

# Helpdesk on Apprenticeship & Traineeship Schemes

## Frequently Asked Questions

### How the Helpdesk can support you

#### 1. Who is the Helpdesk service aimed at?

The service is **not aimed at individuals** who would like to get involved in any of the ESF actions, but at:

- Policy makers at national, regional and local level in the areas of youth employment, education and training policies
- ESF Managing Authorities
- Relevant national and regional agencies
- Social partners

#### 2. Who is providing the service behind the Helpdesk?

The Helpdesk service is run by Helpdesk staff supported by a pool of policy experts on apprenticeship and traineeship schemes. The pool of experts includes High Level Experts and other policy experts covering a wide range of specialist areas on the schemes. Our experts can provide assistance in 6 languages (EN, FR, DE, ES, IT, PL).

When an enquiry is received, the Helpdesk staff matches its contents with the most suitable expert from the pool of policy experts, depending on the complexity of the request, area of expertise, country-specific knowledge required and language skills (EN, FR, DE, ES, IT, PL).

#### 3. What type of assistance does the Helpdesk provide?

To deal with enquires more efficiently, the Helpdesk responds to enquiries by providing information, advice and consultancy support on four levels (Four Tiers):

**Tier 4 – Basic level.** Helpdesk staff directly answers basic enquiries about the schemes, sends relevant information and signposts to other related sources and contacts

**Tier 3 – More complex and topical issues.** Helpdesk provides a response to more complex issues using suitable experts from the pool of Helpdesk experts, such as information on good existing practices, tools and tips, etc. at an operational level.

**Tier 2 – Complex/longer term advice and consultancy and advice.** Helpdesk provides longer term/ on-going advice and tailored consultancy from High-Level Experts providing guidance for agencies which are in the process of developing new or improving their existing traineeship and apprenticeship schemes, preparing the new ESF operational programme, etc.

**Tier 1 – Tailored consultancy and advice.** Limited number of bespoke on-the-spot consultancy sessions in response to a specific need delivered by High Level Experts or other policy experts in-country, tailored to the requirements of the

country/region/organisation. Each request for such type of consultancy will be considered by the European Commission.

#### 4. What areas of expertise does the Helpdesk cover?

The Helpdesk provides expertise on apprenticeship and traineeship schemes in a wide range of areas which can be grouped into the following categories:

- Definition of schemes
- Types of schemes
- EU policies and initiatives
- Standards and Quality Assurance
- Legal/Regulatory Frameworks & Governance
- Setting up a scheme
- Financing a scheme
- Good practice in running schemes (including lessons learnt)
- Assessment and certification
- Monitoring and evaluation
- ESF key information
- Geographic mobility
- Country overviews

#### 5. Can the Helpdesk help individuals looking for traineeships in other EU countries?

The support provided by the Helpdesk is not aimed at individuals looking for an apprenticeship or traineeship but at the following target groups:

- Policy makers at national, regional and local level in the areas of youth employment, education and training policies
- ESF Managing Authorities
- Relevant national and regional agencies
- Social partners

Individuals looking for opportunities abroad could explore:

- **Lifelong Learning Programme - National Agencies** [http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/national\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/national_en.htm) on this page all the National Agencies of the Member States taking part in the Lifelong Learning Programme are represented and can be contacted to learn about opportunities for taking part in formal and informal learning placements for both youth and adults.
- **Your first EURES Job** <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=993&langId=en> - an action to help young Europeans find work in other EU countries. It is one of the actions in the Europe 2020 flagship initiative [Youth on the Move](#) and the [Youth Opportunities Initiative](#)
- [http://ec.europa.eu/youthonthemove/move/train/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/youthonthemove/move/train/index_en.htm) at this link it is possible find more detail about the Youth on the Move initiative and also learn how to find training opportunities and contact details for the responsible agency in your country.

#### 6. My employer represents social partner organisations. Can I promote the Helpdesk to our stakeholders? In what languages is the Helpdesk support provided?

First of all it is important to understand what the role of the Helpdesk is:

- To offer advice to organisations on setting-up/improving apprenticeship/traineeship schemes
- We can provide this advice in 6 languages (EN, DE, FR, IT, ES, PL)

The Helpdesk responds to enquiries by providing information, advice and consultancy support on several levels:

- Directly answering basic enquiries about the schemes, sending relevant information and signposting to other related sources and contacts
- Providing a response to more complex issues from a large pool of policy experts, facilitating exchange of best practice
- Providing longer term, on-going advice and tailored consultancy from High-Level Experts
- Delivering bespoke in-country consultancy or training sessions in response to a specific need

We welcome therefore promotion of the Helpdesk service to relevant interested parties in charge of setting-up or running apprenticeship or traineeship schemes.

**7. Is the Helpdesk a service which could help with finding partners for actions such as Leonardo da Vinci?**

The Helpdesk does not offer support in finding partners for such actions nor does provide access to a network of organisations which offer apprenticeship or traineeship opportunities.

