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 2013\_ALLIANCEAPPRENTICESHIPS

## **REPORT**

### **FIRST ONLINE SURVEY**

#### **ON THE EUROPEAN ALLIANCE FOR APPRENTICESHIPS**

### **I - Overview**

#### **Background**

Against the background of high youth unemployment and evidence of apprenticeships facilitating transitions onto the labour market for young people, the European Alliance for Apprenticeships<sup>1</sup> (EAfA) was launched on 2 July 2013 in the context of the WorldSkills competition in Leipzig (Germany). Its objectives are to promote the quantity, quality and image of apprenticeships in Europe. Apprenticeships are a specific form of vocational education and training (VET)<sup>2</sup>.

The first online survey on the Alliance was open from mid-March to mid-April 2015 and aimed to map stakeholders' activities and results in relation to the Alliance's goals. It was also conducted in order to have a report for the joint EU Latvian Presidency of the Council and European Commission event on 22 June 2015 in Riga (Latvia) marking two years of the Alliance.

#### **Organisations addressed by the survey**

The survey invited around 60 EAfA stakeholders and some 130 companies from the Alliance for YOUTH initiative to give their views. It did not include Member States or European social partners, for whom separate follow-up mechanisms exist.

These stakeholders include:

- Direct pledgers in six categories: businesses, social partners, chambers of commerce/industry/crafts, education and training providers, regions, as well as non-profit and youth organisations.

<sup>1</sup> The joint declaration on the Alliance was signed by European Social Partners, the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union and the European Commission

<sup>2</sup> Apprenticeships are formal vocational education and training programmes, that combine company-based training with school-based education, and that lead to nationally recognised qualifications.

- Alliance for YOUth: Nestlé business-led group pledge for the period 2014-2016 unites companies to provide apprenticeships, traineeships and readiness for work events for young people. It includes a focus on quality, supply and image of apprenticeships.
- Ambassadors: business professionals sharing knowledge and experiences to support the establishment of quality apprenticeships across Europe.

### **Methodology and questions**

The survey contained open and closed questions examining achievements to date and looking ahead at next steps.

This report presents the results along the six questions:

1. What have been the results in implementing your pledge since its submission?
2. Has the number of apprenticeships increased since the submission of your pledge?
3. Is your organisation aiming to increase the number of apprentices in 2016?
4. What activities are you planning next?
5. How could the EU best support your activities?
6. Do you have any proposals on how the Alliance can better meet its objectives?

### **Results**

The survey received a total of 56 replies. 37 were from direct members, 15 replies representing businesses from the Alliance for YOUth led by Nestlé and an additional four from Ambassadors. From direct pledgers businesses (9), chambers (7), social partners (9 - of which 8 trade unions), education and training providers (7), regional authorities (1), and other non-profit or youth organisations (4).

It should be noted that a few respondents declined participation in the survey for various reasons. The European Round Table of Industrialists considered that their network of individual company members was more suited to reply directly, while Microsoft referred to the reply given by the European Youth Forum, which was also valid for them, since both organisations had a joint pledge. The Welsh government responded that it did in general not participate in surveys, but that another approach to give an update was welcome.

When replying to the survey several stakeholders mentioned success stories in relation to their achievements. The most convincing ones were selected and extracts have been published in the EAfA brochure marking two years of the Alliance, which is also available online on the Commission's EAfA website.

## II - Summary of replies<sup>3</sup>

### Q 1 What have been the results in implementing your pledge since its submission?

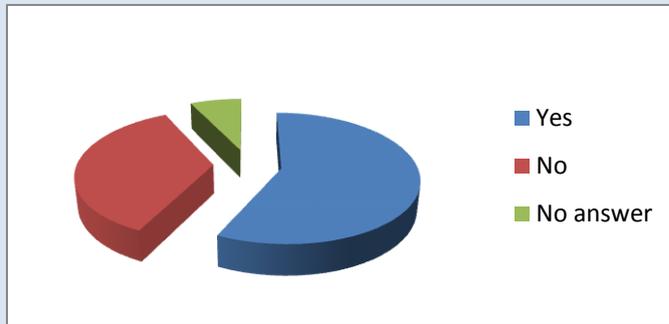
*Main findings: Respondents have focused on activities related to one or more of the three main goals of the Alliance. Mobility has emerged as an additional topic. Many activities by the different categories of stakeholders were complementary and mutually enhancing.*

