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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Despite their advantages apprenticeships are underused

To reduce high unemployment among their young people, countries are looking to others for help. In countries, such as Germany, the Netherlands and Austria youth unemployment has remained relatively low. This is attributed in part to their apprenticeships or 'dual' systems and so interest in them has increased.

Apprenticeships and other forms of work-based learning are seen as having advantages by combining learning with work experience. They can provide young people and adults with the skills employers need and make the transition from school or other learning to work easier. Apprenticeship systems also strengthen cooperation between governments, social partners, employers and training institutions.

But despite their advantages, apprenticeships, like vocational education and training (VET) generally, seem to have an image problem, at least in some countries. The 2011 Eurobarometer found that more than 70% of young people believed that VET is useful for finding a job, but 38% saw the jobs and careers it leads to as unattractive. More apprenticeships are needed in skill-intensive sectors and occupations such as ICT, sales, health care and renewable energies which are seen as offering attractive jobs and promising careers.

Developing apprenticeships depends heavily on employers. Employers who train apprentices highlight the benefits, regarding it as an investment in the future. But too few European enterprises offer apprenticeships. In 2010, on average in the EU around 25% of enterprises with 10 or more employees trained apprentices; this figure is much lower in many Member States.

Some European countries are working to strengthen apprenticeships. Germany, Greece, Spain, Latvia, Portugal and Slovakia signed an agreement, in 2012, to promote apprenticeships. The European Commission, in July 2013, also launched the European alliance for apprenticeships. On 7-8 May 2014, Cedefop (the European Centre for the development of Vocational Training), based in Thessaloniki, Greece, organises, with the European Commission, a conference to bring together countries looking for advice and examples of good practice on apprenticeship.

More in the Cedefop briefing note [Developing apprenticeships](#)

The briefing note is available in nine languages (Spanish, German, Greek, English, French, Italian, Lithuanian, Polish and Portuguese) and in two formats (pdf or e-book optimised for tablets and smartphones).

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About Cedefop

The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop), an agency of the European Union based in Thessaloniki, Greece, supports European policy-making in the field of vocational education and training. www.cedefop.europa.eu

