

Tailored support to SMEs involved in apprenticeships and traineeships

POLICY DEVELOPMENT**PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE** **POLAND**

Timeline

2015 Design**2016 Implementation****2017 Implementation****2018 Implementation****2019 Implementation****2020 Completed****ID number 28476**

Background

Insufficient involvement of employers in vocational education, particularly in practical training, is one of the challenges VET has faced. Although there has been a traditionally active group of small and medium-sized companies from the craft sector providing training through apprenticeships, in general employers' involvement in practical training provision in 2015 was limited; quality apprenticeships and work-based learning opportunities were insufficient. As obstacles to further engagement, companies mentioned the lack of adequate financial incentives, bureaucracy and legal issues. There were also other issues of concern, such as the structure of companies, the lack of a tradition of cooperation between schools and businesses and the negative perception of VET.

A VET advisory team composed of ministers and representatives of employers' organisations and trade unions proposed a rethink of practical training provision and measures strengthening cooperation between schools and businesses. The 2014/15 school year was declared the year of vocational schools.

New legislation came into force in 2015 strengthening the role of employers in shaping VET curricula based on their needs and supporting cooperation between VET and businesses.

Description

From October 2016 to September 2018, the Erasmus+ project Apprenticeship helpdesk for small and medium-sized enterprises was established in Poland (and Cyprus) to build the capacity of key intermediary bodies to support SMEs offering training placements for apprentices/trainees. Among the main results of the project were:

- (a) the setting up of a national apprenticeship and traineeship support service for SMEs, offered by the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development;
- (b) training was provided to the staff appointed as apprenticeship/ traineeship facilitators;
- (c) the setting up of an online apprenticeship/ traineeship resource centre providing support to SMEs and apprenticeship facilitators.

2015 Design

2016 Implementation
2017 Implementation
2018 Implementation
2019 Implementation The apprenticeship and practical training support service is still operating.
2020 Completed The project is completed.

Bodies responsible

- Polish Agency for Enterprise Development (PARP)

Target group

Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices

Entities providing VET

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)
VET providers (all kinds)

Other stakeholders

Social partners (employer organisations and trade unions)

Thematic categories

Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Engaging VET stakeholders and strengthening partnerships in VET

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Reinforcing work-based learning, including apprenticeships

Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Financial and non-financial incentives to learners, providers and companies

Subsystem

IVET CVET

Further reading

[National apprenticeship support service for SMEs](#)

“ ... ” Cite as

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). Tailored support to SMEs involved in apprenticeships and traineeships: Poland. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). *Timeline of VET policies in Europe* (2025 update) [Online tool].

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/28476>