



EDUWORK.NET

Agreement Number: 609096

Project Number: 609096-EPP-1-2019-1-IT-EPPKA3-VET-NETPAR

Context study report

Work based learning and apprenticeship in Italy, Spain, Greece, Lithuania, UK and Ireland



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

Project Consortium

Ciofs-FP (Italy)

Lithuanian Association of Training Centres (Lithuania)

CECE (Spain)

FORMA (Italy)

RINOVA LTD (United Kingdom)

CDETБ (Ireland)

PANNEDIEK (Greece)

ASSOLOMBARDA (Italy)

CONFARTIGIANATO LOMBARDIA (Italy)

LESTU (Lithuania)

VAVM (Lithuania)

INDEX

Introduction	5
Research Design Plan and Methodology	6
Objectives	6
Target Groups	7
Research Plan and Methodology	7
Qualitative research	7
Quantitative research	7
Analysis of the research	8
Research Design	8
Structure of National Chapters	9
Field Research	10
PART I	11
National Context and Good Practices	11
LITHUANIA	11
Current Legal context for WBL	11
Companies/Educational centres – apprenticeship implementation and development	16
Case Study: Visaginas Technology and Business VET	19
ITALY	22
Current context for WBL	22
Companies/Educational centres – WBL implementation and development	23
Case Study – FORMA Association	24
IRELAND	26
Current context for WBL	26
Companies/Educational centres – WBL implementation and development	27
Case Study 1. Apprenticeship: Ballsbridge College, Auctioneering and Property Services	
Apprenticeship	29
Case Study 2. Traineeship: Coláiste Dhúlaigh College of Further Education -Traineeship in	
Manufacturing, Supply Chain & Customer Service Logistics	30

<u>ENGLAND</u>	32
<u>Current context for WBL</u>	32
<u>Companies/Educational centres – WBL implementation and development</u>	33
<u>Case Study 1. Hilton Apprenticeship Academy (Hilton Worldwide, UK)</u>	34
<u>SPAIN</u>	39
<u>Current context for WBL</u>	39
<u>Companies/Educational centres – WBL implementation and development</u>	40
<u>Case Study: CIFASA</u>	41
<u>GREECE</u>	43
<u>Current context for WBL</u>	43
<u>Companies/Educational centres – WBL implementation and development</u>	44
<u>Case Study 1. Apprenticeship: Independent Power Transmission Operator</u>	45
<u>Case Study 2. Internship: Independent Power Transmission Operator</u>	47
<u>PART II –</u>	49
<u>INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUPS</u>	49
<u>ITALY</u>	49
<u>2.1. ITALY – Main Findings from the Interviews</u>	49
<u>2.2. ITALY – Main Findings from the Focus Group</u>	59
<u>IRELAND</u>	65
<u>2.3. Ireland – Main Findings from the Interviews</u>	65
<u>2.4 Ireland – Main Findings from the Focus Group</u>	72
<u>ENGLAND</u>	74
<u>2.5. ENGLAND – Main Findings from the Interviews</u>	74
<u>SPAIN</u>	85
<u>2.6. SPAIN – Main Findings from the Interviews</u>	85
<u>2.7. SPAIN – Main Findings from the focus group</u>	89
<u>GREECE</u>	91
<u>2.8. Greece– Main Findings from the Focus groups</u>	91
<u>CONCLUSIONS</u>	94

Introduction

Work-based learning (WBL) is an educational policy approach that help students with real-life work experiences, where they can apply academic and technical skills and develop their employability and their professional skillset.

In the European context, the European Council has agreed that all Member States must growth the number of apprenticeships and traineeships opportunities in their countries to ensure that they represent a real opportunity for young citizens, integrating these programmes into the educational curriculum. In cooperation with the programme social partners, this form of education and development has a direct relation with the goals of increasing economic competitiveness, as well as improving individual's employability.

By 2012, all European Member States and social partners committed themselves (in the *Bruges Communiqué*) in the European agenda for cooperation in vocational education and training (VET), to include work-based learning in all initial VET courses. As mentioned in the Rethinking Education Communication and the Youth Employment Package, the value of VET – and notably of dual training systems - in facilitating youth employment is clearly acknowledged.

Part of the solution can be found in high quality vocational education and training (VET) systems, in which the active participation of employers and the element of work-based learning simplify young people's transition to work by providing the knowledge, skills and skills which they need for an effective first step into the labour market. Countries with strong and attractive VET systems, and notably those with well-established apprenticeship systems, tend overall to perform better in terms of youth employment.

Since the application and the outcomes of these programmes has been positively growing in Europe, the current project aims to increase outreach and quality of services, establish new structures, facilities and mechanisms and to enhancing transnational cooperation. VET providers and SMEs will be reached outside the partnership and will benefit from capacity building, developing their internationalization and work-based mobilities.

The general aim of Eduwork.Net is to strengthen cooperation between Vocational Education and Training (VET) providers' associations and networks, established at regional, national and European level and stakeholder organisations of the labour market.

Research Design Plan and Methodology

Objectives

The Eduwork.Net project aims at building networks and partnerships of Vocational Education and Training (VET) providers and the world of work, at regional, national and European level. It builds capacity at grass roots level for the effective implementation of national and European policies for work-based learning, apprenticeships and supports VET providers to organise VET students' mobilities abroad.

Specifically, the project aims at establishing a network of VET providers and facilitate exchange of knowledge, feedback and experience of policy implementation, sharing of best practices on VET excellence, improve quality of VET provision and linkage with the needs of the labour market, enhance impact and relevance of VET provision for both learners and employers and supporting transnational mobility of VET students for work placements, implementing the European VET policies for transfer and recognition of learning outcomes and using ECVET.

Regarding the Work Package 1, the main objectives are:

- To make all the necessary preparation for designing and managing apprenticeships, as far as context study is concerned.
- To create an interconnection between learning outcomes and labour market.
- To track VET students and interview them.
- To list their background in order for the apprenticeships to be as efficient as possible.
- To build an interconnection between learning outcomes and work placements.

Target Groups

The main target groups of this project are:

- VET providers of all levels in the involved countries
- Employers and companies
- Policy makers
- Experts and practitioners in VET (managers of VET institutions, teachers, trainers, administrative staff and mentors)

Research Plan and Methodology

This research makes use of qualitative and quantitative research strategy to balance the use of all the information available and try to avoid any potential biases.

Qualitative research

Descriptive in nature, because it generally deals with non-numerical and unquantifiable things. Qualitative research methods are designed in a manner that they help reveal the behaviour and perception of a target audience with reference to a particular topic. Data will be gathered in multiple forms, such as interviews, observations, and documents, it will not rely on only one source.

Quantitative research

Will be the numbers-driven part of the research. The emphasis is on the collection of numerical data. The conclusion then makes inferences based on that data. Quantitative research is defined as a systematic investigation of phenomena by gathering quantifiable data and performing statistical analysis. Quantitative research collects information from existing and potential targets using sampling methods and sending out surveys, where the results can be depicted in numerical form. After careful understanding of these numbers, we will be able to understand if this research is objective. The results achieved from this research method should be logical, statistical, and, to the maximum possible extent, unbiased.

Analysis of the research

For the analysis of the research of each partner and the consecution of a common model, we will do a causal-comparative research method. This research method will depend on the factor of comparison, which will ideally conclude cause-effect relation it exists in each country and what differs between them.

We believe it is important to have the two types of data in the research, qualitative and quantitative, because we believe the thematic requests it. For creating a coherent and complete context study we have to take into account both objective and subjective data. However, the two types of research will be clearly differentiated to have a coherent and concise conclusion for each topic we describe.

Research Design

The research will take the following form:

- Introduction

An introduction about the research objectives and methodology used for the development of the national and consortium contexts)

- National Context and Good Practices (1 chapter per partner country)

- Summarized Results

The results of each partner country will be summarized and clearly stated to give a clear and simplified version of all the recollected data and findings. The results here will be compared between countries.

- Conclusions and Recommendations

Structure of National Chapters

Each National Chapter will include:

Desk Research

Which will be divided in two parts:

Mapping of work-based learning and apprenticeship – legislation and policy

This part of the desk research will consist on:

- The VET context in the partners' country.
- The current legal context for WBL in the partners' country.
- Regulatory framework: the model where and how an WBL experience can take place.
 - o Written agreement: type of agreement that officialises the apprenticeship
 - o Information on the relationship between the type of qualification/professional profile and WBL contracts.

- Pathways and mobility: Definition of Learning Outcomes, insertion in a national qualification framework (include reference to the EQF). Type of access to other learning opportunities.
 - Social protection: the legal rights the trainee has while doing the apprenticeship
 - Design of the apprenticeship: who are the general decision makers when it comes to the design of the apprenticeship?
 - Internationalisation in VET: What framework is put into place to promote and potentiate WBL apprenticeships? Are there any relevant provisions?
- Companies/Educational centres – apprenticeship implementation and development

Case study of one VET provider

This part of the desk research will include a case study that covers the:

- Cooperation with companies
- Quality assurance practices and the “quality culture” of the organisation
- Transnational cooperation – organisation of mobility projects for VET students.

Field Research

Partners countries will carry out 4 interviews and 1 focus group each. Stakeholders to be interviewed are VET students (focus group of 10 students), SMEs and VET providers (interviews), in order to record the needs of the labour market and to work on real-life experiences. Regarding the Field Research, it will be divided in two main parts:

Focus Groups

Focus groups are a useful tool for additional data in research. Focus group research is useful for issues identification, and to determine areas needing further research such as soft skills. Participants usually bring up more issues and concerns outside the prepared question path. Focus group organizers involve a group setting where the group has common shared experiences and allow stimulation of interaction among group participants.

The aims of the focus groups are:

- To define an ideal WBL scenario;

- To gain information on the different WBL experiences, pros and cons, things that were done badly, things that we done well;
- To gain information on the involvement of the student in his/her WBL experience (logistics, decision power, feedback, quality assurance, evaluations);

Interviews

A series of interviews, using a mix between structured and unstructured interview. We have a set of predetermined questions and a standardised technique of recording (voice recording). We would add flexibility in questions that might arise and give freedom to the interviewee in order to collect potentially valuable information.

The aim of the interviews will be:

- To understand the ideal WBL scenario for VET providers and Businesses;
- To gain information on the different WBL experiences, pros and cons, things that were done badly, things that we done well from the VET providers and Businesses;
- To gain information on the involvement of the organization in the WBL experience (logistics, decision power, feedback, quality assurance, evaluations);

PART I

National Context and Good Practices

LITHUANIA

Current Legal context for WBL

Apprenticeships were introduced to the public in 2013 in Lithuania while chairing the Council of the European Union (EU). Apprenticeship has become the priority of the National Education Strategy (2013-2022), the tool of the National Employment Program (2014-2020) and the National Reform Agenda (2014). In 2014 Memorandum on the implementation of the Youth Guarantee Initiative was signed with special attention to apprenticeship. In 2019 A Description of the Procedure for Organizing Vocational Training in the Form of Apprenticeship of the Republic of Lithuania was prepared and approved.

However, in 2019 only 3 percent of VET pupils were learning in the form of apprenticeship (target of 20% by 2020). It is obvious that apprenticeship in Lithuania has not yet established itself as a popular form of training and as clearly defined form of training. Apprenticeship is most successfully implemented among individuals who already have work experience, and apprenticeship is the way for them to gain formal qualification, improve existing qualification or retrain for another field of activity. This form is more understandable for employers, corresponds to the level of business maturity and involvement in the formation of the labour market.

The most successful proven apprenticeship programs have been in areas where the labour market in the region has experienced the greatest shortage of skilled workers. The experience of VET shows that employers is not the proactive link in this process when organizing apprenticeships (the reasons are various - lack of information and trust, fear of responsibility, etc.). In such a situation, the VET provider usually takes a pro-active search for apprenticeship partnerships with employers based on the experience already gained and the insights of the employers.

Challenges for the country.

In 2020, the number of VET students in the form of apprenticeship in Lithuania should reach 20%. According to the Center for Strategic Analysis of the Government, in 2019 this figure was only 3.1 percent. Prior to the Approval of the Description of the Organization of Apprenticeship in Lithuania (October 2019), there was no single institution or platform where it would be possible to find all the necessary information about the form of apprenticeship training regardless of the target group.

Lack of information and its access to employers. Employers are reluctant to invest much time in searching for information about apprenticeship. For this reason, companies are more inclined to choose traditional forms of training that are already clear. The organization and implementation of apprenticeship programs in Lithuania creates a lot of administrative work in companies. Employers who take apprenticeship programs for the first time face the great difficulties. As apprenticeship programs progress, companies gain experience and knowledge, and thus administrative costs fall.

Apprenticeship is effective and efficient only if all parties are able to reconcile the main aspects of apprenticeships (payment, schedule, apprentices' work and training time, training results, etc.) that satisfy all stakeholders. To date, employers in Lithuania lack financial incentives and assistance. The company needs both financial and human resources to prepare for the implementation of apprenticeship programs. Negative attitudes towards VET pose challenges to building quality partnerships between VET institutions, employers and future apprentices. The reluctance of employers to take responsibility for the education and training of individuals. This topic is most relevant for young people in vocational training with no work experience.

In Lithuania, and especially in the regions of the country, small and medium-sized businesses predominate. SMEs in Lithuania are not inclined to get involved in apprenticeship programs due to the existing costs and the specifics of the business.

Regulatory framework: The model where and how an apprenticeship can take place.

Vocational training in the form of an apprenticeship may be organized in accordance with a formal vocational training program or its module (s), registered in the Register of Studies, Training Programs and Qualifications. In Lithuania, apprenticeship takes place in business company and in VET provider institution. A VET provider holding a license entitling him to pursue the relevant formal vocational training program or module, shall carry out no more than 30% of the training time of the formal vocational training program or its module and the employer carries out the remaining part of the training time (70 %).

We have very well equipped Sectorial Practical Training Centres, belonging to VET provider institutions. According to the selected program, if the nearby business companies are not equipped with the modern, necessary technologies, apprentice may spend even more hours in the Sectorial Training Centre. Vocational training in the form of an apprenticeship may, depending on the capacity of the provider, cover at least 1 module of a formal vocational training program or 2 months or more. The scope of training (credits and academic hours) is stipulated in the vocational training contract.

Roles of VET providers:

- to organize vocational training in the form of apprenticeship, including preparation and completion of documents related to vocational training in the form of apprenticeship (curriculum, schedule, vocational training contract, training accounting and other documents necessary for organizing vocational training in the form of apprenticeship);
- to appoint a vocational teacher for the practical training of an apprentice, which is carried out in the workplace, to lead in advising a business company tutor and an apprentice, providing instructions and recommendations on teaching and learning, assessment and other issues related to the teaching process;
- to carry out the vocational training provided for in the vocational training program or its module and established in the vocational training agreement signed with the employer and the apprentice;
- to assess the apprenticeship learning achievements;
- to enable an apprentice who has completed a vocational training program or its module to participate in the assessment, recognizing the acquired competence (s).

Roles of employers:

- to appoint the employee (s) responsible for the organization of the apprenticeship work and practical training and the professional master (s) responsible for the coordination of work and practical training;
- to ensure the conditions for carrying out activities corresponding to the content of the vocational training program or its module at the apprenticeship workplace;
- to participate in the assessment of the apprenticeship's learning achievements and to ensure the conditions for the apprentice to achieve the results provided for in the vocational training program or its module.

Written agreement

When planning the implementation of a formal vocational training program or its module in the form of apprenticeship, the employer has to apply to a provider who is licensed to implement the relevant vocational training program or its module. The VET provider can agree to organize vocational training in the form of an apprenticeship with the employer, only convinced that the employer can ensure the requirements set out in the vocational training program for the methodological and material resources for training.

It is recommended that the VET provider and the employer sign a cooperation agreement on the implementation of vocational training organized in the form of an apprenticeship. The cooperation agreement may be long-term or signed on a case-by-case basis, where the vocational training of the apprentice (s) is organized only once in the form of an apprenticeship.

Regarding Agreements officialising the apprenticeship, a **Tripartite Agreement is signed between VET provider, business company and an apprentice and Employment Agreement is signed between the business company and the apprentice.** Business company is obliged to pay the salary equal to confirmed minimum salary in Lithuania. The state does not have incentives to encourage business companies to actively introduce the form of learning. **Only in 2020 the funds are allocated for the companies that apply for state support. If the application is approved, the companies can get 40% of the amount paid as salary to the trainee and cover hours spent by the tutor/master of business company with trainee.**

Learning outcomes of the apprenticeship.

VET provider institution takes responsibility for the quality of the apprenticeship process. The process is ended with evaluation exam, where VET provider and business company representatives take part. The student after WBL and students having finished the VET standard program, are passing the same tasks and the same exam. In Lithuania after finishing the program, the apprentice gets the qualification of 4 level according to EQF and national qualification framework. For the first and second qualification, the studies are free of charge for Lithuanian citizens, it is Life-long learning process, the age limit is not defined.

The competencies acquired by an apprentice are assessed and recognized in accordance with the procedure for the assessment of acquired competencies of a person established by the Minister of Education, Science and Sports. Having chosen the WLB path, the trainee can choose not the whole program, but separate modules of the program as well. In that case, having finished those, he/she is evaluated by VET provider and gets certificate of acquired competencies. Business enterprise is not involved in evaluation of module learning outcomes. The student can finish the desired program learning separate modules.

Social protection.

Whereas a tripartite employment contract is concluded, while working in business company, an apprentice receives social guarantees from the state, including the right to free health care.

Design of the apprenticeship.

The general decision makers when it comes to the design of the apprenticeship are a VET provider institution and a business company. The VET provider institution is responsible for drawing up an individual education plan for each apprentice. The content of the individual education plan is linked to the program approved in Lithuania, it is also discussed in coordination with the business enterprise.

The quality of vocational training organized in the form of an apprenticeship is the responsibility of the VET provider. The quality of VET in the form of apprenticeships is ensured through the general quality assurance measures for VET, based on the provisions of the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for VET: internal quality assurance systems for VET, external evaluation and / or accreditation. By organizing vocational training in the form of an apprenticeship, the employer cooperates with the provider in ensuring the quality of the vocational training organized in the form of an apprenticeship.

Internationalization in VET

Internationalisation in VET in Lithuania is mainly realised in the framework of lifelong learning program through mobility visits, initialised through the mobility projects of VET providers and their foreign partners. As WBL does not have strong roots in Lithuania by now, the mobility experiences based of real WBL principles are not identified by now. VET providers are encouraged to arrange recognition of competences and qualification for the mobility visits through ECVET tool, so under favourable conditions, the situation is likely to change.

Companies/Educational centres – apprenticeship implementation and development.

