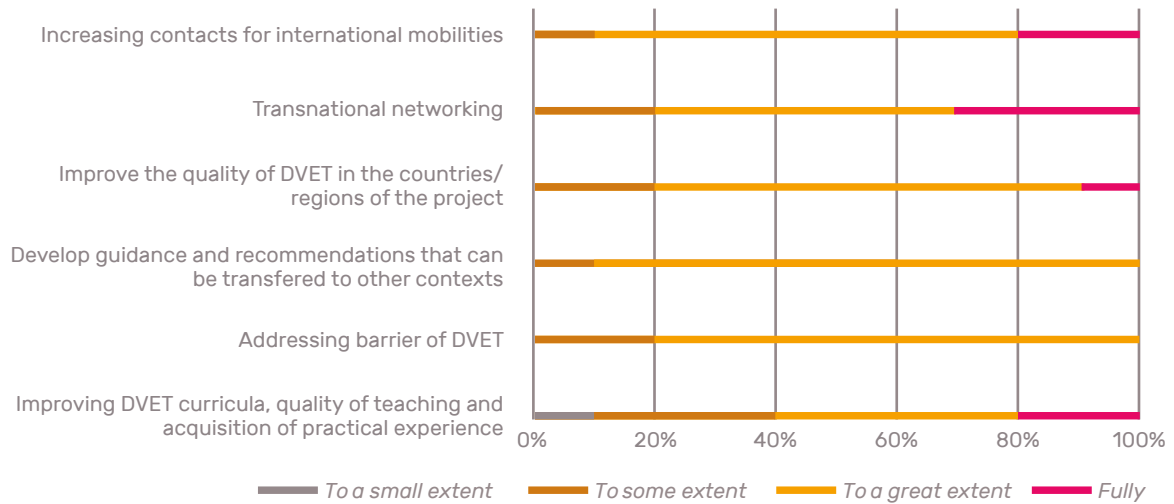
## Extent to which the specific objectives have been met

The project had the following specific objectives:

- ▶ Improving DVET curricula, quality of teaching and the acquisition of practical experience.
- ▶ Identify strategies, approaches and measures to address barriers that arise in the implementation of DVET.
- ▶ Develop guidance and recommendations resulting from learning that can be transferred, disseminated and shared with other institutions and countries at the European level.
- ▶ Improve the quality of DVET in the countries/regions of the project.
- ▶ Support to partners in the development of networks that increase their capacity to work transnationally, sharing contacts, experiences, ideas, practices, methods and work materials.
- ▶ Lay the foundations for establishing contacts in the countries with a view to increasing international mobility.

Partners consider that the objectives that have been met to a large extent are related with:

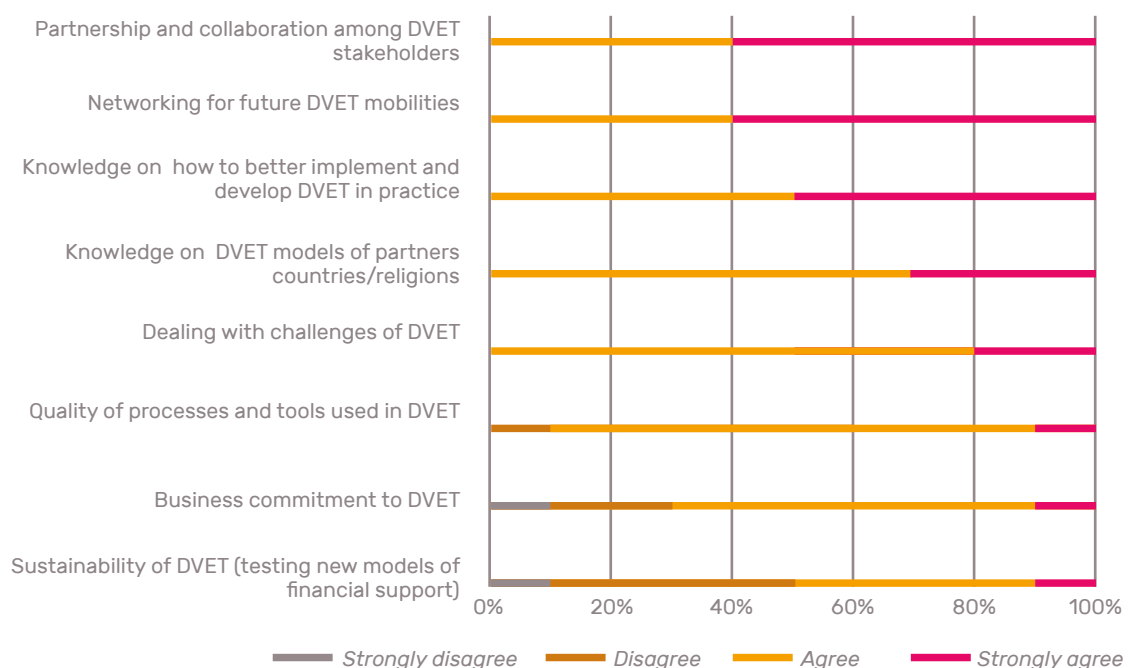
- ✓ Increasing contacts for international mobilities
- ✓ Transnational networking



