


Work-based learning (WBL)

Darba vidē balstītas mācības
 Latvia

1 Target group

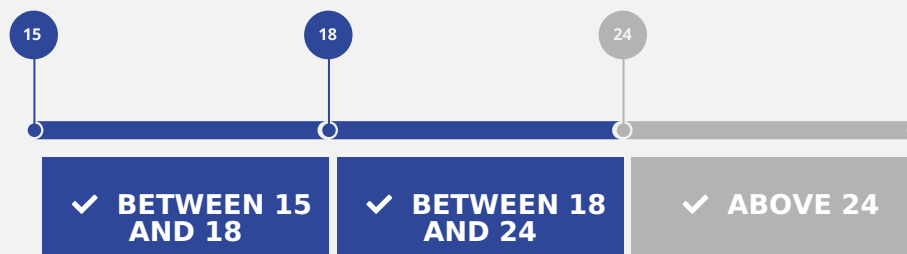
Q6. Does the legal basis define the minimum and maximum age limits for enrolment of the target group of this scheme?



The work-based learning scheme is offered as an alternative option to other existing school-based schemes. Enrolment age is related to these programmes, offered at NQF (analogous to EQF) levels 2-4 (upper secondary and post-secondary VET). In this context, there is no age limit set for the apprenticeship scheme per se, but the age limits for the corresponding VET programme apply.

It is the decision of the administration of the particular VET institution which IVET and CVET programmes will be offered in this mode (usually parallel to the offered school-based mode). Given the ongoing modularisation of VET programmes, more individualised approaches have been made possible, e.g. students can choose to follow a particular programme in a school-based or work-based mode.

Q7. What is the average age of learners in practice?



The traditional age of the initial VET programmes at the NQF levels 2-4 is between 15-18. At the same time, from the planning and administration point of view, the work-based learning option is easier to be organised by VET institutions at post-secondary level (CVET). Especially those schools that are not too experienced with WBL approaches

choose to implement CVET WBL programmes, as there is no need to plan subjects of general secondary education.

2 Overview of the scheme

Q8. Is the scheme included in the ISCED 2011 mapping?

The form for Q8 consists of two radio button options. The first option is 'YES', represented by a grey circle with 'ISCED scheme' inside, and a grey button with a white checkmark and the text 'YES'. The second option is 'NO', represented by a blue circle with 'ISCED scheme' inside, and a blue button with a white checkmark and the text 'NO'. The 'NO' option is selected.

The WBL scheme per se is not included, but it is offered as an alternative to school-based VET programmes at ISCED levels 254, 353, 351, 454

(<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/vet-in-europe/systems/latvia>)

Q9. Is there any organization at the national level with roles in co-ordinating the scheme?

The form for Q9 consists of two radio button options. The first option is 'YES', represented by a blue checkmark and a blue button with a white checkmark and the text 'YES'. The second option is 'NO', represented by a grey 'X' and a grey button with a white checkmark and the text 'NO'. The 'YES' option is selected.

The Employers Confederation of Latvia, implementing a national level ESF project on the implementation of work-based learning.

Q10. When was the scheme introduced?

The form for Q10 is a timeline-based selection. A horizontal timeline has two markers: '2000' and '2012'. Below the timeline are three buttons: 'LONG HISTORY (BEFORE 2000)', 'RECENTLY INTRODUCED (BETWEEN 2000-2012)', and 'NEW PATHWAY (AFTER 2012)'. The 'NEW PATHWAY (AFTER 2012)' button is selected, and the timeline bar is filled with blue up to the 2012 marker.

Work-based learning (apprenticeship) was introduced after 2012 and was formally adopted in 2015 (Vocational Education Act amendment).

Q11. How did the apprenticeship scheme originate?



Since 2012/2013 (before adopting the current legal framework) there had been discussions at various levels between the Latvian state and various co-operation partners (ministries of economy, employment and finance), social partners and employers' organisations) on the introduction of the WBL scheme in the formal Latvian vocational education and training (VET) system.