The most successful proven apprenticeship programs have been in areas where the labour market in the region has experienced the greatest shortage of skilled workers. The experience of VET shows that employers is not the proactive link in this process when organizing apprenticeships (the reasons are various - lack of information and trust, fear of responsibility, etc.). In such a situation, the VET provider usually takes a pro-active search for apprenticeship

partnerships with employers based on the experience already gained and the insights of the employers.

Comparing VET schools network with business entities network it is obvious that the biggest concentration of both networks are in Vilnius and Kaunas counties. Types of companies in Lithuania by size: large companies – have more than 250 employees, annual turnover is over Eur 50 mio. Middle sized companies – have less than 250 employees and annual turnover less than Eur 250 mio, small companies have less than 50 employees and annual turnover less than Eur 10 mio. We also have a lot of micro companies with less than 10 employees and annual turnover is less than Eur 2 mio. So even looking at composition of Lithuanian business structure, it is evident that not all companies can support WBL form of learning.

The medium and small businesses prevail because of the small market. Clustering initiatives in WBL are more regional and on existing bilateral partnerships between the SMEs and VET providers. VET providers network geographically covers all Lithuania. Each year more than 40 000 students are graduating formal VET programmes, yet, employers feel a huge lack of employees, especially in industry sector. Companies of that sector are the most motivated to implement any new initiatives. Tourism, transport, IT, engineering sectors are also supporting WBL implementation. Not all sectors are suitable for WBL. Beauty industry, that is widespread enough in Lithuania, cannot apply the WBL principles.

Lithuanian regions have very different potential for WBL implementation. VET providers and companies' readiness and capacity are much better in bigger counties. In 2019, there were 76 VET providers in Lithuania.

2017-2018, 42101 VET students graduated from those 76 schools, 25 % of students graduated in Vilnius and Kaunas counties.

Clustering of SME's around each VET provider is beneficial from regional perspectives. Greater capacity and infrastructure is provided in sectoral VET centres, but they are mainly established in Vilnius and Kaunas counties, in these counties more than 50 % of all enterprises are located. In order to enable clusters (giving support) in all Lithuania clear decisions from policymakers have to be done. Speaking about implementation of WBL – is it sectoral (42 sectoral VET centres) or regional approach (counting all schools). Good examples of cooperation between VET and companies are showing that sectoral approach works better than regional.

In Lithuania, all VET providers have to be active in WBL according to the plans developed for the sector by the Ministry of Science, Education and Sport. The principle of each VET provider gets individual annual tasks for WBL implementation.

Pedagogical support

In order to help the trainee to reach the desired learning outcomes, educational centre is organizing vocational training in the form of apprenticeship, including preparation and completion of documents related to vocational training in the form of apprenticeship (curriculum, schedule, vocational training contract, training accounting and other documents necessary for organizing vocational training in the form of apprenticeship), appointing a vocational teacher for the practical training of an apprentice. The teacher is leading and advising a business company tutor and an apprentice, providing instructions and recommendations on teaching and learning, assessment and other issues related to the teaching process, is assessing intermediate learning achievements of the apprentice.

The roles of employer in order to help the trainee to reach the positive outcomes are to cooperate with educational centre on legal and pedagogical issues throughout WBL implementation process, to have employee responsible for the organization of apprenticeship work, to ensure the conditions for carrying out activities corresponding to the content of the vocational training program or its module at the apprenticeship workplace, to participate in the assessment of the apprenticeship's learning achievements and to ensure the conditions for the apprentice to achieve the results provided for in the vocational training program or its module.

Workplace component: percentage of work based time.

In Lithuania, apprenticeship takes place in business company and in VET provider institution. A VET provider holding a license entitling him to pursue the relevant formal vocational training program or module, shall carry out no more than 30% of the training time of the formal vocational training program or its module and the employer carries out the remaining part of the training time (70 %). Vocational training in the form of an apprenticeship may, depending on the capacity of the provider, cover at least 1 module of a formal or non-formal vocational training program or 2 months or more. The scope of training (credits and academic hours) is stipulated in the vocational training contract.

Pay and/or compensation.

During the apprenticeship, the apprentice is employed by the company and receives at least the minimum wage approved by the state. Starting from January 1st, 2020, the minimum wage makes 607 EUR/month.

Involvement of other social partners.

No other partners are involved in the teaching process of WBL. Local Chambers of Commerce and Industry are involved in the final assessment of qualifications of apprentices.

Support for companies: What type of support (financial, logistical, etc.) does the company have for accepting trainees?

In 2019 A Description of the Procedure for Organizing Vocational Training in the Form of Apprenticeship of the Republic of Lithuania was prepared and approved. Up to 2020, no Financial support for SME's (at least for salary of work place tutor's). The state does not have incentives to encourage business companies to actively introduce the WBL form of learning. Only in 2020 the funds are allocated for the companies that apply for state support. If the application is approved, the companies can get 40% of the amount paid as salary to the trainee and cover hours spent by the tutor/master of business company with trainee. Long – lasting benefit for the employer - the company prepares itself a specialist according to the available technological base, already acquainted with the company's culture and work standards.

Case Study: Visaginas Technology and Business VET

Dual apprenticeship schemes developed through the cooperation of the VET centre and Lithuanian enterprises (Visaginas technology and business vocational education and training centre). Visaginas Technology and Business Vocational Education and Training Centre started vocational training in the form of apprenticeship in 2015. In 2019, 9% of students were studying under this form of vocational training. The Centre organizes apprenticeship training in a mixed way: there are cases where training is organized for the whole group, or this form of training is applied to individual pupils in groups.

The Center selects apprentices communicating with companies. The curriculum requirements and parts of the curriculum are coordinated in companies with tutors. The planned process of apprenticeship training is also discussed. Before concluding the individual learning plan of the apprentice, the Center identifies competences the student has. At this stage companies take part and indicate their needs, expectations of the apprentice's existing or missing competencies needed to perform the job functions.

Before starting the apprentice's practical training in the company, the Center's responsible staff goes to the company - the future venue for practical apprenticeship. The apprentice's

workplace suitability for seeking skills and qualification of the training program is evaluated; the needed competences of the apprentice are discussed.

The successful implementation result of VET apprenticeship in the Centre is determined by the fact that students are only sent to companies where the workplaces meet or are very close to the curriculum. Combination of practical training with theoretical knowledge of the apprentices at the Centre is carried out also using the distant learning environments Classroom manager, Moodle, etc. The organization of the apprenticeship training process necessarily requires cooperation between company tutors and school tutors. They communicate on issues of coordination and preparation of tasks and are constantly exchanging information.

The most important achievement of the training institution in organizing the form of apprenticeship vocational training is that the Center is trusted and cooperates with advanced companies as Intersurgical, Biovela, SBA (JSC Visagino linija), JSC Baltijos Informacinės sistemas in Lithuania. VET center crossed geographical borders and cooperates with companies from all Lithuania, because keeping regional approach with mechatronics sector wouldn't be successful in their case. Another important issue is that Visaginas centre is very active in communicating and visiting companies to offer apprenticeship form of learning to their workers.

This example is showing that for Lithuania matching VET schools with companies on regional approach would not be enough. According to VET school specialization and taking into account total amount of companies in Lithuania, it is better to consider all country as one region. Not all VET schools have concrete specialization (representing 4-5 sectors), it makes some misunderstanding related to school identity in the eyes of companies.

Example of how the apprenticeship training model works at Visaginas Technology and Business Vocational Training Center:

Representatives of Continental Automotive Lithuania and Visaginas Technology and Business Vocational Training Center signed a cooperation agreement and launched a training program for mechatronics in the operation of automatic systems for the apprenticeship model. This is one of the first training programs of this type in Lithuania.

The automatic systems mechatronics apprenticeship program organized by Continental and Visaginas Vocational Training Center started in autumn of 2019 and will continue for two years. 70 percent of the total study time will be spent in a direct work environment - in the electronic components factory in Kaunas, where apprentices will work together with

professionals in their field, which will allow them to deepen and understand the peculiarities of mechatronics in a practical environment much faster. The remaining 30 percent of time - apprentices will delve into the theoretical and practical issues at Visaginas TVPMC. Learners will receive wage throughout the program life time. Upon successful completion of the program, participants will not only gain a nationally recognized qualification, but will also have the opportunity to continue their career at Continental.

General Manager of Continental Automotive Lithuania is pleased with the cooperation with Visaginas Vocational Training Center and the WBL program being implemented through cooperation on both sides. The accumulated experience of VET provider in cooperating with business allows to create a common program together.

This form of learning has many benefits for both business and the graduates participating in the program. The form of apprenticeship training brings companies and training institutions closer together in order to achieve the highest possible quality of vocational training. Having acquired the basics of the curriculum modules in an educational institution, the apprentices improve their practical skills in a real workplace. Apprenticeships enable a person to integrate more quickly into the labor market. Everyone wins: apprentices receive a salary while studying, socialize in the company, shorten their professional career path; the employer attracts new employees and makes a significant contribution to the quality of vocational training.

Quality assurance practices and the “quality culture” of the organization (Visaginas technology and business vocational education and training centre)

Vocational training diplomas were awarded for the third time this summer to more than twenty employees of Intersurgical (the company employs about 2,400 employees), who acquired the professional qualification of mechatronics operator of automatic systems operation by training in the form of apprenticeship. Intersurgical, a developer, manufacturer and supplier of medical respiratory systems, cooperates with Visaginas Technology and Business Vocational Training Centre since 2016. Very good assessments of the competencies acquired by apprentices show that close cooperation between the vocational training centre and the company in organizing the training process, procedure and assessment was successful. The training took place through hands-on activities carried out by the learners at the Intersurgical production base under the supervision of masters, thus acquiring a wide range of practical skills and competencies relevant to the specific business environment. At the Energy Sector Practical Training Centre of the Vocational

Centre, future specialists acquired theoretical and conceptual bases for the practical learning process. Apprentices spent there 30% of total learning time.

A qualitative result is achieved only in close direct cooperation between the company's foremen and the vocational teachers of the training centre. The company's specialists performing the functions of training masters are well acquainted with the vocational training program, the content of training modules and the competencies provided to apprentices. The vocational teachers of the training centre maintain close contacts with the masters of the company, share the training material, and consult on the content and organization of the training.

ITALY

Current context for WBL

The current Italian social-economic situation is positive for the implementation of work-based learning programmes. Principal research shows that the innovation increases with the size of businesses and with the number employees. In Italy among innovative businesses, 85% have more than 250 employees, but the percentage drops to 45% in small businesses, from 10 to 49 employees. It is known that innovative businesses need skilled employees, that are able to manage new technologies and new production processes. In general terms, in Italy there are three important measure in WBL: Apprenticeship (under 25 years old), VET path (within the dual system) and internship/work experiences.

With the aim of reflecting the four directions of the European employment strategy (employability, adaptability, entrepreneurship and equal opportunity) and the goals set by OECD, Italy has reformed its job service in the past 5 years, mainly by encouraging the employment of young people and making them competitive on the professional level. In line with the policy, Italy started to be one of the best countries in Europe to offer initial VET training, consisting in courses of 3 to 4 years' duration, for young people from 13 to 17 years old. These courses allow to fulfil the compulsory schooling and at the same time to acquire a professional qualification.

The Working Based Learning programmes in Italy are classified and measure in apprenticeship (under 25 years old), VET path (dual system) and internship/work experiences. The apprenticeship is considered the main kind contractual typology to encourage entry to the world of work for young people between 15 and 29 years of age. There different levels of apprenticeship, such

as a professional diploma, certification for a higher technical specialization or advanced training.

The apprenticeship employment relationships from a sectoral point of view are the following: Commerce prevails (20.9% of the total), followed by manufacturing activities (18.3%) and accommodation and restaurant services (16.8%); more than 55% of the contracts are concentrated in these three sectors. With reference to artisan companies only, manufacturing activities (35.5%), services (20.9%) and construction (18.3%) emerge.

Companies/Educational centres – WBL implementation and development

According to the VET path in dual system in the Italian context, the success of first level of apprenticeship is due to its experimentation in the educational and training courses of dual system experimentation that was promoted in 2015 by the Italian social work ministry policy, aiming at improving the link between trainees and workplaces. This system represents one of the most effective realization of the Italian WBL reality, since its giving to the young citizens the possibility to get a professional qualification, which directly increases their change of employability.

According to the Work Experience path, in Italy these programs are known as “internship”, a kind of WBL, different from apprenticeship or dual system. In the Italian legislation about internship, in the Ministerial Decree (n.142) there are three kinds of internship: curricular internship/school work alternance, extra-curricular internship and internship for non-EU citizens. For apprenticeship of first level contract, or for permanent hiring, if the person is hired by the same company with which the person carried out the alternance schoolwork activity in the previous six months, the company has the total exemption from the payment of social security contributions paid by employers for 36 months.

Besides the economic benefits the element that motivates the companies is also the sensibility to the training of internal resources and the success of experience. Training institutions are engaged in the creation of a “culture of apprenticeship” like an instrument for skills development and socialization at work. Through the observations made by the training center the skills, individual characteristics and the individual needs emerge that permit to design individualized courses.

Independently of the WBL program, there is a payment compensation to the apprentice during the training period. The payment must be defined as a percentage of the contractual framework level and in relation to the year of attendance of the training course for the acquisition of the relevant qualification. In the first year the remuneration must be not less than 45% (due to the contractual level), not less than 55% in the second year, not less than 65% in the third year, and not less than 70% in the fourth year.

Besides the economic benefits, the element that motivates companies is also the sensibility to the training of internal resources and the success of the experience. Training institutions are engaged in the creation of a “culture of apprenticeship” like an instrument for skills development and socialization at work. Through the observations made by the training center the skills, individual characteristics and the individual needs emerge that permit to design individualized courses.

Case Study – FORMA Association

The experimentation of the “dual system” realized by members of association FORMA, represent a “best practice” of WBL. This experimentation is based on a simple principle: the student learns better if he can carry out a concrete action on real orders entrusted by companies, realized in peer group, in a dynamic educational context, and closely connected to the world of work. The purpose of course in dual mode is influenced by some elements:

- the socio-economic characteristics of the territory where the course takes place
- the type of companies
- the professional figures founded by the Region.

The common element that unites the territorial diversity and that is the common frame of courses promoted by FORMA, is at one side the educational mission, and on the other hand the organizational model, founded on the alliance between companies and professional training center.

Training center and companies are united in a partnership that expects:

- the commitment of the companies (in the person of company tutor) to participate in the teaching of professional technical skills and in the planning of the course and assessment of learning,
- the commitment of the professional training center to introduce innovation: didactic strategies, places for practical training, equipment.

Another element of dual model concerns the ways of select companies. About this there are some evaluation criteria:

- The companies must have the highest number of production cycles in able to develop technical and professional skills requests from the professional profile
- The companies must have the possibility to create an educational environment (for example the presence of a company tutor sensitive to training topics; the real interest to realize training activity for the student; the availability to meet the trainers of the CFP for the transversal actions of planning and evaluation of the course etc.)

An important characteristic of dual model concerns the capacity of the members of FORMA to create opportunities for the exchange of practices and knowledge among its operators with the goals of improve didactic strategies and projects. It is most important to provide common tools to professional training centre and the companies for planning, evaluation and monitoring of course. The principal goals that allows to verify how the student / apprentice can acquire the skills required by the professional profile, planning "mixed" training.

This partnership model is effective in managing situations where critical situations or difficulties may arise in the relationship between the apprentice and the company tutor, therefore it is fundamental to plan periodic meetings between companies' tutor and professional training centre. The best practice of dual model, how its realization by FORMA members is effective in international mobility experience. All members are engaged in some action:

- Internships in companies abroad for 4/6 months
- Linguistic in-depth courses (1 month) carried out abroad
- Funding for post-graduate Masters abroad
- Coordination of regional and international networks

INCOMING projects (welcoming students from other countries to Italy) and outgoing projects (Italian students going abroad).

Exchanges and experiences abroad of trainers and strengthening of the skills of their operators and activation of the ERASMUS + European Mobility Charter.

IRELAND

Current context for WBL

The City of Dublin Education and Training Board (CDETb) is the largest of the sixteen Education and Training Boards (ETBs) in Ireland. ETBs provide Further Education and Training (FET) which is known as VET throughout Europe. It has a network of 16 Further Education Colleges, 2 Training Centres, 5 Adult Education Services, 10 Youth reach Centres, Prison Education Centres, Community Training Centres, Specialist Training Providers, Justice Workshops and part time Evening Programmes.

It has in excess of 3,000 staff and annually receives approximately €78 million budget from SOLAS, which is the national authority responsible for VET in Ireland. In Ireland, approximately 48-000-50,000 learners benefit annually from the Further Education and Training, which is known as VET in the European context. Since Dublin over the years has become a thriving tech hub with

considerable influence, the apprenticeships and traineeships programmes in the past years are being developed to follow this tech growth.

These factors affect Apprenticeships and traineeships in different ways, depending on the sector. For example, in the Commi Chef Apprenticeships, due to strong consumer spending, there is now a shortage of qualified chefs and there is now a great demand to train chefs under the Apprenticeship programme. For the Auctioneering Apprenticeship, socio economic factors that will influence it are the rates of home ownership, property market fluctuations, rate of construction, number of property lettings, developments in the property rental sector, income levels, cost of living, unemployment rate.

The apprenticeships programmes are being expanded in Ireland and are classified in two categories: first the so called "pre 2016" Apprenticeships in Construction (Plumbing, Electrical, Brick Laying, Motor Mechanic, Heavy Vehicle Mechanics and Aircraft Mechanics). Second, the 2016+ Apprenticeships (Auctioneering and Property Services, Accounting Technician, Commi Chef, Software Developer, Computer Networking and Hairdressing). Both categories have in average a duration period between 2-4 years.

Companies/Educational centres – WBL implementation and development

Both categories of Apprenticeships are characterized by the supervision appointed to each apprentice to guide them in the academic and professional progress. For each apprentice a mentor is assigned, both in the college/centre and in the company where he is located. This collaborative approach to on-the-job assessment, between college-based staff and workplace mentors is a feature of this programme.

According to payments and compensation, for apprenticeships developed prior to 2016, the employer pays the apprentice while s/he is being trained on-the-job. For apprenticeships developed in 2016 and after, the employer pays the apprentice for the duration of the apprenticeship. In all cases, the rate of pay is agreed between the employer and the apprentice.

There is also the Traineeships programme, which are constructed from the partnership between the responsible government enterprise, the company and the trainee itself. It offers a work-based learning opportunity to the trainee to develop his skills, knowledge and competence within a supportive working environment. In the Traineeships Programme, is the host company responsible to nominate an experience member of the staff to supervise the trainee, and the ETB (government entity) is responsible to nominate a person for both the trainee and host in the company to ensure the quality of the work-based learning.