### Impact of the project on partners

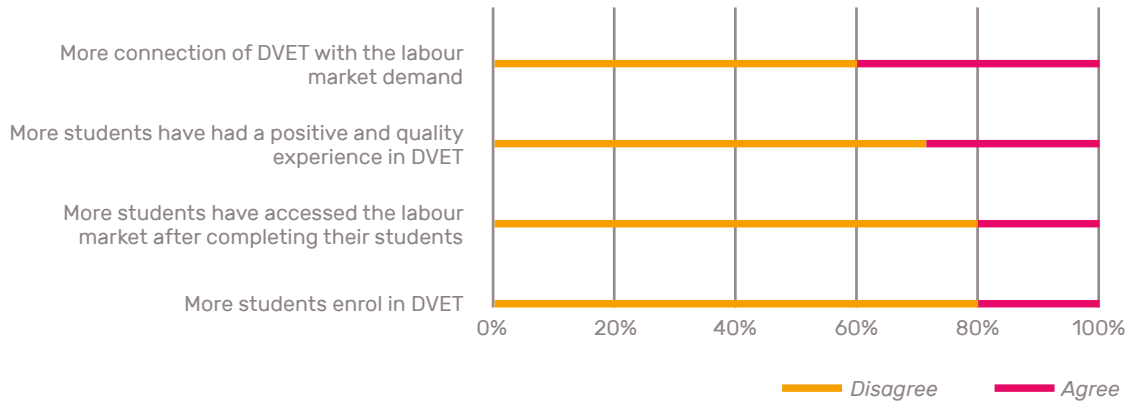
Partners consider that the project has mainly had an impact on the capacity of partners to **work in partnership at EU level and increase their networking opportunities** to foster and promote international mobilities in VET.

- ✓ Increasing contacts for international mobilities
- ✓ Transnational networking



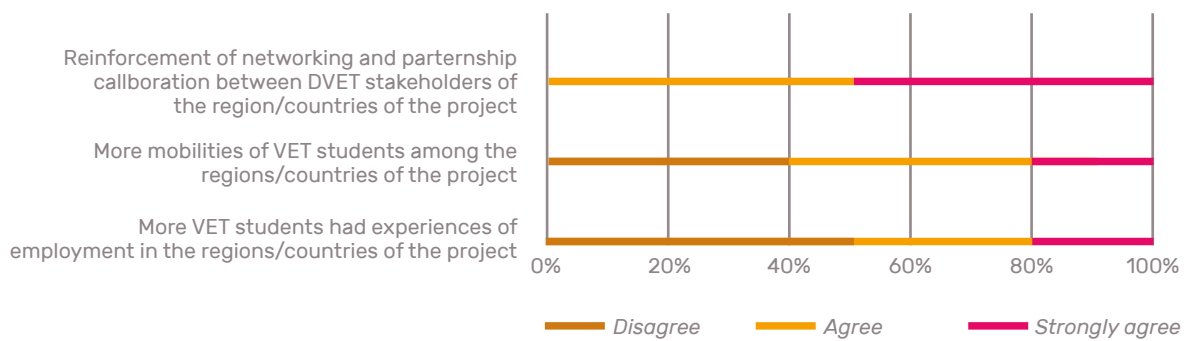
### Impact of the project in the country/regions of partners

In terms of impact in the country/regions of the partners, the project has had mild results. Partners consider that the project has mostly contributed to improving the **connection of Dual VET with the labour market demand**.



### Impact of the project at EU level

Partners consider that the project has mostly contributed to **reinforcing and developing networks** of contacts, partnerships and exchanges between DVET stakeholders of three regions/countries of the project.

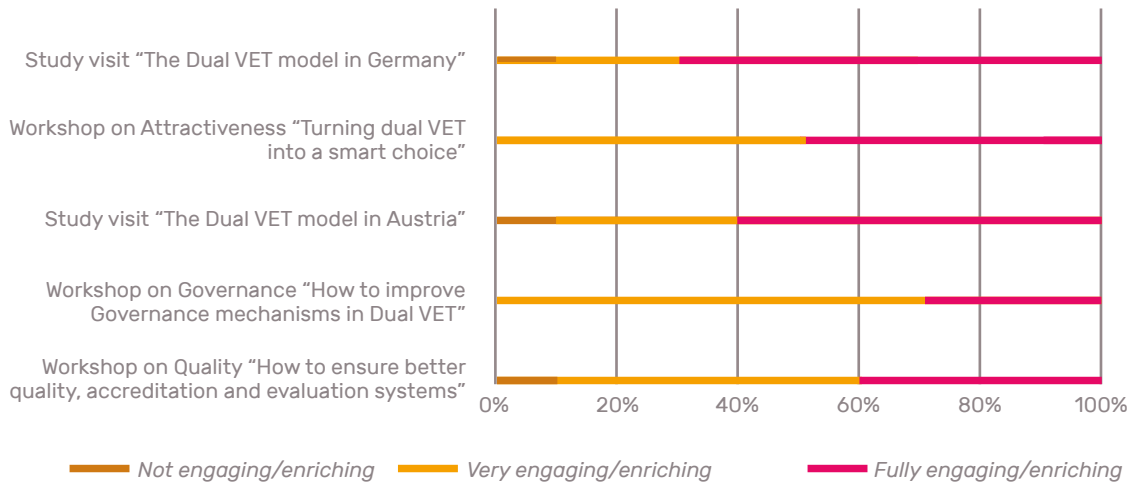


# Project implementation

## Level of added-value and engagement of activities

Partners are of the opinion that activities have been largely enriching and engaging; especially the following two:

