New fields for apprenticeship
International insights

Joint Cedefop-OECD Apprenticeship Symposium

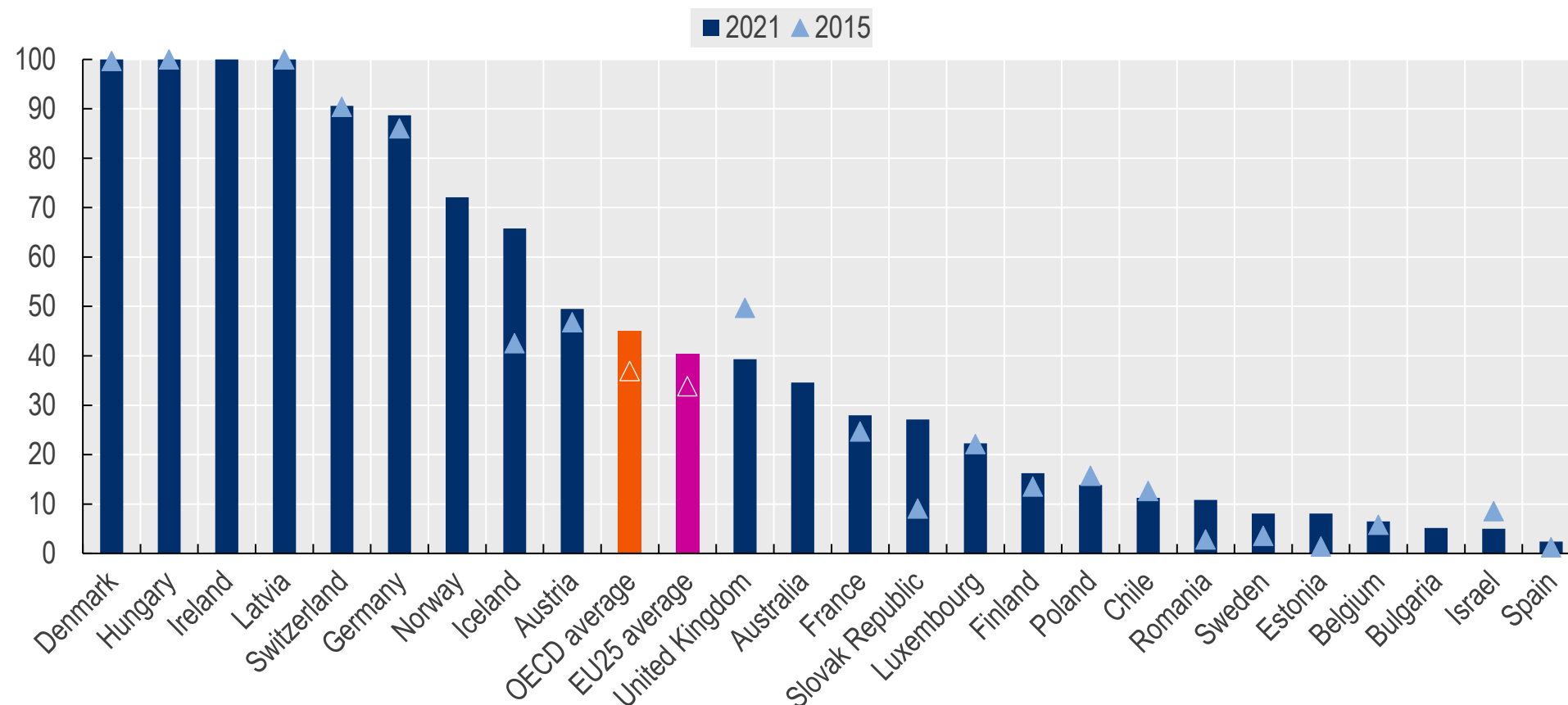Marieke Vandeweyer, OECD Centre for Skills

1 April 2025, OECD, Paris

The use of work-based learning and apprenticeship in OECD countries

Share of upper secondary vocational students enrolled in combined school- and work-based programmes (2015 and 2021)