There are also trainee obligations contained in the *ETB Traineeship Code of Practice* which forms part of the *Career Traineeship Programme Agreement*. Examples of their obligations are: Attend

on time all classes and work-based learning phases of the programme, be responsible for their learning throughout the programme, seek the advice of the workplace supervisor where difficulties arise during the work-based learning phase, bring their concerns to the course tutor should they have difficulties in the classroom based phase of the programme, comply with the relevant code of conduct and regulations of College/Centre and the employer while in those locations and comply with all aspects of health and safety procedures.

There are other programmes in Ireland to ensure the continued progress related to older workers. There is the Skills to Advance programme, which is for employees in entrance or lower-level jobs, and to those currently employed in vulnerable sectors. It aims to equip employees with the skills they need to progress in their current role or to adapt to the changing job market. There is also the Skills for Work, which is a national programme to deliver training courses for full time or part time employees.

In conclusion, the Irish expectation by developing such programmes are that the students would have the opportunity to develop their interpersonal, personal and practical skills in the work place and for certain awards they must have the opportunity to demonstrate skills required for the relevant vocational areas. From the other side, the student's expectation is based on the hope that a placement will give them some insight and experience of specific vocational work areas, support their skill development and help them to make contacts for possible future employment.

Case Study 1. Apprenticeship: Ballsbridge College, Auctioneering and Property Services Apprenticeship

In July 2018, CDETB's new national Auctioneering Property Services Apprenticeship was approved by QQI (the National Awarding Body). The programme development was led by CDETB under the guidance of a Consortium Steering Group comprising the Property Services Regulatory Authority (PRSA), Society of Chartered Surveyors (SCSI), the Institute of Professional Auctioneers and Valuers (IPAV), Estate Agency practices (including Sherry Fitzgerald, Douglas Newman and Lisney) and Cork ETB.

Each employer appoints a workplace mentor to support and guide the apprentice in the work-based learning. The Coordinating Provider provides a mentor training programme. Workplace mentors participate in a mentor training programme at the start of the programme.

A college supervisor is appointed to each apprentice to guide them in their academic progress and pastoral care. The college supervisor liaises with the workplace mentor and is the point of contact should any issues arise.

Each employer appoints a workplace mentor to support and guide the apprentice in the work-based learning. Each apprentice is assigned a College Supervisor who visits the apprentice in his/her work place at least once a year to meet with the learner and with the workplace mentor. This visit/s provides an opportunity to observe the learner in his/her workplace, to discuss the apprentice's progress and any programme or assessment issues with the workplace mentor.

Each WBL module includes an assessment instrument, a learning log, in which the apprentice reflects on the tasks undertaken in the workplace. Apprentices have access to weekly Tutorial session with College Supervisors. The scheduled tutorial period provides an opportunity and space for learners to share their work-based experiences with each other, thus building a community of practice.

Apprentices are eligible to apply for the College's Erasmus+ programmes. To date, no apprentice has applied. In the event of the apprentice applying and being successful in gaining a place, the agreement of the employer would be required to release the apprentice from the workplace for the duration of the mobility programme.

Case Study 2. Traineeship: Coláiste Dhúlaigh College of Further Education -Traineeship in Manufacturing, Supply Chain & Customer Service Logistics

This traineeship was developed, and is run in partnership with Speedpak Group, an award-winning, Dublin-based social enterprise. Speedpak was originally founded by the Northside Partnership in collaboration with the local business community, its purpose was to address the issue of high unemployment in one of Dublin's most disadvantaged areas. The college and Speedpak established a professional relationship over the years, providing the local community the opportunity of work-based learning, to improve their prospects of getting out of long-term unemployment.

The traineeship was designed to be delivered over a duration of 36 weeks and offers real commercial work placement with leading industries in the local community. The industries including Butlers Chocolate, Realtime Technologies, Bewleys Coffee and Allergan Pharmaceuticals. The college through employer engagements became aware of that they were a skill shortage in the manufacturing, supply chain and logistics sector. From this the college completed a number of occupational skills profiling (OSP) and identifying the needs and skills set requirements of the industry. From this exercise the college develop the concept of the traineeship, and successfully established new employer engagement links.

Traineeships were an area that the college had no previous experience in, and they engaged with Speedpak in the development of this course. The structure of the course was designed to ensure that the learners has sufficient time in the class room as well as on site. It consists of the following;

Structure

- 2 weeks induction (training room / classroom based)
- 12 weeks training (Forklift, Warehousing, IT Skills, Occupational First Aid, Functional Maths, Lean Manufacturing, Customer Service)
- 2 weeks holiday
- 10 weeks industry work placement
- 8 weeks training (Forklift, Warehousing, Functional Maths)
- 4 weeks classroom preparation for QQI submission

Course Content

Warehousing, Customer Service, Safety & Health in the Workplace, Personal Effectiveness, Database Methods, Work Practice, Occupational First Aid, Functional Maths, Counterbalance Forklift Truck Skills, Manual Handling, Lean Manufacturing.

Work Based Learning

The traineeship learner complete 12 weeks of the course in the class room environment. This is broken up as one day in the college IT classrooms and the rest of the week in Speedpak training room. This creates an on the job feel to the course, as Speedpak is a functioning building while the learners are using the training room. It also this allows the learner to observe a working space in the sector, and complete the require health and safety aspects of working in a real warehouse.

After 12 weeks in the classroom environment, the learners are matched with host employers and put the new skills into practice on a work placement for 10 weeks. This gives both the learner the opportunity to put the theory into practice and sample the line of work they will be completing once they have completed the course.

This work-based learning (WBL) aspect of the traineeship course provided the learners with the opportunity of real-life work experiences, and it give them the opportunity to apply their new academic and technical skills and knowledge they learnt in the classroom. This aspect of the traineeship also gave the learners confidence in their own employability, and helped them to identify the new skills they had developed.

This was a win-win situation, as it meets the needs of the learners, and the host employers got to sample individuals to see if they were a good fit for the company. The work-based learning also proved to bridge the gap between learning in the classroom and doing on the job, and made the learners aware of the career area.

The whole way through the work placement, the course co-ordinator liaises with the host employers and the learners. Once the work placement has been completed, the learner returns to the class room environment and completes the course of study, submits assessments required to achieve the minor QQI award and/or certifications. The college has successfully delivered two traineeships and began the third course on 3rd February 2019. The learners that engaged in the first two traineeships and successfully completed them went on to employment in the sector.

ENGLAND

Current context for WBL

To start, it is important to note that, in the UK, the responsibility for 'Skills' policy - which is the UK term taken to mean Vocational Education and Training (VET), as it is commonly referenced by the EU, and thereby work-based learning and apprenticeships, is devolved to the individual UK nations. This means that the Scottish Government, the Welsh Assembly and the Northern Ireland Assembly are each responsible for all skills issues respectively, whereas the UK government is responsible for these matters in England. Since the context of Eduwork.Net is with the UK partner Rinova, therefore, the remainder of this section focuses upon the context for Rinova in England (and, where appropriate, a focus on London).

This is an important point, since in the 'popular mind', apprenticeships are an entry point for young people to enter the job market with training. They can be - but in 2018/19 just 25% (97,700) of apprenticeships were started by those aged under 19. In fact, the proportion of all apprenticeship starts for 16-year olds were 5%, 17-year-olds 8%- and 18-year olds 11%. Thus 179,700 (46%) of the apprenticeships started in 2018/19 were by people over the age of 24. A further 116,000 (29%) were started by those aged between 19 and 24, meaning that 295,700 (75%) of apprenticeships were started by people aged 19 or over.

In 2015, the English government had made a target that by 2020 that 3 million new apprenticeships will take place, but at the end of January 2019, only 57% of this target take action. According to the government support for companies, it was analysed that if an employer as a wage bill over £3m each year, it is obligated to pay an apprenticeship levy. Nonetheless, this money is then topped up by governments funds to employers develop these programmes in their

companies. For companies that are smaller than this annual wage bill, they pay 5% towards the cost of apprenticeship training and the government pays the rest (95%).

The government have created The National Apprenticeship Service to support companies to set up and develop apprenticeships. It operates a National Apprenticeship Helpdesk and advertises apprenticeship vacancies on a website. In addition, the National Careers Service provides support for those who wish to pursue an apprenticeship application and provides them with professional advice on making the right choices.

The main characteristics of enterprises involved in WBL, (according to 83% of all apprenticeship started in 2018/19) followed four sector areas, with over half in the top two areas: Business Administration and Law (30% of all starts), Health, Public Services and Care (25% of all starts), Engineering and Manufacturing Tech (15% of all starts) and Retail and Commercial Enterprise (13% of all starts).

Companies/Educational centres – WBL implementation and development

In England, both “apprenticeships” and “traineeships” are formal terms that are used to describe the main WBL-based schemes that are financed and operated by government. A traineeship is a course that includes a work placement as a core aim. It can vary between 6 weeks up to 6 months and are mainly designated to help 16 to 24 years old to get ready for an apprenticeship. The apprenticeship operates more as a job, and in legal terms, the apprentices have the same status as an employee (apprenticeships are available to anyone over the age of 16, living in England and have no upper age limit).

According to the main characteristics of VET centres involved in WBL, they are characterized as Schools, Private Training Providers and Further Education (FE) Colleges. The collaboration between the company and these centres is keen for the success of the programme, and all apprenticeships include elements on and off the job, leaning to industry recognised standards or qualifications.

According to the payment and compensations, when undertaking an apprenticeship, since the apprentice must be employed, there are rules regarding their wages. The national minimum wage (NMW) for apprentices is £3.90 per hour from April 2019 (approximately €4.40 as at February 2020). Apprentices aged 25 and over, and not in the first year of their apprenticeship, will be entitled to the National Minimum Wage (currently £8.21, or €9.70). The Apprenticeship Pay Survey 2016 estimated the average gross hourly pay received by apprentices in Great Britain was £6.70 an hour for level 2 and 3 apprentices, which is equivalent to nearly £14,000 per year.

In conclusion, there are a number of statistics that point further to the challenges of the UK education and skills system in terms of meeting the ambitions that the government states it has for

it. These include: The share of pupils dropping out of UK schools without a diploma was 10.6% in 2018 (Education and Training MONITOR, 2018); More than 30% who start apprenticeships do not complete them and that situation is getting worse every year (Skills Commission UK); Apprenticeships - 98,000 aged under 19 started an apprenticeship in 2018 (including those not at College), a decline from 123,000 in 2016, etc.

Case Study 1. Hilton Apprenticeship Academy (Hilton Worldwide, UK)

The case study of choice is the Hilton Apprenticeship Academy (Hilton Worldwide, UK), which combines college-based courses with on-the-job training across six disciplines:

- Front Office
- Food & Beverage Service
- Multi-Skilled Hospitality Service
- Living Well Exercise & Fitness
- Sales

“Young people are facing a difficult job market with high youth unemployment and many will be considering alternatives to university study. Our Hilton Apprenticeship Academy provides an entry-level education into the exciting world of hospitality and an attractive route into employment with one of the world's leading companies of its kind.” Ben Bengougam, Hilton Worldwide's Vice President, Human Resources, Europe.

The Hilton Apprenticeship Academy provides people with the opportunity to learn the art of hospitality through hands-on exposure to a range of industry disciplines. Launched in 2012, the Hilton Apprenticeship Academy (United Kingdom) provides more than 100 people across the U.K. with the opportunity to train with Hilton Worldwide through one of six 12-month apprenticeships. Apprenticeship opportunities offer on-the-job training from professionally qualified experts, onsite mentors, development workshops and master classes.

Program participants can focus on one of the following: professional cookery, front desk, food and beverage service, multi-skilled hospitality service, exercise and fitness and sales. The Academy's entry-level education to the world of hospitality is fully funded, including tuition fees and travel expenses, plus participants receive a salary while in the program. Hilton Apprenticeship Academy helps ensure young people have access to opportunities and training that will enable them to obtain the necessary skills to be attractive in a global marketplace.

Hilton Apprenticeship Academy is available to job seekers across the United Kingdom who are looking for permanent employment. Hilton Apprenticeships provide team members with the opportunity to combine work and study by mixing on-the-job training with off-the-job learning. Apprentices are employed by Hilton and carry out a real job and usually spend about 20% of their time learning, either off the job in the hotel, at a college or a training centre.

The aim is, that by the end of the apprenticeship, the Apprentice will have gained the skills, knowledge and behaviours needed to commence in their chosen career, and potentially progress onto the next apprenticeship level. Apprentices in every role follow an approved study programme, which means the Team Members will gain a national certification at the end of the apprenticeship.

In terms of numbers within the UK, **Hilton is growing its apprenticeship scheme by almost 30 per cent in 2020, with 274 apprentices currently, and a further 76 apprentice roles will be available over the next 12 months.** The VET provider works closely with key Hilton team members and Apprentices to ensure engagement with Hilton Apprenticeship Programme, much in the same way advocated by Eduwork.Net The VET provider, Hilton and the buddying/mentoring team leader collaborate to create and develop an individual learner journey to embed the Hilton Apprenticeship Programme.

The VET provider is then expected to regularly co-ordinate and communicate with Hilton Cluster / Unit Training Managers and Cluster / Unit HR Directors on a bi-monthly basis to maintain a high profile for The Apprenticeship Programme within Hilton. This ensures that the apprenticeship journey remains on track and any issues addressed early on and at regular intervals. Hilton and the VET review the progress of all recruited Apprentices at 6 weeks from commencement and ongoing throughout the programme and the VET also becomes the first point of contact for learner queries, providing a quick and effective response.

Hilton has a number of initiatives tied into the Hilton Apprenticeship Academy including Galvin's Chance (a work apprenticeship programme that provides vulnerable and at-risk individuals, including those convicted of violent crime, the opportunity to work in the hospitality industry) and the HOPES project (a unique initiative that is designed to give people from disadvantaged backgrounds the opportunity to gain valuable knowledge and experience working in the hospitality industry. It also aims to build their confidence and equip them with the skills they need to pursue careers in hospitality or other industries).

Hilton operates a very strong outreach programme to young people through **Youth in Hospitality**, an annual career awareness celebration, which has engaged more than 265,000 young people through job fairs, career guidance talks and job shadowing events.

Conclusions

The overriding conclusion from this report is that there is a huge disparity in perception between hospitality employers, VET providers and young people or learners about hospitality as a career, about hospitality apprenticeships or traineeships and about young people as potential employees. It has become evident that the Eduwork.Net concept is needed very much in order to bridge these differences.

However, there is much work to be done. There is an over-arching consensus amongst hospitality employers that young people generally do not know what hospitality is, and do not think of hospitality as a career, with a majority thinking it means working solely as a chef or as a waiter, with many not even considering being a waiter as a career path. There is a perception that working in hospitality means going to work 100 hours a week for very low pay or being stuck in a dead-end job with no prospects. Many young people are unaware of the diversity of roles within hospitality – such as design, marketing, management, human resources etc.

Schools within the UK are not providing the appropriate knowledge or skill sets for young people leaving school and wishing to enter a career. There is a vast difference in leaving academia and entering “life in work”. Many young people leave school not knowing how to write a CV or resume, how to find a job, what their working rights are, what to look for in an employment contract and interview technique and etiquette. With hospitality there is the added issue of young people not understanding how the hours and shifts patterns may look like.

This, in large part, is as a result of careers advice being cut in schools 5 years ago unable to provide support and preparation for young people for what follows after they leave education. For hospitality, the problem is exacerbated by the decline in the number of schools offering Food Tech GCSEs (over 50% in 5 years) which provides a direct link to the career. There is a need for a programme such as the Eduwork.Net project in order to fill that gap and create a better understanding of job expectations.

Participants all agreed that having a personal mentor from the hospitality sector is a great idea and had been proved previously in a number of documented initiatives. Without these initiatives, young people would not be exposed to the sector and its career opportunities. Participants felt that within the UK – and London in particular – the hospitality industry is very diverse and culture and language are not obstructions to job entry.

In our research it became evident the perception issue is not just about young people and how they see hospitality. Employers, also, do not have an appreciation of younger people and their needs. There is a general perception amongst hospitality employers that young people are lazy and this was evidenced by comments made by several employers. Some of this is led by employers not having realistic expectations of young people before they start work.

This could be as a result of the age difference between those working in the industry and school leavers. Linked into this, employers often feel that VET providers do not offer training to suit the individual needs of the business, usually being offered a standard training package, without the employer fully understanding the needs of the VET or package in order to achieve success. It was felt that the Eduwork.Net proposal would address these issues. Here, learners will be provided ILPs meaning the employers will more invested in the process as they will be involved from the start.

The Eduwork.Net proposal will provide hospitality businesses the correct tools and infrastructure framework to enable success for both the young person and the hospitality employer. Post Brexit, participants concurred that hiring is much more localised. There appears to be good outreach teams in colleges, schools and communities but a lack of subsequent information and guidance support for employers and/or young people after this process. The Eduwork.Net project will bridge this gap by providing that information and laying a framework for such guidance and support.

There is nothing similar in the UK that we could find to the Eduwork.Net proposal within hospitality, in particular for SMEs. Some larger chains such as Pret a Manger, Premier Inn and Hilton Worldwide run internal and very successful schemes but these are not open to hospitality as a larger whole. Participants felt that the Eduwork.Net concept tackles failure rates in apprenticeships by having a representative within the hospitality organisation who will be able to represent the learner, the employer and speak to the VET about the needs of the business and the learner.

The Eduwork.Net concept will also enable success in other ways. Having an ambassador who is in the role will be beneficial to the employer and learner as it will mean that employers will have more empathy for the young person due to a likely lower age difference. Another suggestion that has proved to work well in other projects such as PanOut London, is that employers visit schools to introduce hospitality to young people. What came out very clearly in our findings is that the lows of the hospitality industry must be discussed (e.g. long hours, low wages) as well as the highs (fast career progression, international opportunities, good pay in senior roles, diversity of roles etc).

The fact that the Eduwork.Net provides a readily available framework that school, VET practitioners and employers will have access to will be hugely helpful and enable everyone to be clearer as to expectations and best practices. It will be a clear foundational guide for everyone and will ensure success.

The Eduwork.Net concept is absolutely required in the UK as funding for food tech continues to drop and there is less and less exposure for young people to hospitality-based skills. At the age of 16, young people are required to make the choice of whether to proceed to A-Levels or go into Apprenticeships. Hospitality employers **MUST** push forward the apprenticeships and the Eduwork.Net concept can be a key factor in this push and change.

The Eduwork.Net concept will be a gateway in which we will be able to build stories. As Eduwork.Net develops, it will start creating alumni who have been through the process and will be able to share their experience and success with young people, employers and VET practitioners. This will inspire young people, their parents, employers and VET practitioners through the use of tools, support and real-life success stories.

