



GOVERNANCE AND FINANCING OF APPRENTICESHIPS

Brussels, 8 and 9 February 2016

CEDEFOP EVENT

BACKGROUND NOTE

OBJECTIVES

The first objective of this event is to **present and debate the findings of Cedefop's project 'Governance and financing of apprenticeships'** carried out in Italy, Latvia, Portugal, Spain and Sweden from November 2013 to June 2015.

The project was designed as an **action research** with national stakeholders actively involved: representatives of governments, employers, employees, training providers and independent experts participated in a series of workshops to assess current apprenticeship/VET governance structures and financing arrangements in each country and discuss alternative scenarios for developing quality apprenticeships.

The second objective is to **identify and discuss countries' current challenges** in the area of governance and financing of apprenticeships **and need for further support to develop apprenticeships**.

The third objective is to **share information on actions** already taken or in progress **for quality apprenticeships at EU and international levels**.

Aimed at **policy learning**, this event will provide participants with an opportunity to:

- learn about and discuss the results of Cedefop's analysis (findings from five countries);
- share project experiences;
- become familiar with methods and tools, elaborated during the project, for evaluative assessment of governance structures and financing arrangements for high-quality and sustainable apprenticeships;
- exchange information on recent and planned policy and research developments in governance and financing of apprenticeships;
- reflect on the way forward: identify information gaps, country challenges and need for further support (by Cedefop) in governance and financing of apprenticeships, and share ideas on potential tools for research and policy implementation.

The event will bring together **national stakeholders** from the five EU Member States that participated in the project and from other countries, as well as **representatives of EU and international institutions**: the European Commission, European social partners, the European Training Foundation (ETF) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO).



STRUCTURE

The **first day** will start with a presentation of Cedefop's project 'Governance and financing of apprenticeships': the project topic, its goals, methodology and main outcomes.

This will be followed by the first panel session 'The project in national contexts', when the national coordinators of the five countries covered by the study (Italy, Latvia, Portugal, Spain and Sweden) will present the state of play of apprenticeship/VET systems at the time the project started, by highlighting the socioeconomic and political challenges of the time, and how these evolved as the project developed. Moreover, this session aims at sharing each country's experience in the project implementation, in particular in relation to bringing together national stakeholders and involving them in debates.

During the second panel session, 'Visions and strategies for apprenticeship development', representatives of the relevant ministries (of education or labour) and national institutions for VET will be invited to present current and future actions regarding their apprenticeship systems, reflecting on country-specific visions and strategies elaborated within the project. This will also be an opportunity for an initial impact assessment of Cedefop's project on national developments on apprenticeships at legal, policy and practical levels.

An open discussion with all stakeholders will follow. Representatives of social partners, training providers, research organisations from the five countries concerned, as well as stakeholders from other countries and EU/international organisations, will be invited to contribute to the debate.

The **second day** of the event will start with three parallel working groups, dedicated to the follow-up of Cedefop's project.

Discussions in the working group on (a) 'research methodology' will focus on the methodology designed and used for Cedefop's project 'Governance and financing of apprenticeship'. The workshop will start with a presentation to explain the study's research methodology in more detail: the theoretical framework, main concepts, action research method and research tools applied. This includes a tool for assessing governance structure and financing arrangements, guidelines for organising stakeholder workshops, methods for elaborating visions or scenarios, as well as the so-called governance equalizer, which illustrates countries' governance conditions along six dimensions. Project contributors will be invited to share their experiences with the tools and, together with workshop participants, reflect on what could be improved: what the main challenges in implementing the project were; how useful the developed tools and methods were; what their limitations are; how they could be further developed.

The two working groups on (b) 'governance of apprenticeships' and on (c) 'financing of apprenticeships' should identify information gaps, country challenges, need for further support and, accordingly, type of support, by whom and at which level (European/national/local). Each working group will start with short presentations, which will provide input for discussion.

The working group on 'governance of apprenticeships' will start with the Lithuanian country example to illustrate Cedefop's 'thematic country review on apprenticeships' approach, a form of support provided by Cedefop to countries undertaking reforms of



their apprenticeship systems or on their way to develop such systems, following a request from the relevant national authorities. The presentation will be a reflection on the process and content of the review in Lithuania carried out in 2014-15, and will also briefly outline policy developments after the review, especially a recently developed initial action plan for apprenticeship. The second presentation will be devoted to the EC-ILO technical cooperation project on apprenticeship programmes in Latvia, Portugal and Spain, and the ILO approach for working with the countries, including the ILO toolkit on quality apprenticeships currently being developed.

The working group on 'financing of apprenticeships' will begin with a presentation of results of a Bertelsmann Foundation study, simulating ex ante the costs and benefits of apprenticeship training for companies in a country with no apprenticeship tradition. This pioneering simulation exercise was carried out for Spain. The study provides evidence which may help to overcome a major challenge countries face: reluctance of companies to engage in apprenticeship. The second intervention will discuss direct and latent costs, returns on investment and benefits for companies, apprentices and the government; it will include country studies from ILO experience worldwide. Lastly, the participants will be informed about recently launched EC-OECD project on costs and benefits of apprenticeship. The project will examine the evidence on costs and benefits for employers, learners and society at large.

Discussions in small groups will follow the presentations. The outcomes of the working groups will be reported in the plenary session.

The concluding panel will bring together institutional voices at European and international levels. Speakers will report on actions taken or coordinated by their organisations – including research activities – at European and international levels to develop quality apprenticeships (with focus on governance and financing of apprenticeship). In doing so, they are invited to refer to the outcomes of the discussions held in the working groups, in particular (b) and (c), to frame or address the identified information gaps, country challenges and need for further support to develop apprenticeships.

Cedefop will provide conclusions and input for the way forward.