Legend: ■ 2021 ▲ 2015

Countries (left to right): Denmark, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Switzerland, Germany, Norway, Iceland, Austria, OECD average, EU25 average, United Kingdom, Australia, France, Slovak Republic, Luxembourg, Finland, Poland, Chile, Romania, Sweden, Estonia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Israel, Spain

Notes: The work-based component is between 25% and 90% of the curriculum in combined school and work-based programmes
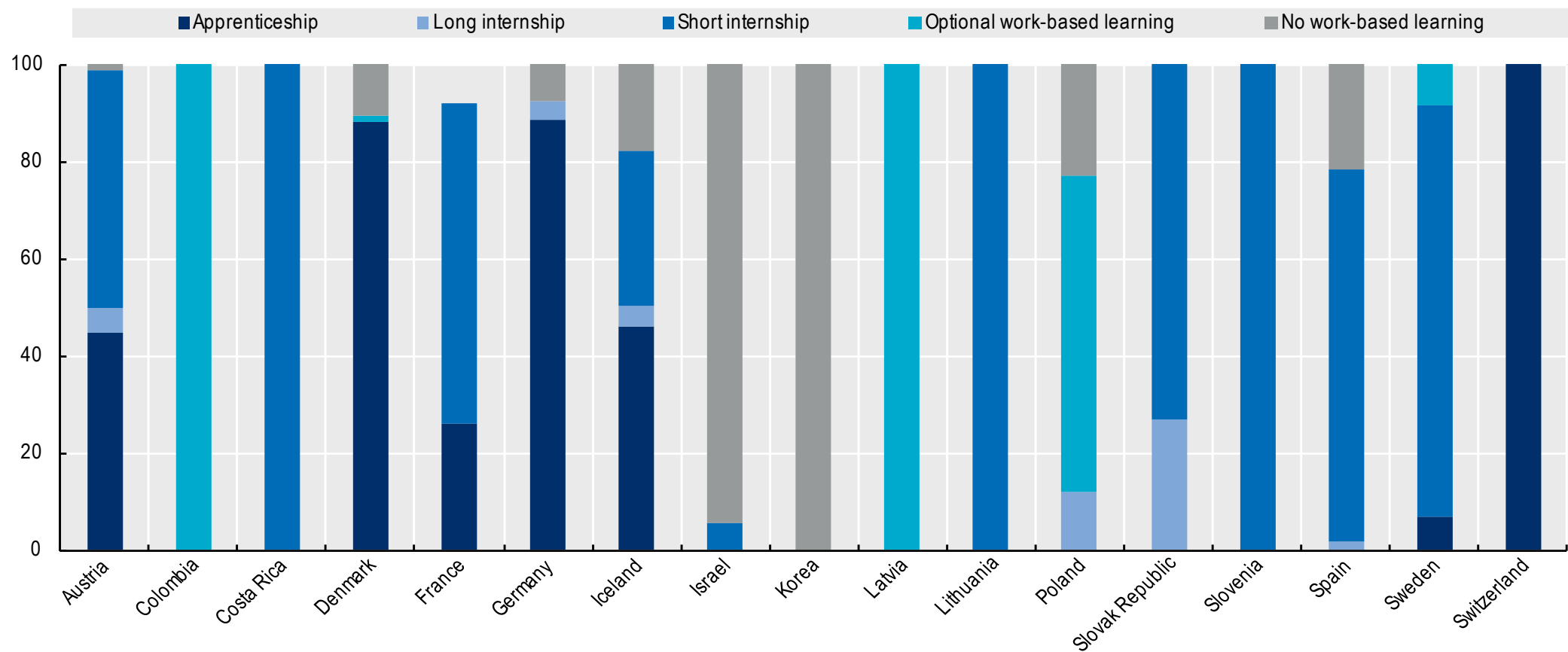Source: OECD Education at a Glance 2023

The use of work-based learning and apprenticeship in OECD countries

Apprenticeship: work-based learning is mandatory, accounts for at least 50% of the curriculum and is paid