We found from the results of our interviews and research that all participants were genuinely positive about the Eduwork.Net concept, and there was an overriding belief that it is needed. It bridges the gap between what hospitality sector employers are looking for in young people and what young people are looking for in employers.

SPAIN

Current context for WBL

In Spain, the Vocational Education and Training (VET) programmes are under the responsibility of the national education and employment entities. The General Council for Vocational Training is the national government advisory body on VET policy; it comprises representatives of national and regional public authorities as well as the social partners (enterprises and trade unions). Stakeholders are involved in designing and updating VET qualifications in line with labour market needs. They develop occupational standards in all sectors of the economy, which make up the national register (CNCP) and are used as reference for designing and updating VET programmes and qualifications.

The Spanish VET system is modular allowing recognition and transfer of (units of) competences gained in one VET programme to another, shortening its duration. Units of competences may also be acquired through validation of prior learning. CVET includes a wide range of courses designed for different needs and skill profiles, allowing people to upgrade their skills and acquire a (partial) professional certificate. It may be financed through public funds (mainly company and worker contributions to social security). Training is offered by private and public institutions accredited by labour authorities as providers of professional certificates and by other VET training centres.

There was created a Royal Decree 1 (529/2012), to established a framework for the development of projects of dual vocational training. Dual vocational training has been since then progressively introduced through projects developed by the Autonomous Communities (regions). The

2012 Royal Decree regulates key aspects of Dual vocational training such as (not a complete list): The basic content of the training programme: curriculum, training activities, their length, evaluation and grading criteria; The minimum number of hours to be spent in a company; The minimum information that needs to be included in the agreement between the training centre and the company (training programme, number of participants, allowance, number of hours and distribution of training hours between company and training centre, etc.)

The Spanish demographic reality is contributing for the impact of the VET programmes. The population has slightly decreased in the past years and is getting old, and the medium-term forecasts indicate that an important proportion of job openings will mainly come from the need to replace workers retiring or changing occupations, which will require qualified people through VET. Also, the unemployment rates in Spain are increasing over the years (13.9% in 2018), and such circumstance can be correlated with education attainment.

Companies/Educational centres – WBL implementation and development

In Spain, the term used for “apprenticeship” is “dual vocational education and training”. It is defined in legislation as “training actions and initiatives, combining employment and training, that aim at workers’ professional qualification in a regime that alternates work activity in a company and vocational education and training delivered by the education system or the employment system”, i.e. respectively the Ministry of Education (central o region departments) or the Ministry of Employment (central o region departments).

The VET programmes include a wide range of courses designed for different needs and skill profiles, allowing people to upgrade their skills and acquire a (partial) professional certificate and it may be financed through public funds. Training is offered by private and public institutions accredited by labour authorities as providers of professional certificates and by other VET training centres (Adults can also enrol in the same VET programmes).

From sectorial point of view, WBL experiences in Spain are: 19% manufacturing, 16% Commerce, 12% IT and Communications, 11% construction, 7% scientific activities, 7% other services, 6% Education, 6% Health and social services, 3% Finance, 3% transport, 3% Hospitality and 2,5% Administrative and auxiliary.

This instrument of work based learning intended to promote youth employment has a duration of a 1 year (minimum) to 3 years (maximum), the salary can’t be less than the minimum inter-professional salary, the apprentices must have between 16 and 25 years old (no age limit for people with disabilities) and not having qualifications for an internship contract. According to company incentives, there is a reduction fee of 100% for companies with less than 250 workers and 75% for companies with more than 250 workers.

To be successful in the implementation of such programmes, it implies a strong involvement between the company, the government and the social partners (public and the private sector), willingness of the private sector to accept quality control of its education and training activities a fundamental Vocational Education and Training Act which regulates the roles of the stakeholders and a strong cooperation between secondary school and companies.

According to the Spanish reality, it is recommended that dual training courses last for +/- 3 years and correspond to an estimation of 4200 hours. In Spain, the average length is 2000 hours, which can be distributed in 2 or 3 school years. The paradox is that the same Autonomous Community can offer the same cycle of dual vocational training with different hours' duration.

Case Study: CIFASA

The criteria established for selecting a case study of a Vocational Training Centre relevant to this research were defined according to the reputation of the center or association, its network of contacts, the experience in Dual Training and Training in Workplaces (FCT) and, its experience in international mobility. For this reason, we decided to contact an organization called CIFASA, which groups 7 Vocational Training Centers in the region of Madrid and Castilla- La Mancha.

These centers differ in their training specialties and in their locality but share the implementation of The Dual Training and the same ERASMUS mobility management. The seven centers that make up the organization: EFA de Valdemilanos, EFA Oretana, EFA La Serna, EFA El Gamonal, EFA Molino de Viento, EFA Moratalaz, EFA La Serna, and EFA El Llano.

Each center that makes up CIFASA has its own model of cooperation with companies, which differs whether it is a national or European level. However, there is a natural homogeneity in the system used. At the national level, depending on the student's specialty and interest, the center proposes to the student, as a component of his/her training and always with the support of the school, that he/she contact the company and request its internships. In case of any complication, the educational center acts as an intermediary of both parties.

On the other hand, the implementation of the dual system facilitates this process. Companies and training centers that register in this system cooperate for the development of dual VET, and there is automatically a collaboration to encourage student practices. This collaboration can also be moved to the other modality of Training in Work Centers, in which already with previous experience of collaboration in the dual FP, the center and the company can collaborate again in this modality.

There are also cases where companies come to vocational training centers to give lectures or classes and from there collaborations can be established between the different parties. At the European level, for the case of CIFASA, the management of the European mobility of its centers

corresponds to the CIFASA itself, which, depending on the demand of the students of its centers, establishes international cooperation with various companies corresponding to this demand. There is also a practice carried out by CIFASA that involves contacting peer centers, from different countries, and sharing their network of local companies for which mobility agreements can be established, for the most part, financed by ERASMUS+ funds.

It is important to mention that Training in Workplaces (mandatory module of the training process), as well as the Dual Training System (optional system), is a synergy between students, educational centres, and companies and it is important to guarantee quality to all parties. If the first internship experience in companies is successfully realized, it is an important step in future collaborations between the school and companies.

To ensure this quality, there are training criteria that are reflected in both the curriculum of the training cycle and in the Dual Training Projects that are established between companies and schools and that indicate the skills to be acquired during the training of internships. For a student to go through internships, they must have previously approved all the theoretical and practical requirements. The selection process is open and all students can be applied to it. Depending on the interested parties, objective criteria are applied, that guarantee the quality of the student when carrying out their internships: involvement during the course, marks, letter of motivation, personal interview, etc.

CIFASA being an association that groups different vocational training centres with various specialties, usually divide the squares by specialties. All mobility is divided among all EFAS and subsequently each EFA according to the same objective criteria, makes the same selection. Prior collaborations between CIFASA and companies and their experience, it is what manages to guarantee and promote the reliability of the practices for both students and companies. There were always and will be cases where these collaborations were not effective, but so far most of the collaborations with the entities have always prospered.

During the internship, the communication between the school and student/company is constant which allows ensuring that all defined competencies are achieved and that the training process is consistent with the established agreement. Within the company, there is a figure who is the trainee tutor who is the person responsible for the training of the student and who is in permanent contact with both the student and the internship coordinator of the school. On-site visits by the internship coordinator are also established.

CIFASA, is the entity in charge of managing the international mobility of the different Vocational Training Centres that make up it. So far, collaborations have been made with companies in Italy and Ireland, and collaborations with Germany and Portugal are beginning to be established. To establish this European network, contact is used with peer centres in the countries of origin that facilitate its network of companies, to which CIFASA can establish collaborations to send its students to carry out the internships.

The model followed by CIFASA to establish its international mobility begins with the mobility of teachers, through which links are created between the two entities that subsequently allow collaboration for the mobility of students.

GREECE

Current context for WBL

In Greece there is a network of 131 Institutes dedicated for VET programmes and they are mainly focus in professional training for ages above 18 years old, offering more than 90 areas of specialization. Both VET Institutes and Vocational Upper Secondary Schools (EPAL) participate in apprenticeship and/or in internship (the two types of learning in Greece). Although the apprenticeship/vocational education and training are not so popular in Greece, after the crisis of 2007-2008, the government and the European Union has started to enforced this programme in the population by increasing the financial and logistical support needed.

The formal Educational System in Greece includes primary education (5 y.o. to 12 y.o.), low secondary education (12 y.o. to 15 y.o.), upper secondary education (15 y.o. to 18 y.o.) and tertiary education. There is also the non-formal education, which includes initial vocational training from IEK (Institouto Epaggelmatikis Katartisis /Vocational Training Institute), the continuous vocational training and the general adult education through different providers.

In practice though, non-formal education may lead to formally recognised qualifications, which are included in the National Qualifications Framework and are linked to the European Qualifications Framework. For the school year 2019-2020 there are in Greece 398 EPAL, 81,4% in the morning shift and 22,8% are Esperina EPAL (Evening EPAL for workers, this type of schools starts the lessons at 19:00 and the studies duration is 4 years) and there are 131 IEK and 51 EPAS. EPAL supports almost 40 different specialties and over of 1400 classes all over Greece and IEK.

In a rapidly changing world, many workers` skills are mismatched to their jobs. The Greek skill system was generally ill-equipped and struggled to meet even the most mode levels of skills demand. The latest years the attainment, to the Greek VET system, has increased but there are concerns that the education and training system, is not sufficiently align with labour market needs. And the Greek Vet system is characterized by low attractiveness and remains, until 2020, relatively poorly placed to meet current labour challenges.

Now the new policies have changed Apprenticeship. They focus on hi-tech skills needs. The rapid technological changes are the main reason for this change. There is a legislative framework on apprenticeships to make Apprenticeship more attractive on the employers' side. We live in a world of work in transformation. We can adopt and build new learning methods. We can thrive together in this new world.

Companies/Educational centres – WBL implementation and development

Apprenticeships in Greece have a dual learning system, that is defined as a system in which learning alternatives occur between the workplace and the educational institute. In order to promote a professional specialization to apprentices, the employer must provide a learning programme based in a specific area, pay a remuneration or allowance (under applicable law) and cover the apprentice insurance. There are different entities responsible for the VET programmes, and the duration vary between 6 months to 3 years, within different levels of specialization.

The other alternative to gain some work experience is by enrolling an internship position inside a company. Is the alternative to the apprenticeship and graduates seem to prefer this type of education, since they can start after the end of the second semester and they can manage more their schedule. The duration of the internship is 960 hours of work and the internship learners doesn't receive any salary. They have only health insurance coverage if an accident happens in the work environment.

For apprenticeships developed in 2019-2020, the apprentice receives compensation in the 75% of the legal national minimum wage of the unskilled worker. This is an amount of 21.78€ per day. This amount comes from the resources of the operational program "Human Resources Development, Education and Life Lifelong Learning" for the implementation of the European Social Fund and the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) in Greece. An apprentice has social security (health insurance and count as a period of employment for pension purposes).

The overall picture of the working-based learning in Greece is that after complete their studies, students have two possibilities. Either they can choose a VET program (apprenticeship or internship) or they can find a new job placement on their own. The main goal is to offer a specialized working experience to graduates to contradict the cultural fact that employers generally do not accept the process of hiring and training a person from the ground.

Both VET Institutes and Vocational Upper Secondary Schools (EPAL) they can both participate in apprenticeship and/or in internship. Due to expert advises, this policy would help the Greek

Economy and would aim at bringing together the worlds of employment and education to establish a new era on how employability could attract more jobs in the labour market. SME's are the biggest percent of the labour market in Greece.

Case Study 1. Apprenticeship: Independent Power Transmission Operator

In February 2017 the Independent Power Transmission Operator (ADMIE in Greek), approved by Greek Ministry of Education, offered thirty apprenticeships to apprentices and students of three structures of VET. Apprenticeship program supported by this company. The programme development was led by Greek Ministry of Education in corporation with the Hellenic Manpower Employment Organization and the support from the Vocational Training Institutes and the Vocational High Schools. We must notice that during 2017 was the first year of Apprenticeship programmes for Vocational Training Institutes and for the ADMIE.

Each employer appoints a workplace mentor to support and guide the apprentice in the work-based learning. Unfortunately, there wasn't a mentor training programme. A supervisor from the educational structure was appointed to each apprentice to guide them in their academic progress and act as a mentor. This supervisor liaised with the workplace mentor and was the point of contact should any issues raised. Each employer appoints a workplace mentor to support and guide the apprentice in the work-based learning.

Each apprentice was assigned a Supervisor who visited the apprentice in his work place, at least once a month (two times during the first month), to meet with the learner and with the workplace mentor. This visit/s provided an opportunity to observe the learner in his/her workplace, to discuss the apprentice's progress and any programme or assessment issues with the workplace mentor. After this visit the Supervisor made a report about the learning process for each of the apprentices. This report recorded the process, the status of the safety rules in the working environment and possibly notes from the working mentors.

Apprentices had the duty to participate every Friday in their weekly Tutorial session with educational mentors. The scheduled tutorial period provides an opportunity and space for learners to share their work-based experiences with each other, thus building a community of practice, learning alternative approaches as case studies from their working tasks. After the end of their Apprenticeship process, apprentices will participate in exams for their diploma or certification.

Structure

- Apprentices from Vocational Training Institutes (IEK):

- Total: 960 hours
- Hours in working place: 768 hours (8 hours/ day, 4 days/week)
- Hours in educational structure: 192 hours (8 hours every Friday afternoon)
- Age limits: No limits
- Holidays: 2 weeks (Easter Holidays), 8 days as
- Certification: Certification of Vocational Training (BEK)-(EQF5).
- Exams: Final national examinations
- Salary: 21.78€ per day (From Ministry of Education 16.54€, from the company 5.24€)
- Apprentices from Vocational High Schools (EPAL):
- Total: 9 months
- Hours in working place: 28 hours / week
- Hours in educational structure: 203 hours (7 hours, 1 day/week)
- Age limits: <24 y.o.
- Holidays: School Holidays
- Certification: Vocational Upper Secondary School Certificate (EQF 5).
- Exams: Final national examinations
- Salary: 21.78€ per day (From Ministry of Education 16.54€, from the company 5.24€)
- Apprentices from Vocational School (EPAS):
- Total: 2 years (according to the school schedule 9 months per academic year)
- Hours in working place: For 6 days per week, 6 hours / day, 36 hours/week
- For 5 days per week, 6 hours / day, 30 hours/week
- For 4 days per week, 6 hours / day, 24 hours/week
- Hours in educational structure: 1 day/week in morning shift, 4 days / week evening shift
- Age limits:<23y.o.
- Holidays: School holidays, After the first 12 months.
- For 6 days per week, 24days/year
- For 5 days per week, 20days/year
- For 4 days per week, 16 days/year
- Certification:Diploma / Ptychio (Πτυχίο). EQF4

- Exams: Final In-school examinations
- Salary: 21.78€ per day (From Ministry of Education 16.54€, from the company 5.24€)

Case Study 2. Internship: Independent Power Transmission Operator

This internship was developed and run in partnership with local business near to the Vocational Institute of Aigaleo. Especially the local small business community of West Attica -Athens (Areas of Korydallos and Aigaleo), have propose a cooperation for internship. Its purpose was to address the issue of high unemployment in one of Greece's most disadvantaged areas.

The Institutes and business community established a professional relationship over the last three years, providing the local community the opportunity of work-based learning, to improve their prospects of getting out of long-term unemployment.

The internship was designed to be delivered over duration of a semester and offers real commercial work placement in the local community. The labour including Computer Service, Software houses, Pharmaceuticals, Café shops, Bar and Restaurants, small industries and shops.

The Vocational Institute of Aigaleo, through employer engagements, became aware of the skills shortages in the Informatics industry sector (software and hardware) in the local businesses. Due to this shortage, the Vocational Institute, set the needs and the skill set requirements for an Internship.

Structure

- From Vocational Training Institutes (IEK):
- Total: 960 hours
- Hours in working place: 960 hours (8 hours/ day, 4 days/week)
- Hours in educational structure:0 hours
- Age limits: No limits
- Holidays: 2 weeks (Easter or Christmas Holidays), National days and celebrations
- Certification: Certification of Vocational Training (BEK)– (EQF 5).
- Exams: Final national examinations
- Salary:0€ per day
- Requirements: Trainees have to complete the first two semester of their studies

- Similar scheme has been developed from Local University (University of West Attica – www.uniwa.gr)
- Total: First period: 1st October (or 1st November) to 31st March (or 30th April)
- Second period: 1st April to 30th September
- Hours in working place: 960 hours (8 hours/ day, 4 days/week)
- Hours in educational structure: 0 hours
- Age limits: No limits
- Holidays: 2 weeks (Easter or Christmas Holidays), National days and celebrations
- Certification: Bachelor (EQF 6)
- Exams: No exams
- Salary: 580,80 € per month (280,00€ from the Institute, 300,80€ from the business).
- Requirements: Trainees have to complete their studies (8 semester – 4 years).

Work Based Learning

The internship learners complete their studies and they have two possibilities. Either they can choose the internship business or they can find a new job placement on their own.

If the business is certificated from a previous corporation (not a formal process), the employers of the internship learners must declare the official job description. In any other occasion they must sign up in the official system of Internship and fill some forms about their business.

The internship learners chose the appropriate business from the local community. When they signed a contract with their host employees, they started their internship. For Vocational Institutes (IEK) internship learners this contract can be start every 1st or 15th of any month but for University trainees the dates are strict. They can start their internship only in 1st of October or November or April.

In the end of every month, during the internship period, the host employer made a report about the internship learner. When the internship period ended, the internship learners submit a detailed report for everyday of their internship period, a brief report for every week and a checklist with the done targets in the end of every month. Also, they filled a questionnaire about the quality of their internship and they submitted a full report from their host employer.

PART II –

INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUPS

ITALY

2.1. ITALY – Main Findings from the Interviews

Stakeholders Interviews – Main Findings

Partner: Assolombarda **Country:** Italy

Name of Stakeholder (organization): Pompetravaini SpA

Type of Stakeholder: Business

Role in the organization of the interviewee: HR Manager

WBL Context

The company has been using WBL for a few years and is satisfied with the use of this tool, which allows it to train human resources that it hardly finds on the job market (in particular intermediate level technicians in the mechanical sector) and gives the opportunity to implement generational turnover policies effectively. Young people are integrated into the company with extra-curricular internship or apprenticeship contracts, after a pre-selection made by the training institution to identify the figures sought by the company, and are accompanied on the training path by a company tutor. The management of the training project requires the company, especially in the start-up phase, to make a considerable commitment on the part of HR, as the tutor himself must be instructed to carry out this new task without however neglecting his workload. The WBL experience offers young people a great opportunity for personal growth, in terms of learning and socializing at work, and easy adaptation in the production area of the territory. No apprentice has interrupted the WBL experience.