- ▶ Workshop on attractiveness held in Castilla y León.
- ▶ Workshop on governance held in Emilia Romagna.



Partners highlight among the most innovative aspects of the project:

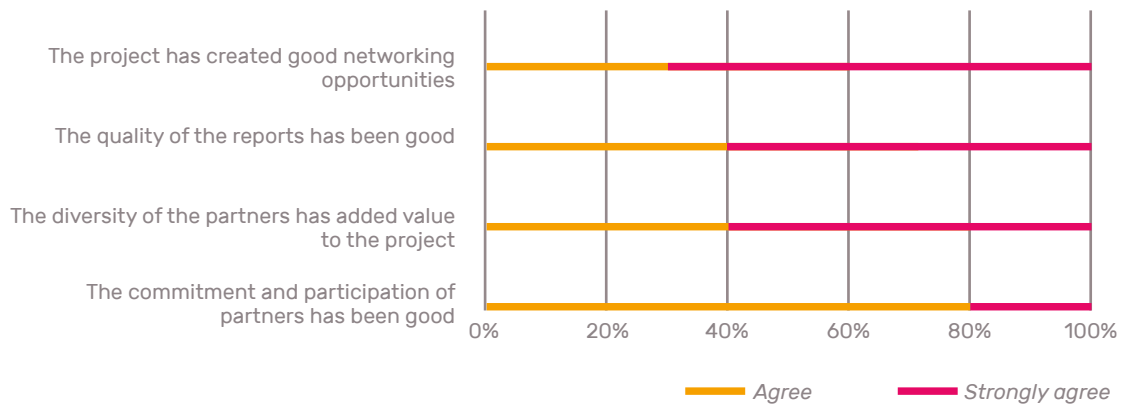
- ✓ Diversity of stakeholders
- ✓ Continuous evaluation, timing and use of new technologies
- ✓ Study visits
- ✓ Participation of staff from policy departments
- ✓ Guidance and recommendations based on key findings

- ▶ The multidisciplinary approach and diversity of stakeholders involved.
- ▶ The method of the continuous evaluation of the project and the possibility to discuss on time the issues with the support of new technologies (e.g. the satisfaction/assessment survey methods). The support of an external professional support has been very positive.
- ▶ The structure and facilitation of the study visits.
- ▶ The participation of staff from policy departments in study visits/workshops to acquire information on the ground, together with a thorough sharing of regional good practices.
- ▶ The guidance and recommendations resulting from learning that can be transferred, disseminated and shared with other institutions and countries at the European level.



## Management aspects

One of the aspects that has been considered more valuable is the opportunity that the project has given to the partners to facilitate networking at European level.



Below we include references to other aspects that partners have highly valued during the project:

- ▶ Study visits have been most impressive and powerful to transport knowledge about dual VET. It would be recommendable for all partners to stay in contact and work on networking for the future.
- ▶ The project has fostered good institutional cooperation among partners within the project but also in existing initiatives and most of all in new European cooperation projects. During the implementation of the project two new strategic partnerships projects have been presented to the Erasmus+ call 2019.
- ▶ The project has served as platform for discussion on the fulfilment of some of the 14 criteria of the European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships.

# Mutual learning

Partners have highlighted that the project has contributed to acquire knowledge and awareness on the following aspects:

## QUALITY

- ▶ Tools for accreditation of competence.
- ▶ The opportunities that international mobility offers for dual VET students and trainers.
- ▶ The importance of having well prepared and committed tutors that are able to provide quality guidance and coaching support during the training together with a system of progressive monitoring of learning.
- ▶ The need to ensure permeability and (mutual) recognition of examination certificates and other accreditation of competences.

## ATTRACTIVENESS

- ▶ The different roles and opinions of the companies with regards to Dual VET in the participating countries and the arguments that can be used to increase their involvement.
- ▶ The need to carry out specific actions to increase the positive image of VET in society.
- ▶ The important role of having good and proactive career guidance services.

## GOVERNANCE

- ▶ The diversity of VET models systems in the partners' countries and different/new approaches to implement VET policies.
- ▶ How to promote and encourage private-public collaboration.
- ▶ The importance of having and doing evaluations and skills analysis, based on consistent methods social dialogue.
- ▶ Stakeholders involvement, communication and visibility.

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U M S E R V I Ç O