- Businesses: included a **qualitative** focus on developing right/transversal skills and sponsored research into comparative career progression. Increasing the **supply** by setting-up new apprenticeship schemes with local authorities and VET providers, using public procurement to increase the supply of apprenticeships in SMEs, Ambassadorship activities, using a bus to tour business parks to promote the **image** of apprenticeships, and some apprenticeship learning **mobility**.
- Chambers: included study visits to different countries to strengthen expertise, pilot projects introducing the dual system to increase **supply** and **quality** (AT - SK, BG, RO), Erasmus+ project on modernising apprenticeships (CY, GR), training for company tutors in SMEs, linking VET providers and business (ES), national awareness raising campaigns (FR). Expanding and deepening an online platform of competent intermediate bodies to promote quality of learning **mobility**.
- Social Partners: included a focus on fostering **quality** and **image** of VET teachers and trainers and apprenticeships through seminars notably by ETUCE and some of its national member organisations (FR, MT, NL, LT, PL). Meetings with policymakers and employers to ensure good functioning of apprenticeship system. Also improvement of VET legislation and VET criteria (LT), participating in a national Apprenticeship Alliance (DE), and quality, supply and image activities within the food and drinks sector.
- Education & Training Providers: included the organisation of roundtables to promote the Alliance, design of new apprenticeship training programmes to improve **quality** and delivery methods, such as blended learning course for company trainers, intensified partnerships with schools for apprenticeships to increase **supply** of training apprentices. Peer learning activities and sharing good practices between education and training providers from different countries and VET systems, cooperation.
- Regional authority: included the implementation of a new strategic VET agenda focusing on internationalisation, and **quality** by responding to company's skill needs.
- Non-profit/Youth: included the development of a **quality** learning network for companies on apprenticeship and traineeship, the development of self-assessment tool on quality of apprenticeships in companies, and the production of a quality charter internships/apprenticeships. In addition, campaigning on the quality, **supply**, **image** and funding of apprenticeships towards government, information to VET schools and employers.

<sup>3</sup> The report constitutes examples of replies on the basis of activities reported by respondents; it is not an exhaustive list.

## Q 2 Has the number of apprenticeships increased since the submission of your pledge?

**57% of respondents reported increase since submitting the pledge**



Examples for "yes":

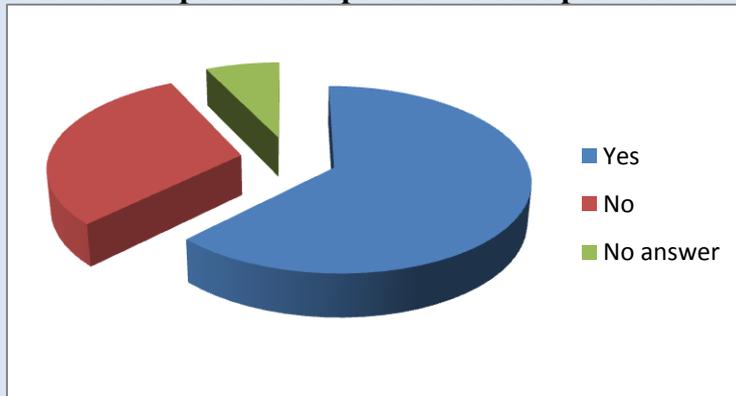
- Siemens: number of apprentices in the EU (without DE) increased from 1,439 in 2013 (30 September) to 1,506 in 2014 (30 September)
- Repsol: created 42 new apprenticeships
- Swiss Post: set target of 5% apprenticeships out of total workforce

Reasons provided for "no" or "no answer":

Some organisations reported that it was more difficult to reply to this question (e.g. trade unions), as they did not have a direct influence on the number of new placements.

## Q 3 Is your organisation aiming to increase the number of apprentices in 2016?

**62.5% of respondents reported increase planned for 2016**



Examples for "yes":

- Horeca Flanders Training provider: aimed to create 250 new apprenticeship contracts for 2016
- Austrian Economic Chambers: expected to create 60 new apprenticeships in Romania and 90 new apprenticeships in Bulgaria

Reasons for "no" or "no answer" include: Respondents referred in some cases to lack of data or uncertain funding due to the economic situation or legislative setting, as well as the varying focus of pledges which may not have addressed an increase in the supply of apprenticeships.