Connection VET-Business

The company works in close collaboration with some local technical and professional institutes to organize company visits, project work, traineeships, apprenticeships etc. The organizations cross-refer all the information necessary for the start and success of the WBL experiences and, in

this perspective, the company has also made a specific agreement with the schools to adopt a particular time modulation of the WBL.

Ideal Scenario

For the company, "the difference is made/depends by the school". The ideal organization would be to be able to weave a close synergy with proactive and organized professional training institutes which, with their openness to dialogue with the world of work, represent the primary interlocutor for the training of young professional figures, trained to benefit a fast and responsive company. For the trainee / apprentice, the ideal follow-up is to understand what the world of work really is and to integrate into an organization with a conscious choice and personal satisfaction.

Stakeholders Interviews – Main Findings

Partner: Assolombarda **Country:** Italy

Name of Stakeholder (organization): Nove25 Srl

Type of Stakeholder: Business

Role in the organization of the interviewee: Product Manager

WBL Context

Nove25 has been collaborating for over 10 years with a professional training institute for the various types of WBL, a tool that the company considers very useful and "for some points of view, even fantastic" as it gives it the opportunity to give a significant boost to the company innovation, by means of a new reading of business processes by the open mindedness of young people hired in apprenticeships. Young people are integrated into the company with internships and then continue with apprenticeship contracts, after a pre-selection made by the training institute to identify the figures that show characteristics and interests close to those of the company. The integration process in the company is followed by a tutor, who can be a Department Manager or a work colleague. The management of the training project initially involves an enormous cost of time as the tutor himself must be supported continuously so that he can explain and supervise the apprentice's work while carrying out his activity at the same time. The follow-up offered to the trainee / apprentice consists in the opportunity to create a structured approach to work, acquiring an overall view of the company and the ability to respect the rules connected to the company organization. No apprentice has interrupted the WBL experience.

Connection VET-Business

Along WBL's experience, there are continuous contacts with the tutor of the training institute, who periodically visits the company to follow the apprentice's path. The collaboration between the company and the training institute also extends to company visits, lectures at school, school-work alternation, internships. The two organizations cross-refer all the information necessary for the start and success of the WBL experiences and, in this perspective, the company has encouraged the school to plan courses (for example on health and safety, foreign language, Office package) that facilitate access to the world of work.

Ideal Scenario

The integration of apprentices is an opportunity for renewal for the company and gives it the opportunity to collaborate in the growth of the new generations, in a logic of social responsibility. Synergy with training institutions is essential, because the latter, through the apprenticeship experiences, better understand the needs of the production sector and can train young people better prepared to enter the world of work. The ideal follow-up for the apprentice is the opportunity offered by the company to mature a technical / professional and human growth, regardless of whether the employment relationship can continue at the end of the training period.

Stakeholders Interviews – Main Findings

Partner: CIOFS-FP VENETO **Country:** ITALY

Name of Stakeholder (organization): ___TOP1 SRL

Type of Stakeholder: Business

Role in the organization of the interviewee: ADMINISTRATOR

WBL Context

The TOP1 srl company is an SME from Coneglianese that works on the Italian territory, mainly deals with rental services and wholesale trade of sanitization and hygiene products. It is a young and dynamic company that in recent months has been developing new commercial sectors such as green and services / consultancy for companies to create sanitation and hygiene plans by adopting innovative and low environmental impact technologies. The company's administrator, Alessandro Bortolon, has been working in the hygiene products sector for years, always trying to expand his range of commercial proposals. The company has believed in the project from the beginning, has many expectations in this collaboration that it believes to be winning, giving the possibility of inserting young resources that can be shaped ad hoc for the needs of the company, be more concrete and less embedded in predetermined schemes and pre-

packaged. The company hosted a boy of the dual course for 500 hours in an apprenticeship, the experience reports the administrator was very positive to the point that the boy at the end of the training year will be confirmed and included in the company staff. Mr. Bortolon underlines the importance of reiterating these initiatives which are precious aids for companies but also the possibility of growth for a young boy who has yet to clarify his ideas about his future, allows also to outline the propensities and bring out the potential often unspoken in the world of school. The company was contacted by the stage tutor who proposed 3 profiles of students of the course, after evaluating the CV and a cognitive interview they came to the choice of 1 of the three boys who showed interest both in the commercial part of the sales and in the most operational part of the warehouse.

Connection VET-Business

The company became available and collaborative with the training school from the beginning also because they were not aware of these contractual possibilities of WBL, in fact Mr. Alessandro Bortolon, underlines that the trade associations or more generally the consultants of work have never informed the company that these programs existed with schools, indeed at the time of the contract the consultant had numerous difficulties in understanding how he had to manage the practice, to the point that the tutor of the school was put in contact with the consultant to be able to guide him in carrying out the practices. There clearly emerges the need for greater collaboration with associations and training schools, so that companies can be better informed and there are no bureaucratic problems that slow down and often can put in difficulty the activation of apprenticeships. He reports that comparing that other referents of local companies were not aware of the project, and they expressed a "nuisance" about the lack of information that could be useful and many of them. During the interview, Mr. Bortolon asked who is responsible for letting companies know about these initiatives? The schools? Associations? The region? Employment centers? After 3 years of experimentation, everything is still unclear; stresses that it is unthinkable for a company to look for projects and collaborations, there is a communication gap between educational institutions - institutional and associations / accountants-consultants. He reports that a few months earlier he had called the Conegliano Employment Center to ask if there were any job placement projects and they did not give any even less exhaustive information for the dual project in place at the CIOFS-FP Conegliano.

Ideal Scenario

To improve the synergy between companies and ifp, the Top1 srl administrator proposes a portal that connects companies and schools without intermediaries that slow down communication. A compensation system between companies and schools should be created in order to guarantee the best training for young people, maintaining constant relationships that allow the school to update itself by creating attractive figures on the market and companies to keep the

contacts and the circulation of information alive. The follow-up the company has not expressed, believing that it is the responsibility of schools or employment centres. Lastly, he points out that one of the greatest critical issues encountered by staff resources is increasingly the lack of care and correctness of the CVs that are sent and the lack of originality, especially today in a digitized and branded way.

Stakeholders Interviews – Main Findings

Partner: Confartigianato Lombardia/Associazione CIOFS FP Lombardia

Country: Italia

Name of Stakeholder (organization): see below

Type of Stakeholder: Business

Role in the organization of the interviewee: see below

Interviews Settings

Roberta Gagliardi (Confartigianato) and Antonio Sassi (CIOFS FP Lombardia association) conducted the interviews jointly. In Lombardy the identification and involvement of the firms were carried out by Roberta Gagliardi within the membership network of Confartigianato by identifying representatives of companies experienced in co-management of pathways either in work-linked training (both school-job and education) or in First Level Apprenticeship. These interviews were made using Skype because of Covid-19 emergency restrictions and a video recording of each interview under authorisation by interested parties. Precisely, the interviews (for an average duration of an hour and a half apiece) involved:

Rocco Dabraio, owner of the company "Impianti Elettrici Dabraio" Cav. Ambrogio Colombo street, 36, 21012 – Cassago Magnago (VA), <https://www.impantieletricedabraio.it/>, active in the electricity and photovoltaic industry with 6 employees, the interview took place on 3rd April at 14:30. Dabraio is also National and Regional President Gruppo Giovani Imprenditori (Young Entrepreneurs Group) of Confartigianato and delegate in the National Council. With regards to the subject of the interview the Company has experience in both the First Level Apprenticeship and in the work-linked training.

Flavio Bassani, "Gecotec" Managing Director, Valsugana street, 7 – 23900 Lecco, www.gecotec.it, the interview took place on 3rd April at 15:45. The Company has 4 employees and deals with engineering in the carpentry sector, design and qualification of welding processes and also aluminium processing. Bassani is also President of Gruppo Giovani Imprenditori (Young Entrepreneurs Group) of Confartigianato Lecco and Gruppo Giovani (Youth Group) of Confartigianato Lombardia Vice-president vicar. With regards to the subject of the interview the

Company has experience in work-linked training with technical schools, for a total amount of 80-160 annual hours.

Barbara Nespoli owner and Export Manager of the Company "Arredi 3N" dei fratelli Nespoli S.r.l., F. Filzi street, 12 – 20833 Giusano (MB),) www.arredi3n.com . The Company has 35 employees and is in charge of design and furniture production for public and private environments to be used collectively (such as all level of school, etc.) with a significant market share also international. The interview was on Thursday, April 30 at 11.00. Regarding the interview subject the Company has experience in work-linked training with technical school and Vocational school.

WBL Context

For "Impianti Elettrici Dabraio"

The company resorts to work-linked training (and recently also to First Level Apprentice) to test and evaluate new hires. The model adopted by the company includes a process of multiannual training where tasks of increasing complexity are set out, taking into consideration the conditions of real context which can be found in the yards. In this model it is decisive the identification of a leading figure for each student all year long. This figure has to face the owner of the company who is the ultimately responsible. This choice comes from the fact that an intermediate figure "works best" by facilitating young people in the growth. It was necessary to invest in these figures, by training them, stimulating some skills and attitudes, also personal. During the interview differences have emerged between students attending the Istruzione e Formazione Professionale (IeFP) Regionale (vocational school) and the ones attending the Public School (technical school), synthesized below:

Selection

With the IeFP for the company it is possible to point out tasks and work activities planned for the internship period and – as far as possible – the CFP (Vocational Training Centre) proposes the more suitable candidate for the business request. With the Public School, this does not happen. There is not a similar methodological approach with the Public School, which autonomously indicates the student (often according to only geographical criteria of greatest proximity between workplace and home).

Training

IeFP students turn out in compliance with Safety training (and medical examination) and can be "directly" entered in the workplaces. This does not happen with the students of the higher education institute. As a consequence, the need to ensure to all students of upper secondary school (at least technical and vocational) a proper training on safety emerges to ensure to all students a direct and "safe" access to the work-linked training, focusing on the involvement of the company on learnings and trainings.

Evaluation

For the students of Public School, the evaluating process is realized only by the filling of the sheet given by the Institute. In contrast, with the leFP students – especially for the Apprentice – the evaluating process includes a greater interaction with the educators ongoing. With the leFP students, who have a longer work experience, there is a time of examination at least “monthly” (for the apprentices it matches with the paycheck, that is a significant moment) entering into the detail of learning, behaviour, and possible critical issues. With these students the evaluation takes place daily when guidance is given, including training and educational activities.

For “Gecotec”

The detection of young occurred through the personal and familiar network

The pathways in work-linked training is based on the 3 areas in which the company is structured.

The model of work-linked training adopted by the company is characterized by dynamism. During the years, the company established collaborative relationships with several local and international schools, aware of that in the court of public opinion, the school system is often considered unable to prepare youth to labour market and the company not to offer enough moment of knowledge growth.

Thanks to 3D LAB (technological laboratory made available to companies), Geotech wanted to contribute to fill both these shortcomings. In 2019, this Methodological approach was reflected in a proposal of a Contest¹ directed to students from several local schools to create a combined course, work-linked training + project work aimed at stimulating the start of a business idea.

Regarding the work-linked training experience as planned at institutional level, according to the company, coherence of choice greatly affects the trend and the success in the youth school career according to the kind of tasks carried out in the company. The internship often highlights that the school choice does not match with personal reasons and goals. In these cases, it is difficult to set and handle the internship properly.

For the “Arredi 3N”.

Students are selected and sent from Schools, without the possibility of intervention for the company, also pursuant to a long-term collaboration.

During the business experience it is evident that students arrive at the internship not very motivated, because of the awareness about the obligation of this experience more than its usefulness; only after a while the enthusiasm, the involvement emerge because students experience

¹For further details <https://3dlab.one/>

the relationships, the specific activities, the different operating environments and the organizational models

In fact, the company ensures to all students a presentation, view and “experimentation” of all the labour process (production, administrative, commercial, etc.) where they will be involved even though they take part only in some tasks and phases. A specific focus is ensured to workplace safety.

Regarding the result of the experience, it emerges that students often ask to repeat the experience the following year.

Connection VET-Business

For the “Impianti Elettrici Dabraio”

The formative tutor is the reference for both the IeFP and the School. No other figure is involved. Overall, the collaboration works well even if the relationship with the school is standard while with the IeFP there is more flexibility and customization. A deficiency is that schools do not report to the companies the possible difficulties of youth placed (dyslexia, ASD etc.) and this could create criticality. The tutor shows student's educational and training background, so the entrepreneur can define the path in the company.

For the “Gecotec”

The common element is “the school absence” in each step of the work-linked training, from the organization to the management of it. There was a concrete timely involvement when criticality emerged. Summarizing it emerges:

The contrast between experience and training experience, between school and job proposal

The need for more cooperation between the business world and the school and the teaching world, for example by proposing real business orders to school. Today, this need clashes with some legislative, technical and administrative constrains.

In this sense, particularly in the Italian business environment, which is characterized by MSME, the role of employers' association becomes a key role and they can be a hub of experiences, technologies, collaborations throughout the territory.

For the “Arredi 3N”

The tutor who interacts with the company, also ongoing, keeps the relationship: there are not problems highlighted.

An evaluation about what was proposed to students, their behaviour and the ways of relation is given to school.

Today, the work-linked training for the educational institutions is not promotional. It is compulsory and there are some constraints. The Usefulness/opportunity is not properly valued in educational terms of personal and professional growth.

Ideal Scenario

For “Impianti Elettrici Dabraio”

The best thing is to make the work-linked training (at least for those who do regular technical or professional training), compulsory for everyone. It is necessary a cultural change regarding the idea that there is in our families (for their role in the orientation).

The sentence: **The apprentice is the most beautiful thing in this moment because as well as allowing to study and awarding a degree, it allows you to see first-hand the job.**

For “Gecotec”

The perfect work-linked training should be completely redesigned, involving and starting from the companies as main character and not only as a guest.

Specifically:

It is noted the need for a customization of the internships, proposed by the school and that should not be standard. Internships should be custom-built for each student.

It is useful more attention to personal attitude, different needs and intelligences, emotional aspects, also regarding the evaluation, which should not be based solely on the student progress, but also on what is done on the job, in the free time, etc.

The sentence: **“let’s get companies inside schools, since middle school, also as protagonist of the students’ orientational way.**

For “Arredi 3N”

It should be done an intervention to present to families the industry, the profession and the work-linked training, so that they know what their sons will do, also regarding the job and the profitable prospects once they get the job.

Generally, it is necessary to report, at the moment of the path choice, that there is an important and valorising experience in business.

We need to be able to do conferences in the schools (also in the middle school) with entrepreneurs, to show the possibilities in the territory.

The sentence: ***“we need to make youngsters aware that the internship is not only a number of hours to dispose of. It is sad to see that students arrive at the internship without enthusiasm because they feel compelled. 3 days are enough to see the change, a sign that the experience on the job is motivating”.***

2.2. ITALY – Main Findings from the Focus Group

FOCUS GROUP – Main Findings

Partner: ___CIOFS-FP VENETO **Country:** _ITALY

Introduction and Experience

During the training period 2017/2018 the first VET courses as part of the national experimentation of the dual system were activated. It has been detected a good cooperation with the entrepreneurial world, with companies available to intervene in the training process of the young people. The dual system organically integrates training and work by giving students the opportunity to achieve their qualifications through on-the-job learning. It is a question of operating in the wake of the experience of the leFP and the VET model, reinforcing the logic of the inductive method, teaching skills, the reality task, the constant dialectic between action and reflection on action, between theory and practice. With the experimentation of the dual system, the relationship with companies is strengthened, which become not only places where students are welcomed for internship experiences, but real partners for the planning and joint implementation of training courses.

The participants in the focus group were the pupils of the 3rd dual of the CIOFS-fp of Conegliano. The boys are in the last year of the WBL training course with double qualification:

- operator at the point of sale
- logistics operator

The two interview groups were divided according to the qualification that the students chose at the beginning of the training course:

Focus group 1 sales made up of 5 people

Focus group 2 logistics consisting of 5 people

The class group consisting of 16 students is quite heterogeneous in terms of age, they are all adults, there is a majority of male students, many of these come from difficult school courses

that have led to a significant demotivation towards the study and school. I emphasize that the qualifications that we have are chosen indiscriminately by male or female students.

WBL Experience

Focus group 1 sales (5) focus group 2 logistics (5). All members of the group were included by the training school in the companies where they carried out internal training, all of them found themselves well in the assigned job and found that the assigned company met the expectations they had before starting the training. The tasks assigned for all of them were relevant with the study path, the presentation meeting between student-company and tutor was fundamental in order to better define the tasks and organization of the time, this made it possible to agree on a path of growth that was based on the skills they had to acquire reported in the PFI. Important for them was the presentation phase to the company accompanied by the tutor stage with reading the documents and explaining them. Someone (20% 1 of sales and 1 of logistics) encountered relational and communication problems with some work colleagues, smoothed out later with an informal peer interview without the intervention of the company or internship tutor. The difficulty of managing school and work emerges from both groups, companies often change their working hours for internal needs and students have found themselves in difficulty with both study and travel times, the intervention of the stage tutor of the school in order to better organize working hours. Only a few of them (2 people) claim to have thought about abandoning their studies for personal extracurricular reasons.

VET Provider

The totality of the participants in the focus group declared that they chose the CIOFS-FP Conegliano because there was the possibility of doing the dual path, many of them, in fact, were looking for a school with more practice and less theory that would give them the concrete opportunity to enter the world of work. For all the Ciofs-FP Conegliano responded to their general expectations, 1 person of the sales course and 1 person of the logistics course said that he expected more from the content point of view in the part of theoretical delivery, especially in the professional subjects, they found that often the contents were not useful at work. 3 members of the logistics focus group and 2 of the sales focus group found that the tasks assigned by the company were often very specific and sectoral so they could hardly be faced in theory hours, also because in the last two years the hours of professional subjects are few. The totality of the two groups underlined the too many hours of cultural subjects at the expense of the professional ones, even if filled with the work experience, often felt the need to have more professional hours also to have explanations or insights on the jobs they were going to carry out in the company, even the lack of hours of accompanying to work often led to difficulties, in fact, the students were unable to have defined time spaces where they could compare with the tutor internship (in the dual path project there are no hours to accompany the work as in ordinary courses). The

boys were satisfied with the work on soft skills done at school and in parallel with work; this year they were evaluation jettison and reported inside the report card so that both pupils and families could have a comparison between behavior at school and at work, the boys note how the assessments were better than those of the work compared to those obtained in school, this confirms the general line of how they perceive work compared to school, giving the former greater importance.