In 2013, the Ministry of Education and Science invited 6 VET institutions to consider participation in a WBL pilot project. In the academic years 2013/2014 and 2014/2015 a limited number of VET institutions took part in the implementation of the WBL pilot project. The results of the implementation of the WBL pilot project have served as a basis for further WBL developments in Latvia at a later stage.

The legal basis for WBL as an apprenticeship scheme is in place since 2016 when regulation on the "Procedures for Organisation and Implementation of Work-based Learning was adopted (Cabinet of Ministers' Regulation of No. 484 of 15 July 2016). (<http://likumi.lv/ta/id/283680-kartiba-kada-organize-un-isteno-darba-vid...>).

See more in the Latvian country fiche.

Q12. What are the sources of financing of the direct costs for the in-company training part of the apprenticeship scheme?



✓ SINGLE EMPLOYERS HOSTING APPRENTICES



✓ SECTORAL FUNDS



✓ STATE



✓ OTHER

State budget and ESF funding are the major sources of financing the apprenticeship costs.

The remuneration is ensured by the company and is compulsory. The company is free to cover other expenses as well. Remuneration can take the form of a wage (taxable) or an allowance (non-taxable) (see more in Q31).

Apart from the wage/ allowance also the individual labour protection means and the civil liability insurance of the learner have to be ensured during the implementation of the individual plan in accordance with the training contract.

The general provision for ensuring learners' insurance is included in the Regulations by the Cabinet of Ministers of 20 November 2012 No 785 'On the organisation and insurance of students' training practice' (Regulation No 785), <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/252862-macibu-prakses-organizacijas-un-izglitoj...>

In case the particular qualification is not referred to in the regulation No 785, it can be covered by the ESF project OP 851.

Q13. Are there any financial incentives for companies that offer apprenticeship places?



✓ YES, SUBSIDIES



✓ YES, TAX DEDUCTIONS



✓ YES, OTHER INCENTIVES



✓ NO
FINANCIAL
INCENTIVES

Any stakeholder can join the WBL scheme either exclusively under the umbrella Regulation No 484 (that stipulates its general provision) or in addition, subject to certain compliance criteria, join also the ESF scheme which is being implemented as an additional incentive for employers. Under the ESF supported WBL measure (Supplementary Regulation No.483), the employer is entitled to a monthly lump sum of 270 euro per student. It is up to the employer how to spend this – either as a salary to the trainers, or for wages/allowances to the apprentices, as it is a compulsory criterion (payment to the apprentice).

As an incentive for employers, since 2016 it is possible for them to choose to pay apprentices either wages (taxable, full set of wages apply) or allowances (non-taxable) (see more in Q31).

According to Law on Citizens Income Tax, Article 9, paragraph 81) - scholarships up to 280 euros per month, paid to a learner in accordance with the procedure specified by the Cabinet for organizing and implementing work-based learning, by a merchant, institution, association, foundation, natural person registered as an economic operator, as well as an individual enterprise, including farmers or a fisherman's farm and other economic operators, <https://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=56880>. These allowances are not taxed.

Q14. How many learners are enrolled in this scheme?

Around 3,000 learners have been enrolled in the scheme. The results are derived from the implementation of the ESF funded project on the implementation of WBL.

Q15. What is the share of apprentices enrolled in this scheme in relation to all VET students for the corresponding educational level(s) as reported in Q3?



✓ MORE THAN
60% OF VET
LEARNERS



✓ BETWEEN
30%-60% OF VET
LEARNERS



✓ BETWEEN
10% AND 30% OF
VET LEARNERS



✓ LESS THAN
10% OF VET
LEARNERS

3,000 learners are enrolled in the WBL scheme, with around 28 000 learners in the VET system in total (10% of total VET students approximately).

Q16. Which is the type of qualification obtained through the apprenticeship scheme?



✓ FORMAL VET
QUALIFICATION
(WHICH DOES
NOT INDICATE
THE PATHWAY)



✓ FORMAL VET
QUALIFICATION
(WHICH
INDICATES THE
PATHWAY)



✓ FORMAL
APPRENTICESHIP
QUALIFICATION
(JOURNEYMAN,
ETC.)