Help in finding partners under the Lifelong Learning programme (including Leonardo da Vinci) can be obtained from the Lifelong Learning national agencies (see [http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/national\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/national_en.htm))

**8. My organisation provides support to clients working in the primary education sector. Does the Helpdesk provide support to trainee teachers looking for placements?**

The Helpdesk does not have this activity as part of its remit.

The Comenius programme focuses on school education so can be a useful reference for teachers: [http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/comenius\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/comenius_en.htm)

**9. Can I find more information about recent reforms of apprenticeship systems in the EU Member States, from the viewpoint of the implication of Social Partners?**

The Helpdesk offers access to a pool of policy experts who can assist with providing information on different aspects of apprenticeship systems in different Member States, including social partner involvement. If you require such information, please contact the Helpdesk who will contact relevant experts and provide a summary document in response to the request.

**10. Can the Helpdesk be presented as a tool to people learning German for finding opportunities to work in Germany?**

The Helpdesk does not offer support for finding work opportunities.

A useful starting point for finding work in another EU Member State is the EURES Job Mobility Portal: <https://ec.europa.eu/eures/>

**11. I work for a technical college. Our students are interested in the possibility of internships in companies or to expand their training abroad (languages) through subsidized programmes. Can the Helpdesk offer support?**

The Helpdesk does not offer support for finding individual apprenticeship or traineeship schemes.

Useful links for individuals looking for traineeships or apprenticeships abroad can be found in the answer to Question 5 above.

**12. Can the Helpdesk provide support in finding information about apprenticeship schemes in private companies?**

Yes, the Helpdesk offers access to a pool of policy experts who can assist with providing information on company apprenticeship schemes in different Member States. If you require such information, please contact the Helpdesk who will contact relevant experts and provide a summary document in response to the request.

**13. Does the Helpdesk provide financial support to individuals wishing to undertake an internship abroad?**

The support provided by the Helpdesk is not aimed at individuals looking for financial support to undertake internships abroad.

Funding opportunities for internships abroad are available under the Lifelong Learning programme. For more details, you can contact your National Agency:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/national\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/national_en.htm).

More information about various opportunities at European level can be found in the answer to Question 5 above.

**14. I am interested in attending the learning seminar organised as part of the project in February 2014, to enhance my knowledge on the evaluation of apprenticeship and traineeship schemes. I also would like to know how to participate in awareness-raising activities organised in the Member States to bring projects closer to the businesses, educational institutions and young people.**

The Learning seminar on the evaluation of apprenticeship and traineeship schemes of the project will be an invitation only event. However we will publicise the results of the seminar on the project website <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1045&langId=en>

In relation to taking part in awareness-raising events, we would suggest checking the Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion Events page at <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=88>

**15. Are there any funding opportunities available for projects/programmes aimed at disadvantaged young people and adults?**

At EU level, there are different types of funding streams available for projects which have disadvantaged young people and adults as target groups, such as those under the Lifelong Learning Programme. We recommend contacting the National Agency in your country for more information [http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/national\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/national_en.htm)

**16. Can the Helpdesk provide help with finding useful documentation about the history of apprenticeships in specific Member States?**

The Helpdesk Experts can help with finding some sources of information which could assist in documenting for example the history of apprenticeships. However, as this is a specific area and not entirely related to the scope of the project, it cannot be guaranteed that these sources of information exist for all member states and that our Experts can access them.

**17. I work for a newspaper and would like to put together a feature on how the UK's proposed traineeship programme compares to those available across the EU. Can the Helpdesk provide more information on this topic?**

The Helpdesk provides access to a pool of Policy Experts who could provide further information following specific enquiries. Please note that for general advertising of the Helpdesk support, our webpage has all the information necessary:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1045&langId=en>

**18. Where can I find more information about the new ESF funding development and procedures?**

Information about the new ESF programming period 2014-2020 can be found here: <http://ec.europa.eu/esf/home.jsp?langId=en>. Questions related to ESF procedures and eligibility in each Member State should be directed to the respective ESF Managing Authority. However, the Helpdesk can offer tailored assistance and consultancy support for planning, establishing, improving and managing apprenticeship and traineeship schemes – including within the Operational Programmes for the new programming period.

**19. Which programme has replaced the Leonardo Da Vinci programme, and who is the national agency in the UK?**

The Leonardo programme, formerly part of the Lifelong Learning Programme, has now been replaced by the Erasmus+ programme, which started in January 2014 and is the new European funding programme for education, training, youth and sport. The programme is run by the National Agencies in each Member State; for the UK the Erasmus+ National Agency is the British Council in collaboration with Ecorys UK. Information on funding opportunities for vocational education and training under the new programme can be found on the Erasmus+ UK website <http://www.erasmusplus.org.uk/>

The European Commission has now published detailed guidance for organisations interested in participating in Erasmus+ Programme. The Erasmus+ Programme Guide provides all the application information on the new programme including: deadlines, eligibility criteria, funding levels, project activities and durations, and application process <http://www.erasmusplus.org.uk/news/erasmus-call-and-programme-guide-published#sthash.PUjFAAgs.dpuf>