



2021 joint Cedefop/OECD symposium: *Apprenticeships for greener economies and societies*

Virtual event, 21 and 22 October 2021

Call for papers

To be presented at the symposium and/or included in a joint Cedefop/OECD publication

Deadline for submitting abstracts: 3 May 2021

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[Call for papers in pdf](#)

■ RATIONALE

The joint Cedefop/OECD symposium on apprenticeship brings together policy-makers, practitioners and researchers from around the world to consider new research or analysis of practices exploring the links between apprenticeships and the transition towards greener economies and societies, as well as the implications for policy-making.

After a period of relative neglect in many countries, the past decade has witnessed a revival of apprenticeships, in recognition of their effectiveness in easing school-to-work transitions, but also increasingly because of their particular potential for developing skills closely tied to labour market needs.

The transition to a green economy and society aims at mitigating the environmental impact of human activity, including investment in environmentally friendly technologies, better waste management and land use, and changes in production, consumption and behaviour patterns, among others. Ambitious climate change mitigation policies are not only good for the environment, but also for jobs. The OECD's 2020 [Ministerial Council Statement](#) highlights that OECD country recovery plans will boost growth, incomes and employment while promoting cleaner and more sustainable economies.

These changes have implications for preparing, reskilling and upskilling the workforce. Both the [Paris Agreement](#) and the [European Green Deal](#) (EGD) – the EU growth strategy – recognise that skills development is an indispensable pillar for the transition. Possessing the right set of skills will be essential in supporting worker mobility from sectors and jobs with declining employment – for example the oil and gas, agriculture, aviation and tourism sectors – to sectors such as renewable energy industries, where job opportunities rise rapidly; it will also be essential in creating a qualified workforce in the long term in a greener labour market. Apprenticeships can provide opportunities to develop the right skills for the green transition, both for young people in initial education and for adults in need of upskilling or reskilling.

In this context, the symposium organisers would welcome contributions on apprenticeships and the green transition within the following broad areas:

Creating new green apprenticeship programmes

In view of the green transition, apprenticeships will have to be developed in new sectors or occupations, and, most likely, also at education levels higher than upper secondary VET. Defining the core content of each apprenticeship programme requires considering the needs of a diverse group of stakeholders.

Undertaking surveys to measure the costs and benefits of apprenticeships for employers in new green sectors can provide empirical evidence to inform policy-making. Trade unions can usefully balance the influence of employers and champion interest in transferable skills. Guidance practitioners may be given a role to promote and raise awareness of apprenticeships in sectors or occupations driving the green transition.

Types of papers the organisers are looking for:

The following questions could be of interest: What would the characteristics of new 'green occupations' be and why would apprenticeships be the 'appropriate' educational and training track to train the workforce for these occupations? On what basis, and on whose input do apprenticeships emerge in new green sectors? How can stakeholders (e.g. social partners and professional bodies) become engaged in designing and implementing apprenticeships in new sectors? How can apprenticeships be best designed for emerging green sectors or occupations (e.g. choices concerning wages, duration and funding, how to ensure sufficient interest of learners and employers, how to ensure students have access to new technologies, how to ensure teachers/trainers have the right skills)? Does the emergence of new apprenticeships in green sectors and occupations lead to expansion of apprenticeships at education levels higher than upper secondary? How do apprenticeships compete with alternative learning pathways in those sectors/for those occupations (e.g. school-based programmes, post-secondary or tertiary education)?

Adapting existing apprenticeship programmes for a greener economy and society

Apprenticeship programmes themselves are changing in light of the green transition. In addition to specific emerging technical skills, they need to cultivate broader skills, especially basic and soft skills, to prepare resilient learners who are well-placed to navigate greener economies and societies. Consultations need to be organised with stakeholders to understand how the green transition will impact the existing apprenticeships, and mechanisms need to be designed to ensure that programmes and curricula are updated.

Types of papers the organisers are looking for:

The following questions could be of interest: Which are the green transversal skills that will need to be integrated into all apprenticeship programmes to ensure that people adapt to greener ways of working and living? What needs to change in existing programmes in the way green technical skills are developed at school and in the workplace? Will such changes affect the level at which programmes should be offered? How can stakeholders be engaged in updating the content of existing programmes? How can such mechanisms be built into governance and institutional arrangements? How can the skills and knowledge of teachers and trainers in apprenticeship programmes be updated to adapt to the green transition? What pedagogies and technologies can be used to this end? How can employers already participating in apprenticeships be supported to cope with or embrace such emerging changes?