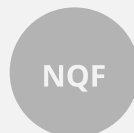


✓ OTHERS

Q17. Is the qualification included in the National Qualification Framework (NQF)?



✓ YES



✓ NO



✓ THERE IS NO
NQF

NQF 2, 3, 4

Q18. How does the qualification link to the scheme?



✓ IT IS A SPECIFIC TYPE OF QUALIFICATION WHICH CAN ONLY BE OBTAINED THROUGH THIS APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME



✓ THE SAME QUALIFICATION CAN BE ACHIEVED ALSO THROUGH OTHER SCHEMES (I.E. SCHOOL-BASED VET)

In order to adjust an existing VET programme to the WBL mode or create a new WBL programme, certain time/ human/ financial resources have to be invested. Thus, the number and type of the offered WBL programmes depends on the ability/ capacity/ possibilities of VET institutions to adapt and offer programmes in such format. The Ministry of Education and Science is encouraging schools to set up programmes (existing or new) in WBL mode.

Q19. Does the scheme provide direct access to higher education?



✓ YES



✓ NO

Work-based learning (apprenticeship) programmes can provide direct access to higher education depending on the level of the corresponding VET programme in which they operate.

A level 3 work-based programme does not lead to higher education in any format (School-based or apprenticeship), but leads to level 4 options which in turn lead to higher education.

A level 4 programme leads to higher education, whether is offered through the school-based or work-based (apprenticeship option).

3 Programme

Q20. How is the scheme linked to a training programme?



✓ THE SCHEME IS IMPLEMENTED VIA A SPECIFIC APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME



✓ THE SCHEME IS IMPLEMENTED ON THE BASIS OF THE SCHOOL-BASED VET PROGRAMME



✓ THE SCHEME IS IMPLEMENTED BASED ON THE VET STANDARDS (VALID GENERALLY FOR ALL VET SCHEMES)



✓ OTHER

VET institutions are free to choose whether they will implement a VET programme in apprenticeship mode or in a school-based mode.

VET programme standards apply regardless of its form of organisation or delivery (school-based or workplace based / apprenticeship). Also, the qualification is the same. A WBL VET programme can be adapted from an existing school-based VET programme or a new can be created, based on the same VET standard.

The school has to report in the Education Information System (VIIS) that the programme has been adapted or created anew for the delivery in WBL mode. If the VET programme is adapted, it does not need to be licenced or accredited anew, since it concerns only the mode of delivery. In case a new programme is being created for the WBL mode, the licencing and accreditation process is the same as for any other VET programme.

The programme (its mode of delivery) is adapted at school and company level to meet the needs of apprenticeships (see Q35 below).

4 Duration

Q22. If the scheme is not implemented via specific apprenticeship programme, how is duration of apprenticeships defined in the regulation?



✓ IT IS DEFINED AS MINIMUM AND MAXIMUM SHARE OF A VET PROGRAMME



✓ IS DEFINED AS MINIMUM SHARE OF A VET PROGRAMME



✓ IS DEFINED AS MAXIMUM SHARE OF A VET PROGRAMME



✓ IS NOT DEFINED BY REGULATION



✓ OTHER

The scheme is analogous to and directed at the same learning outcomes as its corresponding school-based VET programme. The overall duration is the same as in the corresponding school-based VET programme. The difference is the amount of the time (and part of the programme) mastered in company (no less than 25%).

In IVET, the scheme lasts typically 3 or 4 years. In CVET (adults), 1.5 to 2 years.

Q23. Is there a distinction between the training time and working time for the period spent at workplace, as per regulation?



✓ YES, THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK MAKES THIS DISTINCTION



✓ NO, THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK MAKES NO DISTINCTION

There is no particular distinction made. It is considered that practical learning and work goes hand in hand. Remuneration-wise – the payment depends upon the actual input by the student and tends to increase with growing ability and competence to perform.