Business

Most of the work experiences took place in the GDO (sales: 3/5 logistics 4/5); the remaining students served in SMEs (logistics 1/5) and traditional shops (sales 2/5). The companies we have worked with for years are chains that have offices both at national and European level and have already requested the possibility of having internships / apprenticeships carried out also in offices outside Italy; this possibility had also been mentioned to the boys and 60% have shown themselves not only interested but also willing to make an experience abroad. The focus groups revealed a general satisfaction with the experience gained over the two years from both a business and a school point of view, reinforced by the awareness of around 70% of the participants that this experience will continue after the qualification is achieved, will be hired as apprentices by the companies where they carried out internal training.

Ideal scenario

The boys proved to be very critical in analysing their path, 80% of them said they had not given their best at school while 90% said they had lived up to the company's demands at work and to have worked according to the required standards. It clearly emerges that the presence in the company is constant while that at school is put in the background, it is, from their point of view, less important and more negligible, this brings us back to their need for less more practical theory; they repeat several times that it is difficult for them to be constant at school while in the world of work it is easier and lighter. The need for everyone to better organize time at school emerges, there has been an extension of the organization of school-work time in 2 years and in 3 years. In the second year the choice was made to split the week in half at school and half at work, the boys found this system very confusing and not very continuous, in fact the companies were unable to give defined tasks because they were partially present; while in the third year the choice of the intensive 4-month period in the company and the subsequent one at school was more appreciated, giving the opportunity to totally enter the world of work and to be able to carry out their duties independently after an initial period of insertion, thus giving children have the opportunity to develop a spirit of initiative.

FOCUS GROUP – Main Findings Template

Partner: Ass CIOFS FP Lombardia Country: Italia

Introduction and experience

The focus group was held on 15th April 2020 from 2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m by using FAD mode on G Suite Meet platform. The decision to use remote mode was made due to the health emergency caused by COVID-19 disease. We felt it was appropriate to talk about the apprentices involved in Article 43 who have not been able to continue their company experience over the recent months. That's because they were fully part of the target required by the focus group but also to provide them with an additional tool to elaborate and discuss about the current situation. The focus group was led by Dr. Roberta Aledda, Representative for apprenticeship Art. 43 at CIOFS headquarters in Cesano Maderno and the support of Dr. Antonio Sassi, apprenticeship manager at CIOFS Lombardia at central level, as moderator and observer.

There were 8 guys in the focus group, 7 of them from the Restaurant/Bar sector and one from the Commercial/sales technician sector. All of them are attending the fourth year of study. The group was composed of 3 girls and 5 boys all enrolled on the course as apprentices hired with former Art.43 of Legislative Decree no. 81/2015 for the achievement of professional level diploma.

Precisely, they are all the apprentices of the VET centre CFP CIOFS FP in Cesano enrolled on fourth year courses who are not working due to the COVID-19 restrictions and that caused – during phase 1 in which the work was carried out – the companies' closure. Everyone was connected to the video meeting from their home through the available tools: computers and smartphones. Each participant was given the freedom to participate or not to answer when the question or topic it was not to their liking. The conductor and the observer had their microphone and webcam always on, the guys chose to have the webcam off and turned on the microphone as signal to speak. Only on rare occasions it was necessary to encourage their speech. Most of the time they were active and involved.

WBL experience

Each participant exhaustively described their experience during the apprenticeship and how it was born. Last year two guys were already apprentices at the same company, and they are finishing their professional diploma course in the same way. Everyone works in medium or small places: bars, restaurants, pizzerias and small or medium shops, characterized by informal and often family-run locations. Most of the apprentices were directed towards the training by their

own VET teachers, instead someone proposed himself to the VET centre responsible. The institution acted as moderator between availability, business needs and willingness of the students. For each of them the curricular internship undertaken in previous years was fundamental: the outcome of this experience and the positive judgment of companies, together with the proactive intervention by VET operators, they have made it possible for all the guys to stay and train in companies already known thanks to the school-work alternation but with a different way of collaboration (apprenticeship). Apprentices carried out operational roles and tasks for the company and above all according to their own aspirations and goals; someone else in order to try new areas of work and make a wiser choice at the end of experience. No one expressed the will or thought to leave the training undertaken, even though the effort to reconcile work, study and personal life has emerged.

VET Provider

All participants stated the choice of vocational training courses proposed by the CIOFS according to type of course and training proposed: more space for practical and laboratory expertise than theoretical content that prevail in ordinary school. Some of the guys come from technical or professional institutes that disappointed them or didn't meet their expectations due to a lack of practice activities and the distance from working and productive context. The choice to enrol in a VET centre was made precisely to learn "how to do a job" and enter the working world quickly and with good proficiency. It is highly appreciated the school-work alternation reinforced with the increase of hours at the company from the second year.

All participants consider the institution in line with their expectations and able to offer them the tools to test themselves with the labour market soon. Apprentices are familiar with CIOFS apprenticeship proposal under Article 43 and appreciate the distribution between external training and attendance at the company (about 400 hours of external training at the VET centre and 500 hours of internal training at the company) which is similar to what they had already sustained in previous years with "increased" school-work alternation.

The return of the guys to classroom twice a week was helpful to learning and allowed them not to feel left out by the group but essential part of it.

Business

All participants explained in detail the tasks carried out at the company. Tasks, responsibility, communication and work business methods were gradually introduced by responsible, until all the apprentices achieved a good degree of autonomy. The proficiency established in the formative assessment plan, which was agreed with the company, were generally adhered, in some cases they were even exceeded thanks to the introduction of activities even higher than the

profile, but always supervised by the tutor. The guys didn't perceive a sharp separation in terms of proficiency between their past role as interns and their current role as apprentices, skills and knowledge required and put in play. The process was gradual and ameliorative and the choice to move on to apprenticeship was a natural evolution of the trust relationship that had already been built between the company and the student. Apprentices were able to develop positive relationship with both colleagues and owners, showing themselves mature from a relational point of view: "they're like a family to me", "they treat me like a son". They feel appreciated and valued, despite some initial difficulties just by some of them.

Ideal scenario

To amazement of conductor and moderator, the guys didn't stress any great needs for improvement in the management of the apprenticeship by the institution. Even though they were encouraged to be honest and free in their answers, most of them appreciate the mediation effort by the centre between business and personal needs. They felt guided and supported by the teacher and the Director. The only weak point was the lack of clarity in explaining to the company and apprentices what internal training and the composition of the final payroll consisted of. This fault, caused by an "organizational" reason within the VET centre (replacement of the representative for the apprenticeship in Article 43 due to resignation of the appointed operator at the beginning of the year), made them feel disoriented for a few weeks. The problem subsided with the arrival of the new representative who remotely tried (given the coincidence with the restrictions caused by the COVID-19 disease) to build a sincere and trustworthy relationship with apprentices and companies. None of them complained about the salary but rather about the difficulties in understanding the payroll and its peculiarities.

Two suggestions were made:

increase general knowledge hours during the lessons at the centre in order to be more appropriate in the interaction with customers, consumers, colleagues, suppliers and supervisors.

increase their involvement within the class by providing for activities to be carried out together with their classmates.

IRELAND

2.3. Ireland – Main Findings from the Interviews

Stakeholders Interviews – Main Findings

Partner: City of Dublin ETB

Country: Ireland

Name of Stakeholder (organization): Ballsbridge College

Type of Stakeholder (VET Centre or Business): Further Education College (FE)

Role in the organization of the interviewee: Principal

WBL

The interviewed explained that the organization provides WBL in the form of Apprenticeship (2-year programme in Auctioneering and Property Services) and so far, the overall image of the outputs has been positive. To run this kind of programme in a Further Education environment is something new, but the interviewed argues that they are adapting very well and the students are getting a lot from it. Although the positive outcomes explained, it was also discussed about the first negative perceived, which was the poor engagement to the programmes by the employers. Currently, there are 3 supervisors in Ballsbridge that visits the workplace at least once a year and in the second year, the apprentice produces a cap-stone project. According to the selection process, the apprentice must be above 18 years old and his chosen by the employer. Since the Apprenticeship only started in 2018, this college don't have already a full cycle, but so far, the follow up is offered to the apprenticeship is mainly by feedback surveys. To date, they have already apprentices that drop-out the WBL programme, and according to the interviewed, they're reasons were mainly illness, pregnancy or left the employer (two failed the first-year modules so they couldn't progress to the second year).

Connection VET-Business

According to the interviewed, the type of synergy established between the VET Provider and the Business is under constant development and evaluation. The companies are involved in a pre-schedule module development, they reviewed the modules and give feedback, in order that the quality assurance of the programmes meets the industry standard. There is also a consortium leading out the national apprenticeship and there are representatives of employers on this. They will play a role in the review of the programme. The relationship and the connection between VET and Business it is being developed to go behind the established of an apprenticeship. They are building link with employers and past pupils of the college who had become estate agents are ringing the college and are looking to get involved to hire the apprentices. There is an on-site meeting between the employer, apprentice and college which is a supportive meeting where the progress of the apprentice is discussed with them and whether they need additional supports.

Ideal Scenario

According to the interviewed, a lot of people are still unaware of this Apprenticeship because it is new. When it is more established, ideally, they think they will have a deeper relationship with the employers. Maybe to increase the number of visits to the company and for the companies to understand more their roles and responsibilities. Another suggestion was to develop an alumni association and track the apprentices with a destination survey. Keeping contact because they will be in the industry. In the future they could come in and give guest talks to future apprentices too.

Stakeholders Interviews – Main Findings

Partner: City of Dublin ETB **Country:** Ireland

Name of Stakeholder (organization): Ballyfermot College

Type of Stakeholder (VET Centre or Business): Further Education College (FE)

Role in the organization of the interviewee: Deputy Principal

WBL

This college organises Trainee programmes in Animation. According to the interviewed, these programmes are great since their students are aiming to go into the animation visual effects industry and working alongside with industry professionals really keeps them focused on relating and understanding the relationship between theory in the classroom and practice in the workplace. The practical training in the classroom with the real-world training is the combination of the best possible experience which is given by WBL programmes. If students were only in the classroom, they might be learning one particular piece of software in isolation, not in the experience of a workflow.

According to practice, the college supervisor meets the mentors and the trainees, one after the other (or at the same time depending the needs are like) and he makes sure to talk to the trainees every single visit. The feedback is given to the interviewed itself. According to the selection process for the traineeship: First of all, they put the courses up on the FETCHcourses.ie website as well as their own college website. Applications are open so the interested person would make an application on the college's application system. This will trigger an interview, so that the applicant and the coordinator of the course would talk, look at their experience to date, where they hope to go and their expectations for the course. The coordinator also asks them of their knowledge of the course and also any experience they have either in software or other relevant areas. From that, a decision is made to offer them a place on the course.

According to the type of follow-up offered to the trainee, this college don't have any established processes yet because they are facing the first group. They are scheduling to first

have an exit interview with apprentices and contact the related industry and old pupils who said before that are looking for someone. We've always done that. Industries that knock on our door or phone or looking for a graduate.

Connection VET-Business

According to the type of synergy established between the VET Provider and Business, the interviewed gave a good example: the college has some industry people who were very keen to take on trainees. However, a lot of these companies are relatively small and they didn't have an extra computer space for the trainee to work at. So, one of the things the college come up was two computers that are basically field computers. What the college proposed is that they could provide the business with a computer for that training while the trainees are on site and the companies just jumped at this idea.

According to the type of relation this college have with the other organization involved, was very interesting explained by the interview. Their course coordinator receives calls from companies and the college attended at various industry occasions. There is being done and collective effort from both VET and business in order to observe these new apprentices' footsteps.

According to the information shared between organizations, this college haven't shared trainee results with the employer. As part of the preparation for their first work placement the trainees created profiles on LinkedIn and those LinkedIn profiles including sample work that the students had or whatever is relevant and appropriate was shared with the potential employers. So, the employers could effectively view the students and select which ones they thought most suitable for them using LinkedIn.

Ideal Scenario

To this college, it would be ideal to build up a knowledge and profile of each particular company and the way they work. This college needs to build up a profile of the needs of each employer, what they're looking for, what part of the market they're in. Also build a profile on what software each individual employer uses. It's very important for this college to match as best as they can the skill set of the trainee with employer's needs. It is also important in the future programmes in this college to have a constant course coordinator who's there for the students. It must be someone that they can identify with.

Stakeholders Interviews – Main Findings

Partner: City of Dublin ETB

Country: Ireland

Name of Stakeholder (organization): Realtime Technologies Ltd

Type of Stakeholder (VET Centre or Business): Business

Role in the organization of the interviewee: Production Supervisor

WBL

This business offers a Traineeship in collaboration with the Colaiste Dhulaigh (a Further Education College). It is a 48-week traineeship and is organised in the following way: The trainee spends the first 12 weeks in the college, followed by 12 weeks in the company. Then the trainee goes back into the college for another 12 weeks and then finishes in the company for another 12 weeks.

The interviewed recognized that this programme is a good thing for both the company and the college. The business had a very positive experience so far and they have gained staff members with good qualifications at the end of the traineeship. In the end, it gives the trainees the experience of gaining good insights into the work that the business do and combining education with work experience.

According to the interviewed, the company has a trainer helping these programmes. This trainer was in place before they started to offer the traineeship, so this is an additional role this person does. When the company had 2 trainees at the same time, the interviewed itself helped the company trainer. It supervised the trainee on the production floor to ensure they were doing the correct things. The business also had an induction day of training which covered practical production skills and the trainees had to do an exam after it. If they didn't pass the test, they were not allowed to go onto the production floor.

According to the selection process for the traineeship, first of all, the interviewed had a meeting with the college to set up the type of candidates the business were looking for. Then the college arranged for candidates to send in their CVs into the company. From these CVs, they picked a number of candidates to interview. From this, they have selected the trainees.

According to the follow-up offered to the trainees, the company mainly give feedback on the trainee to the college after the traineeship ends. However, if the trainee has been very suitable

for the company, they offer them a job at the end of the traineeship. According to drop outs, only one trainee left, citing personal reasons for leaving.

Connection VET-Business

According to the type of synergy established between the VET Provider and the Business, the interviewed find it to be very good. It is very well organised, with a good communication through emails and meetings. There is also the support of the City of Dublin ETB Employer Engagement Unit. The relation with the other organization involved didn't went beyond the establishment traineeship. The relation with the City of Dublin ETB College (Colaiste Dhulaigh) was limited by only providing places in the company for trainees on this programme. The company meets with College Supervisor about 5 times a year. During these meetings, feedback was given by the company on how they feel each trainee is progressing. they found this exercise to be very useful. They also shared the trainee's timesheets when they are in the company with the college.

Ideal Scenario

The ideal scenario is to follow up a trainee to get a job inside the company.

Stakeholders Interviews – Main Findings

Partner: City of Dublin ETB **Country:** Ireland

Name of Stakeholder (organization): St. Vicents Catering

Type of Stakeholder (VET Centre or Business): Business

Role in the organization of the interviewee: Deputy Director of Catering

WBL

This company organizes a Commi Chef Apprenticeship with the collaboration of Colaiste Ide, (a Further Education College). According to the interviewed, this company is very well disposed to develop these programmes and to train apprentices. They see it as a win-win for the company and the apprentice. Since the company provide food in a hospital setting, they have to have suitably qualified people which might not be the case in the majority of catering situations.

According to the dedicated resources and activities, they have workplace mentors for each apprentice. Currently they have 2 Apprentices working, which mean we have 2 workplace mentors. These mentors work with the apprentices constantly through the day. They have to budget to pay the apprentices while they are in college and those days are paid as normal

working days. The apprentices are also encouraged to expand their knowledge by serving the food in the hospital ward and understanding the strict hygiene regulations that are required.

The selection process for the apprenticeship was created and advertised by the employer. The candidates were interviewed by the employer and then put forward to the college to be checked if they met the educational criteria. Prior to starting the apprenticeship, the apprentice is on a contract of either a Kitchen Porter or Catering Assistant. Once the apprenticeship is over, they revert to that contract. However, if there is a vacancy at the chef level, they are free to apply for this along with other employees. Although not guaranteed the position, the apprenticeship is recognised as an important qualification. It is in fact essential to get the job because of the relevant strict guidelines set out by the Department of Health for hospital catering. To date, this company don't have any apprentice drop-out.

Connection VET-Business

The City of Dublin ETB Employer Engagement Unit organised a day long time training for the workplace mentors. The company found this very beneficial. The company had worked with City of Dublin ETB previously through Crumlin College but started to work with Colaiste Ide when they had stopped the programme. This also suits as one of the Apprentices lives near the college. The company meet with the course tutor a couple times of during the year.

The End of Year Results are shared between the college and the company. The company also input into Assignments. The company has to mark the assignment and this is shared with the college. College attendance reports are not generally shared with the employer.

Ideal Scenario

The company feels that it would be good if Attendance Reports were shared by the college as they are paying the apprentice the normal wage even when they are in college. There is currently the expectation that the course content (Year 1 and Year 2) will complete in 12 months as appropriate. The company would prefer if there was a summer break. Because when the apprentice goes on a holiday, they have to catch up on all the assignments etc. If they were on summer break, they could provide more cover to other employees. Although the company do recognise that the college bring the number of days in college back to 1 or 2 days during the summer. Meeting with the course tutor a couple of times.

The company would also like to have some input into the course curriculum, especially as the catering work they do is so specialised for a hospital environment. They would like to be able to add some specific modules to the programme.

2.4 Ireland – Main Findings from the Focus Group

Partner: ____City of Dublin ETB **Country:** _Ireland

Introduction and Experience – 21 Apprentices –Age Range 17-23. Mix of Traditional Apprentices Courses such as Carpentry, Electricians and Motor Car Repairs.

WBL Experience

Very Positive Feedback from their Work Based Learning Experience. Discovered the apprenticeship through a range of different avenues – through friends, online adverts, sending a CV to an Employer. The Apprenticeship will last 4 years and was assigned to them. The majority never thought of dropping out. Only 2 of the group did due to the amount of work required. Some knew of people who had dropped out due to the better money being offered by different employers.

VET Provider

Their Experience with City of Dublin ETB has been very positive. However their particular Training Centre was chosen for that as that is how Apprenticeships are run in Ireland. They find the centre to be very good and well run and find the balance between theory and practical work to be fair and well balanced. They described the process of getting into the Apprenticeship. They are hired by the employer who register the Apprentice with Solas (National FET Agency). Solas allocates a place in one of the training centers.

Business

Excellent feedback from their experience with Employers. They all got to choose their employers. They all felt able to practice their training and gain more knowledge. Helped them understand a lot more about what they were doing in finer detail. Majority were briefed on what are job was all about through all different aspects of the job. They each had individual mentors to guide them and had a tools and a safety course. 2 did not as 1 worked with in a very small company and the other stated "I just reported to site every day and got told what to do on a day to day basis." In all cases the job description and/or the training agreement matched the duties they were given.