Green apprenticeships for upskilling and reskilling adults

Transition to greener economies means that some will be left with skills that are no longer needed, and not all will find opportunities to retrain. Apprenticeships may play a role in reallocating workers from declining to growing sectors or occupations, as many countries are increasingly using or considering using apprenticeships as a way to upskill or reskill adults. More research is needed on the requirements and conditions necessary to offer sustainable and accessible quality apprenticeships for adults that contribute to achieving a just green transition.

Types of papers the organisers are looking for:

The following questions could be of interest: which roles can apprenticeships play in making the reallocation of workers from declining to growing sectors or occupations just for all stakeholders involved? In which ways can they help reduce the adjustment costs borne by displaced workers? Should specific sectors or occupations be prioritised in apprenticeship offering? If so, which criteria would such prioritisation be based on, so that apprenticeship's specific features as a distinct type of learning are better put to use? How do we ensure that disadvantaged adults are not left out in the green transition?

How do we ensure that both men and women are equally well-prepared for the shift to a greener economy and society?

Eco-innovation and the diffusion of green technologies

Apprenticeships, building on systematic interaction between two types of learning (work- and school-based) and on participatory governance that brings together various stakeholders, may give rise to positive spill-overs from one learning venue to another and between stakeholders, in terms of technology diffusion, for example.

Types of papers the organisers are looking for:

The following questions could be of interest: How can eco-innovation be supported through apprenticeship? How can the alternation between learning in the workplace and in education institutions help the adoption and diffusion of green technologies? How can apprenticeship policies and innovation initiatives be linked? How can stakeholders in the apprenticeship system exchange technologies and practices to accelerate eco-innovation at policy-making level? Can apprenticeship support cross-sectoral approaches to foster green innovation across value chains, rather than within specific types of employers or specific sectors?

Apprenticeship in the ecosystem of green transition

Policy interest in linking apprenticeships with the green transition should take into consideration that apprenticeship is a distinct type of learning, different from other types of school-based VET or other forms of work-based learning. All the links described in previous areas can be better understood if they build on the specific features that apprenticeship, as a system, brings to the table. Moreover, apprenticeship needs to be articulated with regard to the adjacent policy spheres (e.g. industrial policies, growth and innovation policies, higher education policies, etc.) in a structured, strategic and sustainable way.

Types of papers the organisers are looking for:

The following questions could be of interest: What could the place of apprenticeships be in the landscape of a green transition from a systemic point of view? What are its links to adjacent policy spheres and systems? What institutional arrangements between these systems and apprenticeship can enable its strategic, systematic contribution to a green transition? What changes in governance are needed to give apprenticeship a leading role in the transformation to greener economies and societies? Which features of apprenticeship systems represent points of strength in promoting green transition, compared to other forms of VET?

■ ABSTRACTS SUBMISSION

Academics, researchers, experts, policy officials, professionals in fields relevant to the call, worker and employer representatives interested in the topics above are invited to submit the following using the [abstract submission form](#):

- an abstract (600-800 words max) of their proposed paper in English;
- contact and professional details, including current affiliation and position and, if relevant, main publications;

The form should be submitted by 3 May 2021 only via email to apprenticeship-team@cedefop.europa.eu.

By submitting their abstracts, authors/authoring teams acknowledge that if accepted, their papers can be included in the joint Cedefop/OECD publication. Some of the accepted papers may also be presented during the symposium, depending on its duration/agenda.

Authors/authoring teams are asked to read the [Privacy statement](#) that describes processing of personal data in the context of this call.

■ DRAFT FULL PAPER SUBMISSION

A Cedefop/OECD panel will consider submitted abstracts, and select by 20 May 2021 those most suitable for the symposium and the subsequent dedicated publication according to the following criteria:

- (a) relevance to the scope and aim of the call and/or policy relevance;
- (b) proposed evidence basis;
- (c) methodology and analytical approach; and
- (d) appeal to an international audience.

Authors of accepted abstracts will be asked to submit a draft full paper by 23 July 2021, based on paper guidelines that will be communicated by Cedefop/OECD. Draft full papers are expected to be in the area of 5 000 words (including references).

■ PRESENTATION AND PUBLICATION

Selected papers that meet the quality criteria set out in the paper guidelines will be considered for inclusion in a joint Cedefop/OECD publication. The publication will be finalised after the symposium and made available under [CC-BY IGO 3.0 licence](#). Authors will retain copyrights to the submitted papers and will be cited as authors of their respective chapters in the publication while Cedefop and the OECD will be cited as institutional authors and will hold the copyright of the Cedefop/OECD joint publication. Authors of selected papers shall warrant that all necessary authorisations have been obtained from third-party holders of copyright, related rights and intellectual property rights of any third-party content included in their papers.