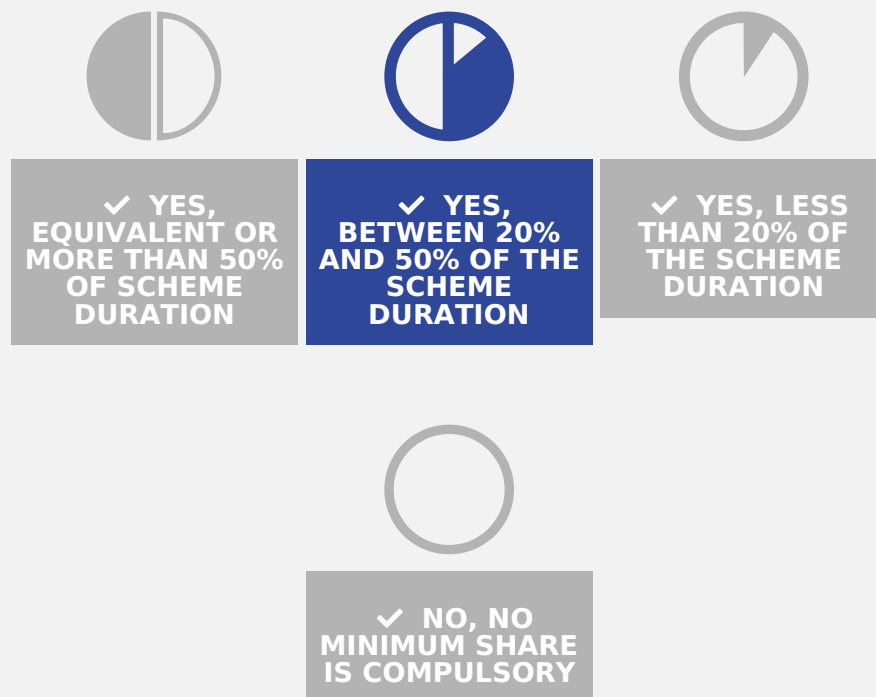
5 Alternation of work-based (in-company) training and school-based training

Q24. Is it compulsory to alternate training between two learning venues (school and company)?



Training takes place both at school and during the time spent at the company. A significant aspect on the WBL organisation is that parts of the theoretical training can take place in the company, not only at school.