Ideal scenario

Many felt it was perfect. Some suggestions were for more breaks, longer lunches, better training centre equipment. One of the focus group felt each training phase should be longer than 22 weeks as everything was being rushed to get done. They felt the employers had done a great job with the Apprenticeships. Some suggested a more variety of the work they were given by the Employer and be given options for further training after the Apprenticeship was over. The

majority of the group think they could improve their role in the process by working harder and pushing themselves to achieve better results.

ENGLAND

2.5. ENGLAND – Main Findings from the Interviews

Stakeholders Interviews – Main Findings

Partner: Rinova **Country:** UK

Name of Stakeholder (organization): Planet Planit

Type of Stakeholder: Business

Role in the organization of the interviewee: Owner

WBL Context

Summary overall, when it comes to WBL there needs to be a rethink and this needs to include the following:

- How WBL can be embedded into the VET environment: by this, this means how do businesses better engage with the VET provider and embed 'real life' projects, problem solving and idea generation, so that there is strong connectivity to education and the contemporary work environment;
- How WBL is better supported in the workplace through skills swaps, mentoring and coaching and a culture change that embraces learning, at all levels and from every-day experiences.

I think it is a never-ending issue for both colleges, universities and VET and employers, as there is always a gap between what education provides and what employers want. It can be the case that employers are disconnected with the curriculum in VET or education and therefore the expectation is that the student or the apprentice reaches the workplace with all the skills and competence needed to work effectively from day one. So, this need for people to be 'ready for work' from the VET environment is unrealistic. There has to be WBL so that the employee can understand the nature and culture of the business. From the other perspective, the VET/educator needs to be more in-tune with what the sector requirements are – what the trends are and

what the trends might be. So, there needs to be more of an effort from both sides to better bridge the gap between the two sectors. As Planet Planit, we don't directly offer WBL, but there are some examples of relationship building activities I have been involved with/implemented with a view to bridging the gap between learning environment and the workplace, with a view to helping both sides gain a little more insight from one-another.

The Young Achievers competition for students in university studying event qualification; students were given an opportunity to give a presentation to industry professionals – a 'Dragons' Den' type pitch on which they had to present and receive professional feedback on what they had proposed. Importantly, this experience provided a brief that was based on what it would be like to produce a 'real life' pitch to business owners and managers. I have also been involved the Event Innovation Award where students were engaged to look at gaps or innovation in the industry to look at how fresh ideas can be brought into the events/hospitality space, which provided an ideal opportunity for students and employers/business owners to explore problems and solutions, along with opportunity.

We've also been involved in the Pan Out project, which engaged young people (15-17 years of age) as part of a Careers Cluster project, which engaged young people at school to debate the Hospitality Industry and especially where the industry was going and exploring sustainability issues as contemporary issues within the sector. The experience highlighted the enthusiasm shown by young people engaged in an impromptu debate – drawing this to the work-based learning – not to be too prescriptive and allow exploration of ideas and input, to improve and increase dynamics. This has a key learning experience for businesses/employers in giving young people credit for their ideas and in terms of creating work-based learning that encourages input and not just output.

Connection VET-Business

In the UK, it is important to say that synergy is really all about what goes on at a local level, especially in terms of relationship building and how keen both sides are in doing something together. If both parties are pro-active and reactive it tends to work, especially when there are good relationships and the collaborators are networked. Otherwise, it is a case of being too fragmented, which is what we see a lot within the industry. Overall, there is no one model that the industry can look to, copy or adapt. By the same token, there is no evidence that collaboration does not work at all. It is obvious that there needs to be a resource – a type of go to framework that is based on effective/good practice. As noted, Planet Planit does not offer WBL as such, but does broker relationships between education and employers in the sector. A good example of such brokerage is the Big Conversation event, which was a trade event that had a strong student focused, with a number of trade bodies, employers and students involved, this provided an excellent opportunity to explore ideas, opportunities, challenges and solutions.

Overall, there is a mismatch between the understanding of typical roles from an education perspective and the roles in the industry – this might be because of the lag between curriculum development and implementation and the speed at which the sector develops to keep up with trends, which businesses will always create and/or follow as they need to compete. So, some exploration of where the job roles meet and where they don't is really important and then it needs to be addressed. How it can be addressed is through creativity and innovative thinking between the industry and the educationalists/VET, so this is where the idea of education providing the 'essentials' – these are known or taught in an educational environment – how can the student be prepared to work in a business in a holistic way e.g. this can include an understanding how the business runs and what they can do to improve the business and/or contribute to how the business can develop and grow – employees need to be enterprising in the workplace and the sector would welcome this.

Then, there needs to be the framework – business networks, mapping and resourcing, looking at a local and wider context and the future, and future-planning in terms of how the curriculum can change to address industry changes, and how 'training labs' can be developed or businesses that can provide an experiential learning in emerging areas can offer skills exchanges. All of this of course needs a culture change right across the industry and within the business from bottom to top.

Ideal Scenario

Essentially, you need a driver - the someone who is the catalyst to connect and drive this work forward and currently in the sector, there's no one person or organisation who is doing this right now. Review of motivation, aspiration and competence to develop progression routes so that the industry becomes a career and not just a stop-gap between proper jobs.

Stakeholders Interviews – Main Findings

Partner: Rinova Limited **Country:** UK

Name of Stakeholder (organization): Katlin Halop

Type of Stakeholder: Business

Role in the organization of the interviewee: Assistant Food and Beverage Outlets Manager, Hilton Hotel Tower of London

WBL Context

In summary, this interview captures the following:

- (i) The need for VET Providers/Apprenticeship Providers to fully include employers in all aspects of apprenticeship training and assessment.
- (ii) The need for employers and VET providers to agree that there is sufficient time embedded into work-based-learning programmes for progress to be reviewed.

Yes, Hilton is a big corporation and encouraging people development is key as it helps individuals to be engaged in a more fulfilling work environment. Joining the Hilton includes 'on-boarding' which covers all aspects of HR and career development and includes the production of career development plans at probation and these are continually reviewed through supervisory meetings. These reviews are important as they are a means of bridging skills and competence gaps and the need for continuous development. As a large corporation, we are lucky to have lots of people, expertise and opportunities, so we do a lot of cross training between departments and hotels in order to ensure that employees are able to gain new experiences or further develop their competences from different situations.

So, it is really important that you tap into the needs of your individual team members, but it is equally important that the employee does not become demotivated because these found needs or opportunities for development are not followed up – there needs to be more of a focus on follow-up. Currently, there are two apprentices in my team who are doing really well. As well as capturing their competence and skill development it is really important to capture their personal and life-skills development and how they are developing in other ways; e.g. capturing and developing motivation, confidence and the like is really important.

Human Resources are the central link (this is where the Career Development Plans as a process start) but then it comes down to individual managers who will take the role to organise the learning and development opportunity; this includes access to the online course platform, which is used in conjunction with the every-day learning and on the job learning; building in projects in the department and building team-building skills through projects is really important, but time is always the issue in the hotel industry and this sometimes gets in the way of the formal online learning and the follow-up to capture the impact of learning, etc.

Hilton University is on offer from the on-boarding to induct and assimilate the member of team into the business; but offers access to other aspects of the hotel. Softer skills, such as English and IT, Time Management, and the like so there's a lot of information in terms of softer skills, including team management.

In terms of my experience, the apprenticeship programme begins with the HR Department. It was one of the HR Managers that first made the approach in terms of Apprenticeships. HR opened the position calling for applications and was part of the interview process.

Selection was really based on attitude displayed at the interview, along with the positive spark and the shine that came to the fore; along with confidence, being well dressed; presenting and

addressing questions well. Some interview really well and give good answers, but it is the personality that often distinguishes between two candidates (especially in this industry). So, the impression that someone makes is really key, along with personality and how this comes through at interview.

Ideally, I like to do check-ins at the end of the day, but this is not always possible – just asking how the day has been, but the nature of the job means that this is not always possible. In terms of work-based-learning for the team and for apprentices, this is different as is the follow-up. For apprentices, for example, this is much more structured, which means it can be slightly easier) – apprentices have to keep a Learning Journal and have meetings with their Trainer, which needs to be prepared for in terms of capture of work-based-learning, competence development, evidence of this, and the like. Conducting reviews within an apprenticeship context can include exploring what else they would like to learn, etc.

In terms of improvement, the follow-up process would benefit immensely from there being a team approach to the individual apprentice e.g. that there is a training event first so that everyone is on the same page in terms of paperwork, process and expectations. Also, there could be more of a consistent approach to the Employer-Apprenticeship provider relationship, again to set in place processes and expectations, so that everyone feels involved from the beginning. The employer should be included in the reviews that are undertaken by the Apprenticeship Trainer, so that there is a 360 degrees/three-way process to reviewing how things are progressing, etc.

The process would benefit from having more detailed processes and documentation at every stage of the process. Katlin mentioned that others had had negative experiences of apprenticeships resulting in some apprentices dropping out, but in her case, no apprentices that she had direct contact with had dropped-out.

Connection VET-Business

We work with Lifetime as an Apprenticeship provider; the HR Dept might be more in contact but sometimes I feel that I am unsure as to where to go for more guidance and assistance; there is an apprenticeship regional trainer; but not sure that there is a strong relationship/contact, which all can be improved so that the overall apprenticeship experience can be improved from both the employer and apprentice perspective; all would benefit from a stronger relationship being built. Relationships would have benefitted more from having more information at the start of the apprenticeship process. Especially in terms of how the work-based-learning fits with studies, which could result in a more tailored apprenticeship and work-based-learning approach.

Ideal Scenario

I think that the ideal would be to have more communication; a monthly newsletter; more visibility about who the apprenticeship collaborations/who the employer and the apprenticeship provider are, etc. Perhaps they go through HR in terms of our company but we need to have a more direct link through the communication we share/exchange. I would like to find out more / I think we would benefit more from finding out about what's happening across the board in terms of apprentices; how are they getting on nationwide; we would all benefit from sharing of best practice from different places; we can explore how apprentices are encouraged to cross-train between organisations or situations, so all in all, we would all benefit from better communications. Much of this has been referred to in earlier answers. Essentially, there needs to be more involvement of the line managers/department managers to clarify and consolidate the skills assessments and competence development – this could be achieved through monthly feedback and reviews; this could help start identifying common trends that might be identified. In an ideal world, before the Apprentices starts, the line manager and apprenticeship trainer should meet/should network so that there is a better understanding/appreciation of needs and expectations from both parties, and of course, the expectations of the apprentice. Again, ideally, the follow-ups should be planned into programmes of work and should be from a 360 degree/three-way process so that everyone is involved in the review, assessment and further planning for skills and competences to be developed in the workplace. Ideally, there should be a joined end-point assessment. The business projects undertaken would benefit from a management input. End point assessments and business projects need to have more management, and we should be clear about the process of how this might work best. There needs to be a clearer understanding / a more holistic picture of the assessments undertaken and if possible, the learning journals should be able to be accessed by the supervisor/employer. Katlin noted that by working with apprentices her own competence and learning from this experience had been enhanced.

Stakeholders Interviews – Main Findings Template

Partner: Rinova Limited **Country:** UK

Name of Stakeholder (organization): JJ Goodman, The London Cocktail Company

Type of Stakeholder: Business

Role in the organization of the interviewee: Owner

WBL Context

In summary, this interview highlights:

- How VET does not always respond to the contemporary needs of specialist businesses;
- How businesses respond to this gap by creating their own work-based-learning programme.

It is without doubt that if done exceptionally well, work-based-learning is incredible for achieving success – there are statistics that show that skills, knowledge and competence from a work-based-learning environment is retained at a much higher level than that learned in a traditional classroom. So, the best results come from work-based-learning but this does not mean that a structure is not needed. There has to be a structure and a clear pathway that people can see and they can work through. We have a particular problem in that the VET sector has nothing to offer such a specialist bar-type work – there are four modules on wines, beers etc., but in terms of the types of things that we teach and specialist skills needed in terms of cocktail making and serving, there's nothing, there's no real relevance to what we need – this is why we had to create our own. Over the years we have learnt that motivation, aspiration and clear progression is paramount, and this all needs to be set within a wider context of embedding into the training the competence and personal ability needed to be enterprising in the workplace. So, in terms of our work-based-learning programme we include learning about how the business works, from all aspects, not just the bar. We also focus on building employability skills, simply as learning bar skills does not make people instantly employable, so we focus on the business needing highly trained staff that understand all aspects of the business.

We are also keen on work-based-learning as an approach to being able to encourage people to grow through the industry and to help distinguish those who are highly skilled from those who are not – we've not quite got there as an industry, yet. Our work with the Prince's Trust came about after the PT had really good results with the hospitality sector as a whole. In summary, we offer work-based-learning that covers all aspects of our business, so this will include the specialist bar work that we are involved in, but also how the business operates and what makes it successful; we look at aspiration, motivation and those life skills that people need to be successful; we also look at employability and being enterprising ... so all of these aspects are included as modules.

Yes. In order to overcome the initial drop-outs that we experienced, we focused upon building up the management team, so that they could see the benefits of work-based-learning for those new entrants into the business, but also see the benefits from their own personal development perspective. So, the key resource is the commitment to the culture of work-based-learning and the buy-in to this; this has meant that the senior managers who are responsible for managing work-based-learning are also committed and motivated, for themselves and for others. With this approach taken, there is now a sense of value of apprenticeships, placements and work-based-learning.

We also focus on exploring expectations of all involved in the work-based-learning process so that these can be carefully managed – with a view to raising levels of success and bringing everyone up to a high level of performance and in terms of their career progression, too. Essentially, everyone within the business is encouraged to embrace a challenge, this is part of our culture, so it is important that everyone involved rises to the challenge that is set out, no matter what it is.

Overall, there is a strong motivation from us all that the selection process is one that has to start with ambition. Those coming into the business have to be ambitious. We also wanted to differentiate from other bars/pubs providing apprenticeships, so that we could clearly promote our approach and cocktail making as a profession rather than simply working in a bar. In the case of the work we have been doing with The Prince's Trust and Springboard there was a particular process implemented. As those engaged with The Prince's Trust and with Springboard are often from complex backgrounds, it was important to run through a process that made sure there were checks to make sure that the people being recruited were not being put into a potentially vulnerable situation. For this particular work-based-learning experience it was important to undertake all of the necessary checks with key people in both organisations. Aligned to the answer below, there was need for a review of communication, a change of culture and a redesigned 'message' that training and the follow-up needed came from a place that was founded on aspiration and motivation; creating a training and development team within the company, and ensuring that these trainers were competent teachers/coaches.

Yes, initially there was a high number of drop-outs on The Prince's Trust/Springboard programme. We addressed this by working with the Senior Management Team, essentially as the work with those from complex backgrounds challenged 'the norm' and therefore there was a need for a culture change so they had a deeper understanding of the complex needs being faced by individuals, and that a different approach to work-based-learning was needed; basically how people were engaged, trained and supported changed as a result. Again, the focus was on building the whole person through lifeskills, employability skills, being enterprising skills, and most important of all, building aspiration for working in the bar industry as a career pathway and not just a job.

Connection VET-Business

As noted above and below, with specific reference to the programme offered for those engaged with The Princes Trust and Springboard, the intention was and will be to improve the life prospects of young people from diverse and complex backgrounds – this is with a view to improve employability skills along with career aspirations. As noted, there are approximately four modules that are currently offered for those wanting to work in bars, but these are not specific to our business, so whilst we know of and work with some of the VET providers, there's so direct

alignment. In the case of our work with The Prince's Trust and Springboard – yes, we have collaborated with these organisations in order to co-design a tailor-made programme.

Ideal Scenario

As noted earlier, currently there are no specific modules in VET training that are aligned specifically to our business – the knowledge and competence along with the skill to become a good cocktail maker has to be learnt on the job. This is why we had to create our own programme. It is necessary to develop a relationship with a VET/VET provider – one that is sufficiently proficient in administering training and qualifications, and of course, it would be necessary for us to work with these providers to ensure that these would be aligned to a good work-based-learning environment.

Stakeholders Interviews – Main Findings Template

Partner: Rinova Limited **Country:** UK

Name of Stakeholder (organization): Sarah Kettle, Restaurant Manager, Freelance Consultant

Type of Stakeholder (VET Centre or Business): Business Manager /Freelancer

Role in the organization of the interviewee: Owner

WBL Context

In summary, the interview highlights:

- (i) Issues with work-based-learning in an SME environment.
- (ii) Issues arising from work-based-learning in a 24-7, 365 industry

In hospitality, WBL tends to be less structured than it should really be, and this is despite there being lots of training and resources, but it is not centralised at all, so for the SME, especially the business at the smaller end of the scale, this is an issue. I have never held a work-based-learning role, in my experience, learning is on the job, it is ad-hoc – to deal with the situation or timing, or the need for learning, etc., but in terms of upskilling the team being managed needs a structured approach and this has included right through the scales and levels from cooking through to customer service. In an SME you just don't have the size of team or a dedicated team member that undertakes a work-based-learning organisation/mentor role, it really does tend to be learning on the job with guidance from those more experienced.

Connection VET-Business

This interview highlights the following:

- (i) Disconnect between the industry and the VET providers
- (ii) Poor image of apprenticeships (generally) and in the sector

So many things need to change to achieve synergy – education leavers are not always prepared for the workplace and the contemporary work setting is not reflected in the current curriculum – with skills, knowledge and competence being taught out of date (often), by people who have not worked in the industry for many years; therefore, this results in poor expectations from both parties. Also, there is a life-skills gap in VET – in my opinion it is huge, so this is impacting on everything from how the person prepares for the interview, through to their interaction, learning and performance in the workplace, it impacts on daily working and learning in the workplace, and often is the case that training and learning around life-skills are missing from the curriculum – and in the work-place. So huge problem here.

I don't have any direct relationships with apprenticeship providers. I have only worked with individual / those who are looking for work and then I arrange work-based learning around that role and the individual needs. Personally, I think that apprenticeships have a bad reputation, so this can have an overall impact on how people access the industry. Honestly, there is a huge disconnect really and that needs to be addressed – the VET colleges/providers need to go to industry and ask what the industry needs.

Ideal Scenario

There has to be people who are hands on and eyes on – by that I mean that the person(s) involved have to be 'on the shop floor' – listening, looking, inter-acting and 'feeling' the environment and understand the impact of the reality of the operations of the business – e.g. having training available within the working hours of the industry – they need to be in the same zone and on the same time zone. I think it is all about having a plan – having a plan (industry wide training plan is so important) obtainable targets; with responsibility for follow-up would be the immediate line manager (ideally) but to achieve that this needs to be embedded within the job role and would need to be given the necessary time allocation for planning, review and progression; the timescales and with a plan in place a difference can be made, but there also needs to be the constant chasing for performance achievement and outcomes.