On the basis of this information, authors of selected papers will be asked to grant the rights needed to allow Cedefop and the OECD to edit, publish and distribute the papers. Ahead of the publication Cedefop and the OECD will provide authors with feedback on the full papers submitted.

Some of the accepted papers will be presented during the event, depending on its duration and agenda. For this purpose, authors will also be asked to submit a draft presentation by 30 September 2021, based on presentation guidelines that will be communicated by Cedefop/OECD. Cedefop and the OECD will review the papers and presentations and provide a first round of comments on both, ahead of the symposium.

■ TIMELINE

Deadline for abstracts	3 May 2021
Announcement of accepted abstracts	20 May 2021
Deadline for draft full papers of accepted abstracts	23 July 2021
Deadline for draft symposium presentations	30 September 2021
Symposium	21 and 22 October 2021
Deadline for final full papers	January 2022
Estimated publication date	July 2022

■ CONTACT

For more information please visit the [event page](#) or contact apprenticeship-team@cedefop.europa.eu

About Cedefop

Cedefop is one of the EU's decentralised agencies. Its mission is to support the promotion, development and implementation of EU policies in the fields of **vocational education and training, skills, and qualifications** by working together with the European Commission, the Member States and the social partners.

Cedefop work on apprenticeships

Within the EU policy framework, Cedefop carries out activities across countries and within single Member States to provide evidence to support policy-making at the EU and national levels and to support European cooperation on apprenticeships among Member States. Since 2014, Cedefop has carried out [Thematic country reviews on apprenticeships](#) in nine countries. With dedicated [policy learning forums](#) Cedefop supports countries in exchanging and generating knowledge on apprenticeships to take their reforms and policies further. In 2018, to strengthen and expand the knowledge on apprenticeships in Europe, Cedefop published the [European database on apprenticeship scheme](#) and set up [Cedefop's community of apprenticeship experts](#). Cedefop's [EU wide comparative study on apprenticeship schemes](#) provides a mapping and comparative analysis of system level apprenticeships which share selected common criteria. Cedefop recently finalised a study on [apprenticeships for adults](#) and one on long-term cross-country mobility of apprentices. Cedefop is currently carrying out analyses on [quality and effectiveness](#) of apprenticeships.

About the OECD

The mission of the OECD is to promote policies that will improve the economic and social wellbeing of people around the world. The Organisation works with partners, in particular 36 member countries, to share experiences and seek effective solutions to common problems.

OECD work on apprenticeships

Over the past decade, the OECD has undertaken considerable work on vocational education and training (VET). The OECD VET team in the Centre for Skills has been responsible for more than 50 reviews of national VET policy (www.oecd.org/edu/vet). Insights from country studies have informed a series of cross-national thematic studies exploring the characteristics of effective policy on VET, including [Learning for jobs](#) (2010), [Skills beyond school](#) (2014) and, in 2018, [Seven questions about apprenticeships: answers from international experience](#). The last study drew on national experience to conceptualise and evidence effective apprenticeship design, exploring key questions, such as whether employers should receive financial incentives to take on apprentices, how long apprenticeships should last, and how apprenticeships can best be designed to meet the needs of young people at risk of poor outcomes. Recent country reviews with a strong focus on apprenticeship provision include reviews of [England](#) (2018), [Israel](#) (2018) and [Scotland](#) (2020). The OECD also fosters the development and collection of more and better data and indicators on VET and apprenticeships. The working paper [Improving evidence on VET: comparative data and indicators](#) (2020) identified key data gaps in the area of apprenticeships and set out proposals for better definitions and data collection.

Joint Cedefop/OECD work on apprenticeships

In 2019, Cedefop and the OECD organised a [joint symposium on 'The next steps for apprenticeship'](#). The subsequent [joint publication](#) on the same topic offered insights from 16 papers by researchers from Europe, Australia and the United States on the future of apprenticeship from the perspective of emerging policy objectives, new approaches to education and training and external megatrends (e.g. sociodemographic changes, the accelerated adoption of emerging technologies and new forms of work organisation).

Joint Cedefop/OECD work on green skills

The [2014 OECD-LEED/Cedefop Green skills forum](#) focused on 'green skills and innovation for inclusive employment growth'. It resulted in a [joint publication](#) identifying obstacles and challenges for the development of skills to address the transition to greener and job-rich growth, and contributing to setting out strategies, initiatives and policy approaches in this direction.