#### Q 4 What activities are you planning next?

*Main findings: Numerous respondents replied that they would broadly continue and/or build on the activities carried out to date, but there were also some new initiatives planned.*

- Businesses: activities planned around attracting talent and employer branding in schools, enhanced **skills progression** and costs of apprenticeships. **Increasing the supply** of apprenticeships by signing protocols with more professional schools and exploring further expansion of apprenticeships, increased **cooperation with government** and Public Employment Services, activities according to new legislation on apprenticeships, **Nestlé survey** addressed to **Alliance for YOUth** business partners to monitor progress; applying for EU funds to promote apprenticeships.
- Chambers: exploring possible initiatives for a **helpdesk and coaching** to facilitate SME involvement in apprenticeships (EU level), facilitating **matching of apprentices** and companies (CY), further pilot projects for **transferring dual learning** models (AT) and implementing Erasmus+ project for "Danube Region Academy", activities on apprenticeships aimed at implementing Youth Guarantee with support of ESF, including skills mapping (ES), improved **quality assurance for learning mobility** of apprentices and development of e-twinning webspace and more awareness raising through annual national apprenticeship week (FR).
- Social Partners: continued focus of trade union organisations on **improving quality of teachers and trainers**, ensuring a **safe working environment** for VET teachers (MT); publication of brochure for members but also quality of certification and support to disadvantaged youth (FR), ensuring **business/public authorities respect their responsibility** on apprenticeships (DE), further cooperation with Cedefop to **improve apprenticeship system**, including monitoring of working/training conditions (LT), continuing project implementation in food and drinks sector.
- Education & Training Providers: strengthening **partnerships** (business/public authorities), conferences on **promoting the EAfA** and dissemination actions with public authorities, companies and VET providers, training for VET trainers, matching skills (including low-skilled), **broadening spectrum of types of apprenticeships and practical training profiles**, integrating apprenticeship programmes in dual learning (BE), participation in projects, creating a group of **business and higher education representatives** to improve cooperation, including on apprenticeships.
- Regional authority: **Modernisation of VET centres** through innovation, value creation and new technology, as well as improved organisational and operational models.
- Non-profit/Youth: fostering **transnational apprenticeship schemes**, business & youth, improve careers advice for young people and support employers, notably SMEs, to do more on apprenticeships including through a campaign, continue **dissemination of self-assessment tools for companies** on apprenticeships and continued reach out to companies.

## Q 5 How could the EU best support your activities?

*Key themes: Many respondents highlighted the need to promote partnerships and funding, e.g. for setting-up apprenticeships, projects, production and dissemination of teaching and information material.*

- Businesses: proposals included for the EU to improve skills matching, to **increase dual learning for VET/higher education** and further **encourage reform of apprenticeship systems** in Member States.
- Chambers: suggested for the EU to promote and share more expertise on apprenticeships, to **foster know-how transfer** and **strengthen intermediary bodies** notably to foster placements in SMEs.
- Social Partners: several referred to the need to enhance **support to social dialogue** at national level for strengthening their role in apprenticeships, as well as capacity building for example through **better access to Erasmus + projects**.
- Education & Training Providers: proposed for the EU to focus on **improving learning outcomes, promote apprenticeships at EQF level 5/6**, and further strengthen VET provider organisations at EU level.
- Regional authority: suggested for the EU to **reinforce regional/territorial dimension**.
- Non-profit/Youth: proposals included for new European Commission initiatives in the field of vocational training to have **in-built quality control** systems.

## Q 6 Do you have any proposals on how the Alliance can better meet its objectives?

*Key themes: The majority of respondents pointed to the need to further improve visibility of activities, sharing of good practices and networking.*

- Businesses: suggestions included for the Alliance to **better communicate the added value** of EAfA, to make key achievements more visible and facilitate link between Alliance partners and national authorities.
- Chambers: proposed for the Alliance to **showcase more pledge delivery** and create a blog, to develop institutional requirements and introduce a 50% VET target for apprenticeships.
- Social Partners: called for more support of the Alliance to **VET teachers/trainers**, stronger awareness-raising activities, EU events on youth unemployment.
- Education & Training Providers: suggested for the Alliance to **better explain the term apprenticeships**, focus on impact, and have a clearer distinction between role of different stakeholders.
- Regional authority: called for a **concrete EAfA action plan**, a stronger involvement of other parts of the European Commission and EU institutions.
- Non-profit/Youth: emphasised the need for further **networking and dialogue** among partners, as well as sharing of good practices.

