

INTELLECTUAL OUTPUT 1

In-depth Transnational Research Study and Analysis on professional roles and challenges of apprenticeship schemes in Europe, concerning: Policies, Systems, Competency Standards and Good Practice

Executive summary

Erasmus+ Project

Elaborated by the Rzeszow Regional Development Agency

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Introduction

The Report called In-depth Transnational Research Study and Analysis on professional roles and challenges of apprenticeship schemes in Europe regarding policies, systems, competence standards and good practices was created as part of the MASTERS project. Partners from four European countries and regions took part in its creation, presenting the approaches of individual countries in this topic.

The goal of the analysis was to assess the current stage of development of apprenticeship models in the partner countries, key drivers of change arising from EC Proposal on a European Framework for Quality and Effective apprenticeships (2017), the European Alliance for Apprenticeship (2013), Europe 2020, ET2020 and national economic development strategies and inclusive VET/ ALM policies, and how these are actually, or potentially, shaping the role of in-company tutors, as they are altering (trends) and adapting to the new market conditions in the VET and ALMP sector.

1. Desk Research

The first chapter concerns existing research, policy analyses, and individual countries' approaches to the apprenticeship system. The first chapter shows that despite many differences in the concepts, requirements, criteria and principles of apprenticeships, they play an extremely important role in preparing especially young people for entering the labour market, increasing competitiveness and employers required by qualifications. The principles, problems and benefits indicated in the reports of individual partners show the importance of developing the apprenticeships system that meets the needs of the modern economy in recent years. Individual parts of the first chapter relate to basic issues regarding apprenticeship schemes in project partners' countries, drivers from the EC Proposal, benefits of organizing apprenticeship and the participation of both interns and entrepreneurs, the development and training of interns and their supervisors, as well as accreditation and certification in individual countries.

2. Primary Research

The second part of the report presents the results of primary research conducted in 4 countries among all Partners of the MASTERS Project with all the key stakeholders involved in apprenticeship programmes: VET educators, job counsellors and potential or effective in-company tutors.

The research was conducted using an interview questionnaire consisting of two parts. In the first part, the respondents answered the questions about their position (VET educator, Job counsellors,

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Potential or effective in-company tutors) and place of work (private company, public institution or as entrepreneur). In the second part, the respondents provided answers in the following areas.

- Assessment of the functioning of apprenticeship systems in the partners' countries.
- The benefits of using apprenticeship during education and after finishing education.
- The level of motivation of participants applying for an apprenticeship.
- Respondents' experience related to apprenticeships and the stage at which participants need support.
- The possibility for the respondents to raise their qualifications in their country.
- The necessary qualifications and skills in a given position.
- The factors which could improve the quality and interest in apprenticeship.
- The assessment of the level of satisfaction with cooperation with institutions receiving interns or institutions sending interns (depending on the position).
- The role / tasks in the apprenticeship system.
- The form of support for the entrepreneur undertaking the apprenticeship.

3. Competency Standards

The third chapter of the report concerns the subject of professional competence standards. It contains descriptions of professional competences necessary to perform professional tasks included in the profession, accepted by representatives of industries and professional organizations, employers, employees and other key social partners.

The development of professional qualification standards for individual professions is carried out in the partners' countries at different levels and to a different extent. Competences for each key professional task are described in three categories: skills, knowledge and social competences.

- Job counsellors support children, young people and adults in making the right educational and professional choices, and support lifelong professional development. In their activities, they use individual and group working methods conducive to determining personal potential, taking into account the current and forecasted needs of the labour market and education.

At present, first or second degree higher education is required to work as a career advisor, while in the educational system (e.g. at school), having higher education, including pedagogical preparation, is an obligatory requirement.

An employee in the profession of a vocational counsellor should have the social competences necessary for the proper and effective performance of professional tasks. In particular, taking responsibility for the effects of undertaken actions related to the performed social role, what

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includes stimulating motivation and continuous development of the individual in the context of educational and / or professional choices, stimulating creative attitudes towards reality and changes in life. Moreover, improving own competences in the scope of performed professional tasks assigned to a vocational counsellor, including new regulations, trends, processes and theories regarding the area of career advisory.

- Vocational education and training (VET) trainers should be understood as trainers teaching vocational subjects and practical vocational training instructors. They conduct didactic and educational classes with young people in factory schools and classes in workshops educating skilled workers and technicians; teach practical vocational subjects to develop students' professional skills included in graduate qualification characteristics and curricula.

When it comes to subject qualifications for teaching vocational subjects, they must have a master's degree diploma – first or second degree, although teachers employed in basic vocational schools should have completed at least first degree studies. However, in addition to the subject studies themselves, these trainers must have pedagogical preparation.

Teacher social competences include i.e.: providing students with practical knowledge of the subject being taught - the goal is for students to acquire practical skills in the chosen profession; developing independent thinking skills and implementing them into independent and systematic work.

- In-company tutors / personal teachers / tutors of apprentices, interns - help the client to make changes in personal or professional development and in achieving the goals set up by them. They also support the process of change in all areas of life, uncover the untapped potential of man in individual and group sessions, as well as arouse motivation and encourage action. Together with the client, they can find effective solutions to identified problems and ways to achieve the client's goals.

In order to work in the profession of a personal trainer (coach, mentor, tutor), higher education, preferably in the field of social sciences, is preferred. Higher education is not required in accreditation procedures, however, it is included in the required period of professional practice necessary to obtain accreditation.

Among social competences that an employee should have in the profession of a personal trainer (trainer, mentor, guardian) should be mentioned, i.a. compliance with the principles of integrity, reliability, confidentiality and the prevention of conflicts of interest in the service provided in ethical and professional standards; accepting responsibility for the social role they perform, in particular in the context of influencing the attitudes related to the need for continuous development (lifelong learning), and openness to new solutions that are the basis for the professional and personal development of clients.

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4. Good Practices

The fourth chapter contains good examples from each partner country on professional roles and challenges of apprenticeship schemes in Europe. In Romania vocational education and training includes activities, from short courses to long-term programs, carried out with the purpose of providing an active person's knowledge, skills, competencies that are required in the workplace, recognized or not in a formal context. Over the past few years, in Spain, entrepreneurs, local governments, associations and the science sector have started to use apprenticeships as a good way to participate in the training and education of future employees.

The Italian example shows the importance of mentoring and the role of a company tutor / trainer in the apprenticeship system. The company tutor / trainer has a fundamental role for the success of the apprenticeship in terms of training value, since he / she is responsible for giving substance to the value of the company as an educational place, ensuring the necessary coordination activities with the promoter. The tutor also has the task of constantly assisting the apprentice in the workplace, guaranteeing continuous supervision of all the activities envisaged in the training project.

Polish good practices concern the hosting and sending tutor's role in developing successful apprenticeship schemes. These projects aim at activating young people to take up jobs, gain practical skills, improve competences and experience, and prepare trainers for training others in the field of educational and vocational guidance.

5. Bibliographical References

The last chapter contains 70 bibliographic references used by partners during preparation of the report.