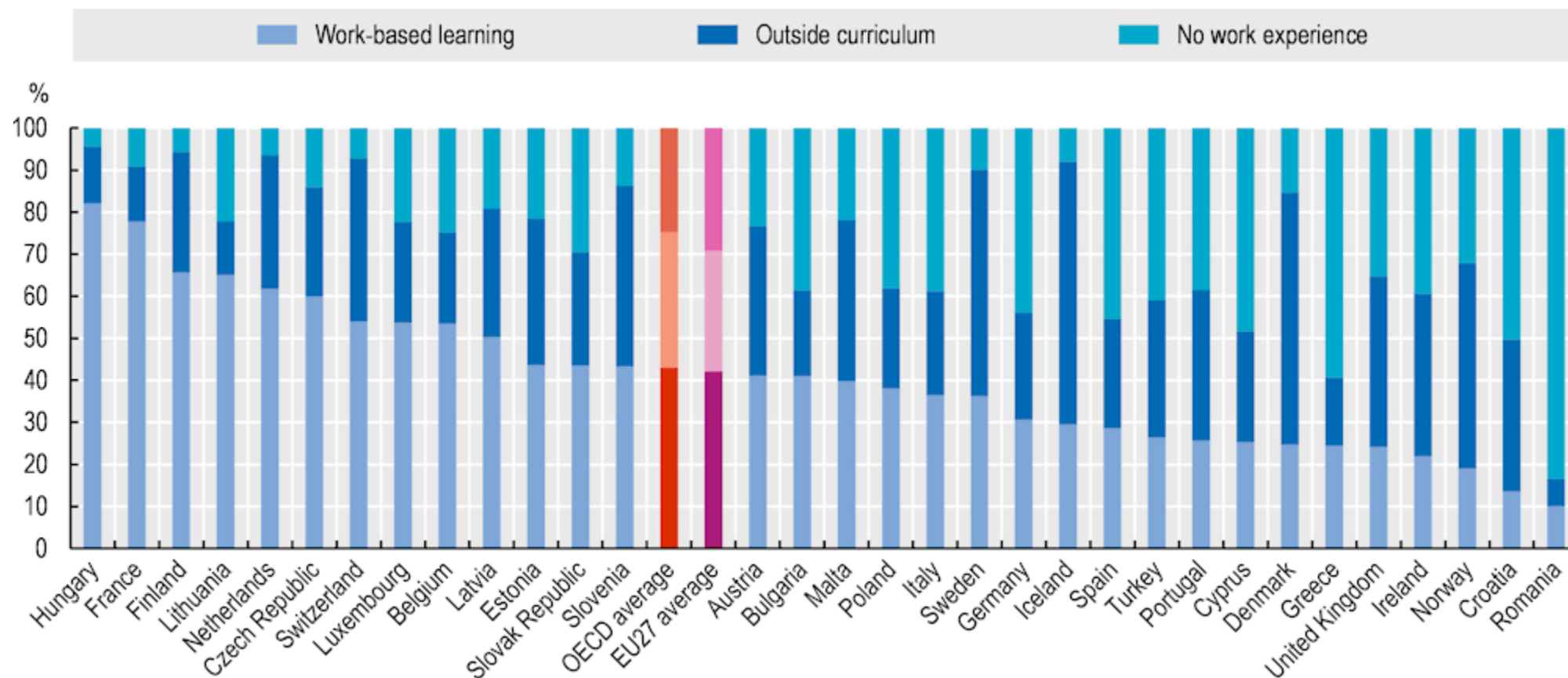**Distribution of students enrolled in upper secondary vocational programmes by type of work-based learning (2021)**

■ Apprenticeship ■ Long internship ■ Short internship ■ Optional work-based learning ■ No work-based learning

Source: OECD Education at a Glance 2023

Distribution of work experience during tertiary studies (2016)

Source: European Union Labour Force Survey ad hoc module on young people on the labour market (2016).