### **III - Report conclusions**

Many of the respondents to the survey highlighted concrete **progress**, notably a reported increase in the supply of apprenticeships since EAfA members made their pledge, and an expected increase for 2016. Equally important were the positive developments reported on the quality and image of apprenticeships. Moreover, the survey revealed the growing importance of mobility in apprenticeships.

The results also highlighted the valuable role and active commitment of the wide range of EAfA stakeholders, through their diverse and complementary activities. Taking into account the different starting points of pledges, respondents noted considerable cooperation, peer learning and sharing of good practices, as well as strong awareness-raising.

At the same time, the survey also revealed some **challenges**, such as the varying levels of experience with apprenticeships and different interpretations of the concept. The distinction between apprenticeships, traineeships and other training activities is not always clear. This applies in particular for stakeholders in the Alliance for YOUth, which has a broader scope than apprenticeships. Moreover, some respondents commented on the continuing challenge of how to better monitor and evaluate outcomes. Others remarked on the need to have a clearer distinction between the different roles of stakeholders.

On **EU support** to stakeholders, many respondents underlined the need to promote partnerships and funding, including better access to Erasmus+ for setting-up apprenticeships or production and dissemination of information material and spreading expertise. Other areas of useful EU support were attributed to promoting dual learning for VET/higher education, encouraging reforms of apprenticeships, strengthening the role of intermediary bodies to facilitate the uptake for apprenticeships in SMEs, enhancing social dialogue, as well as improving quality learning outcomes, including through more support to VET trainers.

On **the Alliance** itself, and how it could better meet its objectives, many respondents pointed to the need to improve its visibility by showcasing more pledge delivery, facilitating the link between Alliance partners and national authorities, and delivering a concrete EAfA action plan. More sharing of good practices and networking were also considered as vital.

#### **Next steps**

Both the survey and report are a starting point for an annual follow-up and monitoring exercise managed by the European Commission with the support of Cedefop. Building on the experience of the online survey, the European Commission will also launch a study in late 2015 to assess the functioning and the progress in relation to the European Alliance for Apprenticeships. The study will not only cover individual pledges addressed through the survey, but also commitments submitted by Member States and EU social partners.

***Annex:** List of organisations that have submitted replies to the survey.*

# Annex I

## Direct pledgers

### **1. Business**

AIM  
BASF  
EMH Group  
Nestlé  
Pera Training  
Repsol  
Robert Bosch  
Siemens  
Swiss Post

### **2. Chambers of industry/commerce/craft**

Assemblée Permanente des Métiers, APCMA  
Austrian Economics Chamber, WKÖ  
Chambers of Commerce and Industry of  
Terrassa  
Chambers of Commerce and Industry of  
Cyprus  
Chambers of Commerce and Industry of  
France  
Eurochambres  
High Council of Official Chambers of  
Commerce, Industry and Navigation Spain

### **3. Social partners**

AOb the Netherlands  
EFFAT/Food Drink Europe (joint pledge,  
separate replies)  
ETUCE  
GEW, German Education and Science Trade  
Union  
Lithuanian Trade Union Confederation/  
Federation of Lithuanian Education and  
Science Trade Union (joint pledge and reply)  
Malta Union of Teachers  
Solidarnosc Poland  
UNSA Education France

### **4. Education and training providers**

CIAPE (Centro Italiano per l'Apprendimento  
Permanente)  
EfVET (European Forum of Technical and  
Vocational Education and Training)  
EU ProVET

Eurashe (European Association of Institutions  
in Higher Education)  
EVBB (European Association for VET  
Institutes) – Replies from Germany and  
Portugal  
Horeca Vlaanderen

### **5. Regions**

Basque region

### **6. Non-profit/Youth organisations**

Apprenticeships 4 England  
Apprenticeships for Scotland  
European Youth Forum  
You Net

### Alliance for YOUth (led by Nestlé)

A and R Carton Oy  
Adecco  
Axa  
BA Glass  
Eurogroup Consulting  
Iberfruta  
Nielsen  
Nordic Label  
Portucel  
Rudolf Wild GmbH  
Saica  
Securex  
Sogec  
Vodafone Portugal  
White and Case LLP

### Ambassadors

EMH Group (also pledge)  
Apprenticeships 4 England (also pledge)  
Apprenticeships for Scotland (also pledge)  
GI Group  
Nestlé (also pledge)  
Proactive Training & Skills Services Ltd  
Repsol (also pledge)  
SAP  
Siemens (also pledge)  
Swiss Post (also pledge)  
Telecom Italia