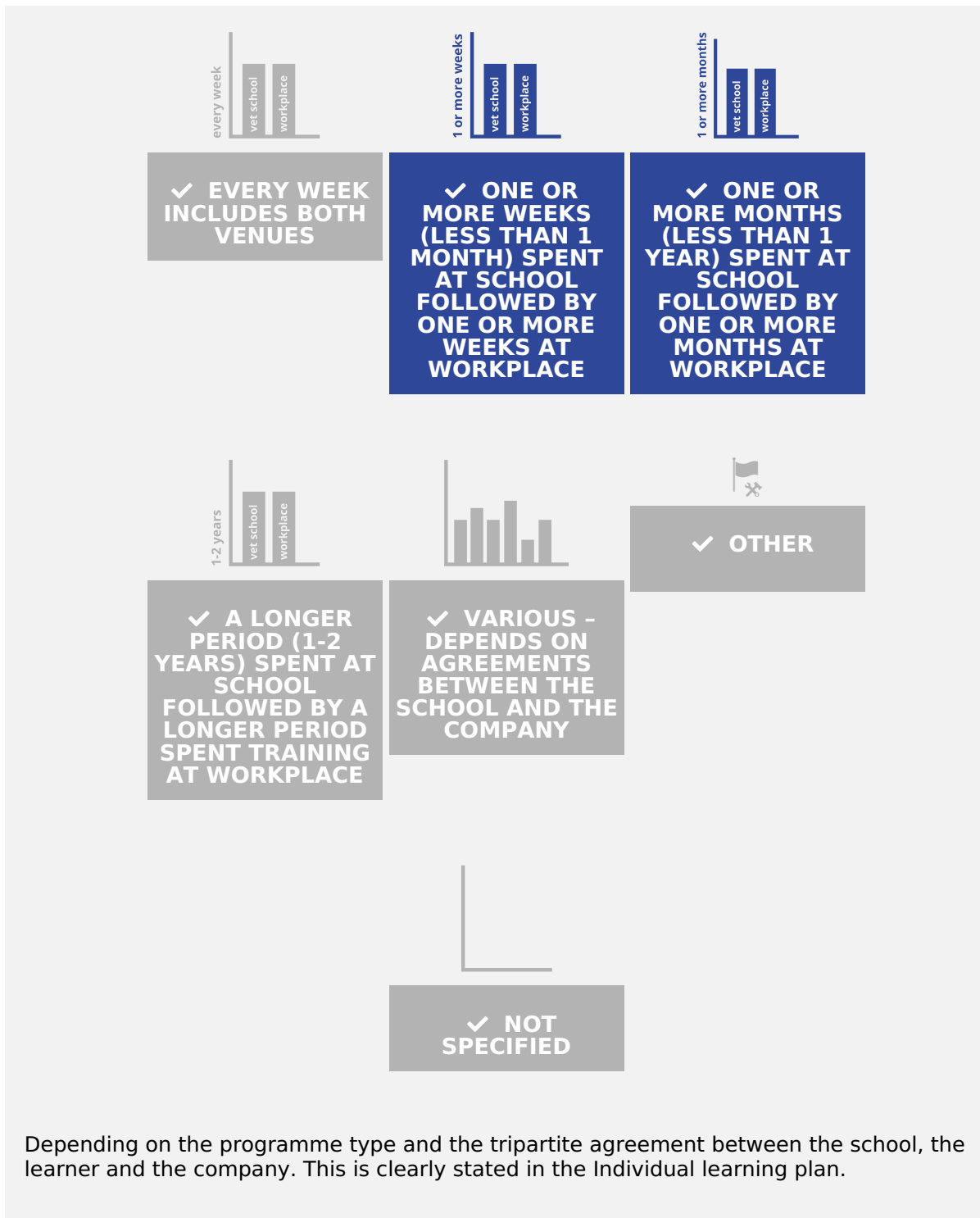
Q25. Is the in-company training defined as minimum share of the apprenticeship scheme duration?



In IVET, the share of in-company training is at least 25% of the total programme duration.

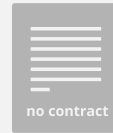
In short-cycle CVET programmes (after secondary education) the share of training implemented at the workplace represents around 70% of the total volume of the programme.

Q26. What is the form of alternation of training between workplace (company) and school?



6 Formal relationship with the employer

Q27. Is any contractual arrangement between the learner and company, required as per regulation?



✓ YES

✓ NO

The contract on remuneration is signed between the learner and the company.

Together with them, the school enters the tripartite agreement which sets general provisions and training related issues.

Q28. What is the nature of the contractual arrangement?



✓ APPRENTICESH
ARE A SPECIFIC
TYPE OF
CONTRACT

✓ APPRENTICESH
ARE AN
ORDINARY
EMPLOYMENT
CONTRACT

✓ A FORMAL
AGREEMENT

The type of agreement depends on the type of remuneration: It can take the form of an ordinary work contract (where wage is paid to the apprentice), or of an agreement in the case an allowance is paid (exempt from citizens income tax up to a certain level). (see more in Q13 and Q31)

Q29. Where is the contract or the formal agreement registered?



✓ AT THE
SCHOOL

✓ AT THE
MINISTRY OF
EMPLOYMENT

✓ AT THE
CHAMBERS

✓ **AT THE
MINISTRY OF
EDUCATION**

✓ **OTHER**

Q30. What is the status of the learner?

✓ **APPRENTICE
IS A SPECIFIC
STATUS**

✓ **STUDENT**

✓ **EMPLOYEE**

✓ **OTHER**

Apprentice is a student (learner).

7 Compensation

Q31. Do apprentices receive a wage or allowance?