The use of work-based learning and apprenticeship in OECD countries

**Programmes at ISCED level 5 and 6 (professional) include at least 25% of work-based learning**

	Australia	Austria	Belgium (French Comm.)	Belgium (Flanders)	Canada	Chile	Colombia	Czechia	Denmark	England (UK)	France	Germany	Israel	Italy	Japan	Korea	Latvia	Luxembourg	Lithuania	Mexico	Netherlands	New Zealand	Norway	Poland	Portugal	Slovak Republic	Slovenia	Spain	Sweden	Switzerland	Türkiye	Brazil
ISCED 5	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Not all	Not all	No	No	Yes	Not all	Yes	Yes	Not all	Yes	No	No	No	Yes		No	No	Not all	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not all	Yes	No	Yes	
ISCED 6 (professional)			No	No	Not all	Not all		Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes			Yes	Not all	No		Yes		No						No			Yes		Not all

Apprenticeships starts in cyber security in England (United Kingdom), by level of qualification
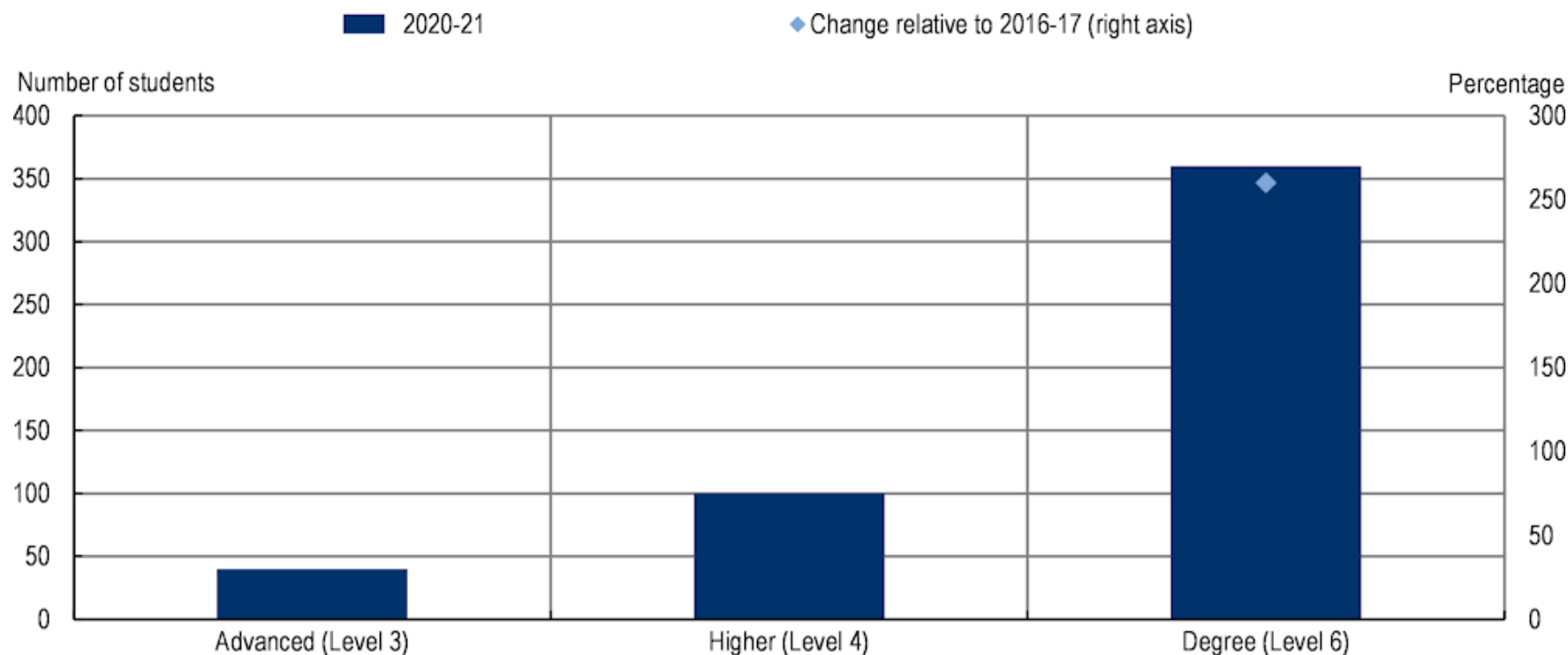
Note: Advanced and Higher apprenticeships in cyber security have only been on offer since 2018-19. The term 'starts' refer to number of new people starting an apprenticeship each year.
Source: OECD (2023), Building a Skilled Cyber Security Workforce in Five Countries: Insights from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, United Kingdom, and United States, https://doi.org/10.1787/5fd44e6c-en ; using data from UK Government (2022[74]), Education statistics: 'Subjects and levels - detailed series' from 'Apprenticeships and traineeships