SPAIN

2.6. SPAIN – Main Findings from the Interviews

Stakeholders Interviews – Main Findings

Partner: CECE **Country:** Spain

Name of Stakeholder (organization): EFA La Serna

Type of Stakeholder: VET Centre

Role in the organization of the interviewee: Director

WBL Context

According to the interviewed, their internship system consists in a dual format, the dual VET based on the EFAs alternation system, which consists in students during their academic training period having theoretical and practical learning modules in the VET centre and in companies, throughout the different academic years. With this dual FP, not only do they have the compulsory module of FCT ("Training in Work Centres), but also during the courses they are studying and having internships in companies on different dates, with a specific objective or the centre of interest. Depending on the course, students have the part of academic training and they can train in FP Dual together with the FCT.

For the dual vocational training, each course has limited periods depending on specific centres of interest of the companies. The student who opts for the dual system, receives a double degree: the qualification of their training cycle and the Dual certificate, where the number of hours of the practices and the evaluation criteria are evidenced. At EFA, they programme the trainees by a schedule, called the Dual programming, which is sent to the Concierge at the end of the previous course and once approved, everything is specified: the training period; learning and assessment criteria; etc. All these criteria are included in a document (the one sent to the Conserjería) called Dual Education Training Projects.

According to the selection process (is free), any student who wants to enrol in the dual FP and meets the conditions can do so. Companies award them based on academic results and student behaviour. Sometimes students want to choose the company, and EFA facilitates the process and get in touch with that company. In the event that a student has some kind of relationship with the employer, whether for reasons of proximity to his home, etc., EFA assign that company to that student. According to the follow up of the trainee, is the interviewed argued that this is mainly based on the communication with the company and depending on where the company is located (via phone, email, Skype or site visit). EFA thinks is necessary to do a specific

follow-up with the student and the company, to ensure if the student is meeting all the criteria that have been established in the internship contract. EFA also goes to the practice site to monitor the student in person.

In some exceptional case, EFA already had trainees dropping out from the WBL experience. The reasons were for example: illness, physical injury, etc. In the case of dual VET, there are students who abandoned the project for various reasons, but always justified: they started working and studying at the same time, in that exceptional case, they quit the Dual project.

Connection VET-Business

According to the relation between organizations, the interviewed said that there are various types of synergies. In several cases, teachers go to training courses for companies to continue their training. In these cases, several professionals are known and students are asked for internships or job placement. Many professionals also come to teach master classes at educational centres. Beyond the establishment of an apprenticeship, the interviewed explained that there are professionals who consider themselves part of the centre's family. There are professionals, with a lot of experience, who teach courses in different countries, and they go to the educational centre because they want to, without any financial compensation. The information between organizations is mainly crossed when students go to the training centre, and the employer prepares a folder and explains what the training process consists of. A general schedule is made, which is adapted according to the company. There is also a document signed by the employer where the interest in collaborating with the educational centre is collected.

Ideal Scenario

The ideal scenario of the interviewed for the relation between EFA and the companies, is that both be clear about what is the fundamental objective. It must be clear, both sides, that the objective of the practices is to train the student and complement their training. The interviewed also argued that it is also very important not to forget that a trainee student is still a student at the centre, so a more continuous follow-up is needed. The ideal scenario, would be create a strong link between the student, the tutor and the company.

Stakeholders Interviews – Main Findings

Partner: CECE **Country:** Spain

Name of Stakeholder (organization): CIFASA

Type of Stakeholder: Group of VET Centres

Role in the organization of the interviewee: Coordinator

WBL Context

According to the interviewed, the internship programme at CIFASA is what really makes the most sense for the Vocational Training sector, mainly because the cycles are of two formative years and the mobilities (national and foreign) are used fundamentally for that purpose. At CIFASA, they offer mobilities of 2 and 3 months for Higher Grades and for those of Middle Grade, they offer mobilities of less time, with a tutor accompanying the group of students. In the case of Medium Degree, they have Dual FP training in companies from another country, between 2 to 3 weeks. According to the selection process of the apprentice, in CIFASA the application is proposed to all students. There are a few objective criteria's to be applied, such us: involvement during the academic year, notes, motivation letter, personal interview, etc. In medium grade, they are concrete projects and the selection processes are always open and public (proposed to all students), and depending on those selected there is a criterion. In the Higher Degree, the same thing happens, CIFASA being an association that groups various Vocational Training centres with various specialties. All mobilities are divided among all EFAS. Then each EFA following the same objective criteria, make the same selection. The trainees follow up are mainly based on meetings before departure and training in the target language. There is an internship tutor who is always in contact with them, and there is also a student coordinator who is always in contact. CIFASA have been doing a diary with all the communications between the students for a year, where at the beginning there is a greater interactivity between the student and later it is reduced depending on the adaptation of the student.

Connection VET-Business

At CIFASA, the synergy and the work relation establish between organizations is different depending on the national and European level. At a national level, there is always initiatives to the student: going to the company and requesting the internship, and if there is any problem, the centre intervenes and contacts the company. Another option, in the case of the Dual FP, the company itself can receive and train students. At a foreign level, companies are sought based on a homologous centre, which is proposed by their own companies and direct contact is made. Students can also propose foreign practices. Attempts are made to establish relationships with companies, however, sometimes it can be a bit complicated due to the workload of the company. In our case, it is a bit particular because we also manage training for unemployed people and courses are also offered to those people with the companies we work with. Conferences for students are also organized with the companies involved. The information that is crossed, generally, is to evaluate the student. There are several items that are evaluated such as attitude and a series of competences to be developed, depending on the practical program

that the student performs. There is also a confidentiality agreement between the company, the student and the centre. In the company there is also an internship tutor who gives feedback to the centre, depending on the achievement. Also, all students are visited once or twice by teachers during the internship period.

Ideal Scenario

According to the interviewed, there are a few delays between companies and the centre, both at national and European level. Making things more digital could help both parts. Also, the bureaucracy was one of the major facts that the interviewed agreed that should be analysed and facilitated in the process. It is important to make this whole procedure much more practical. There must be effective coordination between the two so that in the end the knowledge that is acquired is transmitted to the centre coordinator. The more real given Vocational Training the more real involvement it has. The monitoring has to be long enough for there to be feedback on what is being done.

Stakeholders Interviews – Main Findings

Partner: CECE **Country:** Spain

Name of Stakeholder (organization): Javier Donaire – Complejo Turístico Rural Mirador de La Mancha

Type of Stakeholder (VET Centre or Business): Business

Role in the organization of the interviewee: Manager

WBL Context:

We ask for implication, that we consider key. First we do an interview, with their parents as well if they are less than 18. We ask them for their expectations and where they want to arrive, their ambitions. We want to understand that if we can offer goes according with their expectations.

Me and another chef coordinate between each other the trainees. The responsibilities the trainees get go according with their predisposition to work and to do more things. In 3 months, they cover most of the practices that we do in the kitchen. We also create expectations regarding the schedule. Working in hostelry is a challenge because the work schedule is when most of the people would like to be resting or enjoying. We try to give the trainees a schedule as close as possible to the one they will find in the labour market.

Regarding a bad experience, the truth is that sometimes there is a more complicated individual. It is a complex age we are dealing with (mostly teenagers), and some of them struggle when entering a professional structure and have to follow the rules.

In general, in the selection process, students are generally accepted.

The idea is to recreate the best possible what will be their day-to-day in the restaurant.

Connection VET-Business:

The connection with the VET centre began 12-15 years ago. It is a VET centre of the area (Castilla-La Mancha), where Javier studied. They have a wonderful synergy created, based on constant contact. As Javier went there, he knows most of school staff and the educational level they receive. There is a lot of transparency in their relation, so they are very honest in their WBL procedures.

The VET centre already does the "selection process" for the students, that is why there are very few rejections. What the VET centre sends to Javier is already knowing perfectly what the student will receive.

Ideal Scenario:

From Javier side, since the connection with the VET centre is so direct and special, that he couldn't really conceive what could be better.

2.7. SPAIN – Main Findings from the focus group

SPAIN – Main Findings from the Focus groups

Introduction and experience – Focus Group with 7 VET students, with experience in WBL.

WBL experience

Margarita worked in two different places, which helped her gaining experience in 2 types of cuisine: in Paradores and in a Michelin Star restaurant. The first year of her internship, she did not know where to go, so EFA assigned her a company that they believed could enhance her qualities. Patricia – in the first year she did the internships at the Almagro Elder Centre, a very enriching experience where she could enhance her qualities of taking care of people and solving problems. All the theoretically knowledge acquired during the course was developed practically during the practices. Gonzalo – His first role was as a kitchen assistant. In his case, he always gave the option to the centre to choose his internship companies, because the centre knows

better than he did when deciding where he should go and where he could enhance his qualities. Duration: In the 1st experience he spent 1.5 / 2 months. In the 2nd experience he spent 3 months. In the 3rd experience he stayed 2 months, then he remained there to work. In the 4th experience he spent 1 month. Tamara – The first year she did it in a private company in Bolaños and the second in the General Hospital of *Ciudad Real*. She highly appreciated the change from private to public. In the private sector, she only had an assistant role, however, in the public sector, she had more freedom as well as more responsibility.

For hostelry related students, EFA gave to all the interviewed the opportunity to study cooking from Basic VET, and this has motivated them to continue their training in a Higher Education Degree. Between theory and practice, everything is important, but EFA was highly appreciated by the interviewed since gave them the opportunity to put into practice everything they've learned.

Business

Regarding Cooking and Kitchen apprentices, in general they were given the freedom to play in all areas of the kitchen, which was very important for the learning process. The preparation of the companies to receive them were quite good and the responsibilities that they were going to have vs. those that she really had were very aligned. There was also a VET provider that has given the apprentice supporting in the training. But in other cases, the same does not happened and the preparation was less. In general terms, all apprentices were well located inside the companies and were treated like a regular employee.

Ideal scenario

Argued by all apprentices, the ideal scenario would be to have a more consistent follow up, which for them was considered to be the way to have a positive and a consistent learning curve.

GREECE

2.8. Greece– Main Findings from the Focus groups

Focus Group – Main Findings

Partner: PANNADIEK

Country: Greece

Introduction and experience

The age range of people taken part in the focus group were between 20 and 35 y.o. and all of them have completed their studies in Vocational Training Institutes in Athens Metropolitan Area. More precisely the half of them have completed their training studies in "Web Design / Game Development and Game Designer" Specification and the other half have completed their studies in "Computer Technician" Specification. All of them lived in their family house or as guests in their friends (due to their studies duties) and no one of them was married or has children. None of them had any learning disabilities and all of them (except one) had Greek Language their mother tongue. All of them, also, had completed the Greek Education System, except one student who came from Syria and he had finished only the upper secondary education in Greece. More than the half of them was unemployed. They maintained and financed by their family. Only two of them earned some money from their work. One from the six members of the group worked part time as musician and one other as freelancer programmer. Excluding their experience through the work-based learning program they have taken part, they don't have any other work experience in their training subjects except the freelancer programmer.

WBL Experience

The participants have trained by WBL methods did an Apprenticeship program. The duration of this program was six months. They noticed that most workplaces were not ready to help the participants in their learning process. They didn't get the opportunity to learn new things or apply knowledge from their studies. Also, they have emphasized that the lessons in the VET Provider sometimes were more advance than the requirements of their job and they would like to have advanced workplace requirements, too. They were very satisfied from these learning experience. They expect from the Ministry of Education to set some minimum quality standards to enforced the Apprenticeship. They have faced too many bureaucratic obstacles especially with their "salary". All of them stressed the need for their economic survival especially with a very low salary similar.

(Note from the writer: An apprentice receives a training allowance. A little percent of this allowance be derived by the employer and the rest percent be derived from existing Community programmes and funds. These apprentices received only the percent of the employer).

VET Provider

The participants, all of them come from the current Apprenticeship period, didn't learn in VET provider laboratories, but they have studied from their home the lessons, due to COVID-19. They

have supported that the e-learning process didn't cover their learning needs. Especially from the technician of Computer, support that studying from distance didn't give them the opportunity for a real practise or a real interaction with their learning process or with the other learners and the digital machines. They reject this learning approach for future applies.

Finally, they showed up the non-availability of information technology machines` material in a variety enough to focus in many different case studies.

Business

The most of the participants have declared that they were not satisfied from their business. They didn't receive the training which was based in the curriculum of their specification. The most of the business didn't have an education culture and they didn't have the possibility to train new technicians. Also, many of the employees used the trainees as workers and not as apprentices. And some of them did not want to keep safety rules, set a worker as a trainer, even to design a training schedule.

Ideal Scenario

The trainees referred that in an IDEAL SCENARIO there are some bullets to describe what they believe. They asked from us to write exactly that list:

- Well informed Business Providers
- Black list for the Business Providers who don't follow the rules of Apprenticeship contract and used the Apprenticeship trainees as workers.
- Ensure that every apprentice can live in dignity
- During the apprenticeship period, apprentices have the opportunity to approach the most advanced technologies
- Less bureaucratic and more digitalization.

Briefly they described their ideal scenario for the Apprenticeship learning process as a process where they have been informed for everything about this process before the application. The second step is to protect them from employers who want just another worker and they don't have the possibility to hire an apprentice and support her/his for the appropriate learning outcomes. After all that they want more digital communication, for any document, including any attendance or other certificate or application. Some of them said that they prefer to start the apprenticeship from the first days of their studies. And other believed that a more long-term apprenticeship program with more than one workplace would be ideal. And all of them wanted to received their full salary from the beginning of this process. Their training would include the most modern machines or technologies and less time for training inside the VET provider. Open laboratories for practice and a rotation to different workplaces.

CONCLUSIONS

From the analysed results, it was concluded that despite the differences found, all countries are implementing and developing new ways of working-based programmes to employ and develop young citizens working skills. From all countries analysed, it was found a strong relation between private entities and national department/schools in evaluating and implementing working-based programmes, as well as, the agreed mentorship given to interns/apprentices inside the company.

	WBL Measures	Courses Duration	Students Age Range	Sectorial Focus	Financial Compensation	EQF based
Italy	- Apprenticeship - Internship	3 to 4 years	From 15 to 29 years old	Commerce, Manufacturing and accomodation prevails	Yes	Yes
Irland	- Apprenticeship	2 to 4 years	Ranging from youth to adulthood	Technology	Yes	Yes
England	- Apprenticeship - Internship	6 weeks to 6 months	From 16 to 24 years old	Business Administration an Law prevails	Yes	Yes
Spain	- Apprenticeship	1 to 3 years	From 16 to 25 years old	Manufacturing and Commerce prevails	Yes	Yes
Greece	- Apprenticeship - Internship	6 months to 3 years	For students after completing high-school	Technology	Yes	Yes

Lithuania	Apprenticeship	2 months to 4 years	Ranging from youth to adulthood	Industry sector	Yes	Yes
------------------	----------------	---------------------	---------------------------------	-----------------	-----	-----

Despite the similarities, differences were also found. The countries analysed are applying and involving working-based programmes according to their national needs. In the case of Ireland, for example, working-based learning programmes are being implemented more to follow their economic and technological growth. In the other hand, cases like Italy or Spain, are implementing programmes and training more their young citizens to manufacturing or commerce areas/skills. The case of Lithuania is worrisome since only 3% of VET students do WBL, whilst the proposed objective of the government was 20%.

To start these programmes, differences according to the starting age of the candidates were found, since all countries seem to follow different guidelines according to their own national needs. Also, the duration of such programmes differs between countries, and for example, Greece develops programmes from 6 months to 3 years, in Ireland they can go to 4 years, or in the case of England, they are mainly characterized by the 6-month programme.

The salary and the compensation associated with these programmes also differ according to the economic reality of the partners' country. An apprentice in Greece is going to have a compensation of 75% of the minimum wage (minimum required by law), and in Spain and England, for example, this compensation cannot be less the national the minimum wage. In Italy, for example, this compensation increases over the years passed in the programmes, which means that more time in a working-based programme, more compensation an apprentice will receive.

At last, the cultural differences here analysed determined how the population sees the development and the implementation of the working-based programmes. In Greece and Lithuania, these programmes are not so popular since they are not directly integrated in the educational and cultural system, and they are not seen has the future perspective for a dream job, only has the covering of the market needs. Also, in Spain the demographic and unemployment reality had an impact on these programmes, and the national forecasts indicate that an important portion of job openings will mainly come from the need to replace retired worked.

Besides the differences above mentioned and the pros and cons of applying these programmes, the implementation and the analyses of the focus groups/interviews has brought new insights to the project. In general terms, the majority of the stakeholders here analysed have talked about the implementation of the programmes with a positively and general satisfaction. In the following table, there is a briefing of the results analysed from the focus groups and interviews.

The stakeholders (according to the focus groups and interviews)

WBL Context	Connection VET-Businesses	Ideal Scenario
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Companies analysed are implementing WBL for more than a year and they argued that they are satisfied with the general outcomes. • The open mindedness of young people was argued by some companies to be an opportunity for innovation. • In general terms, students found that the assigned company met their expectations and the tasks assigned were relevant with the study path. • Despite the adaptative and initial difficulties, all students felt appreciated and valued while they were working at the company. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Companies are making efforts to work in collaboration with local technical and professional institutes to organize company visits, project work, traineeships and apprenticeships. • Companies refrained the importance of the tutor in the process, and to be one of the most important stakeholders to the success of the apprenticeship. • In general terms, students considered the institution in line with their expectations and able to offer them the tools to test themselves with the labour market. • Students appreciated the work on soft skills done at school and in parallel with the workplace. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Companies would like to have a closer synergy between the educational center, since all stakeholders will effectively benefit from it. • A few companies proposed a portal that connects companies and schools without intermediaries that slow down communication • A few students felt the need for more cooperation between the business world, the school and the teaching world. • A few students felt that would be useful to also introduce the assessment on personal attitudes, different needs and emotional aspects, and not only evaluate the apprenticeship in a traditional way.

To conclude, the implementation of such programmes were classified with positive outcomes from the majority of the stakeholders and efforts are being made for them to prevail alongside European countries. The apprentice gets his valuable work experience and starts to get good contacts in the industry or sector that can help him start a career. The goal of these programmes have a dual outcome: first, the student that get empowered by achieving employment, working skills and economic self-sufficiency, and second, the companies that can have young people working alongside the business, while their wages can be financially supported by their own

government. In general terms, the implementing of WBL has been bringing positive insights and outcomes to young European citizens, to the job market, and to all the countries that implement such programmes, since they are implemented according to national needs.