✓ **YES, ALL
APPRENTICES
RECEIVE A WAGE
(TAXABLE
INCOME)**

✓ **YES, ALL
APPRENTICES
RECEIVE AN
ALLOWANCE
(NOT A FORM OF
TAXABLE
INCOME)**

✓ **APPRENTICES
RECEIVE A
REIMBURSEMENT
OF EXPENSES**



✓ NO FORM OF
COMPENSATION
IS FORESEEN BY
LAW

Remuneration to apprentices is compulsory.

It can take the form of wage under an ordinary work contract, or of an allowance (exempt from citizens income tax up to a certain level) (see also Q13)

The company can pay either wage or allowance, but not the one on top of the other. The allowance was introduced as an option in 2016 as a compromise to social partners who claimed that employers were not inclined to deal with unexperienced trainees and pay them wages with full set of taxes and benefits to be paid. Thus, the compromise was to introduce both types of payment - leaving it to the employer which mode of payment to choose in each particular case (Wage with full set of taxes or allowance with no tax at all).

Q32. How is the apprentice wage (taxable income) set?



✓ BY LAW
(APPLYING FOR
ALL)



✓ BY CROSS-
SECTORAL
COLLECTIVE
AGREEMENTS AT
NATIONAL OR
LOCAL LEVEL



✓ BY SECTORAL
COLLECTIVE
AGREEMENTS AT
NATIONAL OR
LOCAL LEVEL



✓ BY FIRM-
LEVEL
COLLECTIVE
AGREEMENTS OR
INDIVIDUAL
AGREEMENTS
BETWEEN
APPRENTICE AND
COMPANY



✓ OTHER

Individual agreement.

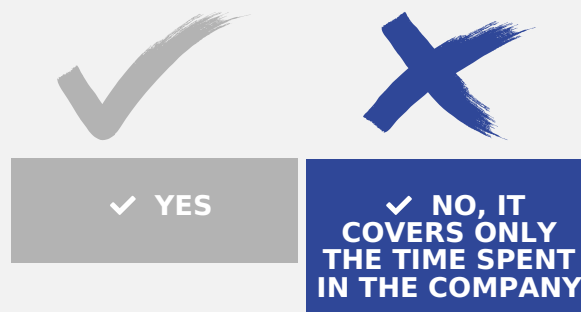
Q33. Who covers the cost of the wage or allowance of the apprentice?



Any stakeholder can join the WBL scheme either exclusively under the umbrella Regulation No 484 (that stipulates its general provision) or in addition, subject to certain compliance criteria, join also the ESF scheme which is being implemented as an additional incentive for employers. Under the ESF supported WBL measure (Supplementary Regulation No.483), the employer is entitled to a monthly lump sum of 270 euro per student. It is up to the employer how to spend this – either as a salary to the trainers, or for wages/allowances to the apprentices, as it is a compulsory criterion (payment to the apprentice).

When operating under umbrella regulation No 484 (without ESF support), the employer does not receive any direct support from the state for covering the trainees' wage or allowance.

Q34. Does the wage or allowance of the apprentice cover both the time spent at school and in the company?



8 Responsibility of employers

Q35. Is the company hosting apprentices required by regulation to follow a training plan at the workplace?



✓ YES, THE TRAINING PLAN IS AGREED AT THE LEVEL OF SCHOOL AND COMPANY



✓ YES, THE TRAINING PLAN IS BASED ON THE NATIONAL/SECTOR REQUIREMENTS FOR THE IN-COMPANY TRAINING



✓ NO, IS NOT REQUIRED FORMALLY

VET standards that are developed for the corresponding VET programmes are applied to the 'work-based learning' scheme (common standard for school-based VET and the apprenticeship option). A training plan is agreed between the school, the employer and the apprentice, and details issues related to the volume and content of workplace training, the type of alternation etc.

Q36. What are the requirements on companies to provide placements, as per regulation?



✓ HAVE TO PROVIDE A SUITABLE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT



✓ HAVE TO PROVIDE A MENTOR / TUTOR / TRAINER



✓ OTHER

Health and safety at the workplace is an important issue as well.