Cedefop and OECD symposium

Apprenticeships and the digital transition

15 and 16 June 2023
Cedefop, Thessaloniki

#DigitalApprenticeships
#ApprenEU

> Evidence on programmes in sectors such as software development, data science, user experience design, and cybersecurity

> Apprenticeship seen as a strategy to cover acute skill gaps

> Digital sectors attractive to learners, including adult learners

> Getting all the relevant players around the table essential for understanding changing skill needs and for jointly deciding what to train in the form of apprenticeships.

> Importance of strong link between VET providers and employers underlined

> New apprenticeships in these sectors sometimes follow an open market approach that challenges how apprenticeships work – but actors often intend to back up the new provision with fitting frameworks and pedagogies
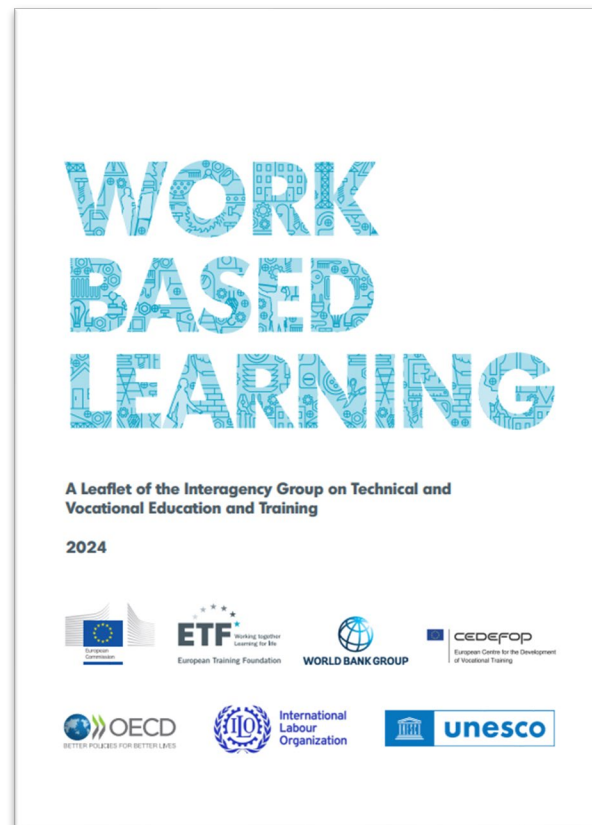
WHAT IS WORK-BASED LEARNING?

Work-based learning (WBL) refers to all forms of learning that occur in a real work environment. It equips individuals with the skills necessary to obtain, maintain and advance in their jobs and professional development. Common types of work-based learning include apprenticeships, internships, traineeships and on-the-job training. These often, but not always, combine workplace learning with classroom-based education.

Apprenticeships are a key type of work-based learning, designed to develop occupational skills and lead to **recognised** qualifications. They **combine school-based learning with workplace learning**, with the latter typically accounting for a **significant proportion** (e.g. 50%) of the programme duration. This combination can vary in format, such as weekly rotations or extended block phases.

Apprentices often have an **employment agreement**, receive **renumeration**, and hold the status of **employees**. However, there are some apprenticeship programmes in which learners havestudent status, at least at the beginning of the programme and during the school phases.

WORK BASED LEARNING

A Leaflet of the Interagency Group on Technical and Vocational Education and Training

2024

European Commission · ETF Working together Learning for life · WORLD BANK GROUP · CEDEFOP European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

OECD BETTER POLICIES FOR BETTER LIVES · ILO International Labour Organization · unesco

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