Additional criteria are in place in the case of ESF funding, e.g. that the company tutor has to have certain pedagogical competence; it is recommended that no more than 6 trainees are being trained with the same trainer etc.

Q37. Are there any sanctions on companies that do not provide training to apprentices at the workplace?



✓ YES



✓ NO

Q38. What is the role of chambers, employers' and employees' representatives, sectoral councils (if existent), in shaping apprenticeship content, as per regulation?



✓ ROLE IN
DESIGNING
QUALIFICATION



✓ ROLE IN
DESIGNING
CURRICULA



✓ OTHER



✓ NO ROLE

The work done since 2013 regarding introduction of apprenticeships in the VET system indicates to the existence of strong social dialogue in Latvia at various levels – VET institution, local and regional level, sector level, ministerial and social partner level. The social dialogue refers to various aspects - the drafting of legal framework, development of standards and curriculum, compliance to labour market demands, determining the priority areas, incentives to the involved parties and now increasingly also to graduate tracking.

Sector expert councils play an important role as advisory bodies supporting the development of quality IVET programmes in line with the needs of the labour market. Sectoral expert councils operate on the basis of tripartite cooperation. Their members include representatives from employers' organisations, trade unions, ministries (the education, economics and welfare ministries), as well as other branch ministries, and the State Employment Agency.

Sectoral associations are also relevant actors.

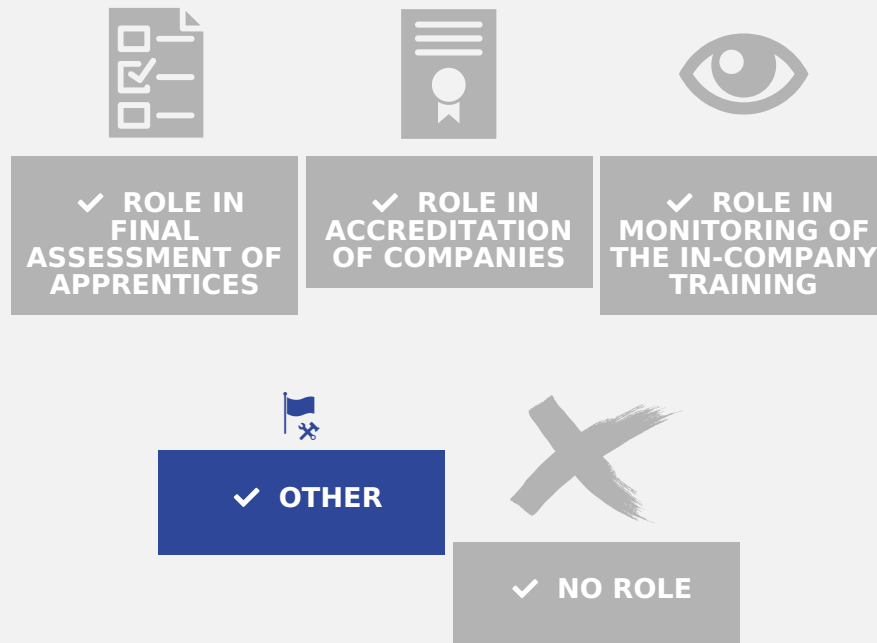
These stakeholders have a role in the development of the actual content of the programme and the expected outcomes (through setting the standards, content of the examinations etc.)

VET institutions (Competences centres) as stipulated by VET Law have established advisory bodies (Conventions) where local or regional employers are represented

(among other stakeholders) to better coordinate the local/ regional and national priorities for better education and employment/ labour market compliance.

The role of VET institutions Conventions and Sector Expert Councils is growing – since their establishment by amendments to the VET Law in 2015.

Q39. What is the role of chambers, employers' and employees' representatives in implementing the apprenticeship scheme, as per regulation?



Their role is related to defining the rights and responsibilities of the involved parties.

The sector expert councils have the right to express their opinion on the company potentially implementing WBL – if their opinion is being required, as it's usually the schools that select reliable and suitable companies for the learners.