

# EUROPEAN ALLIANCE FOR APPRENTICESHIPS

## MEMBER STATE – PLANNED REFORMS/INITIATIVES

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Considering the Council Declaration<sup>1</sup> on the European Alliance for Apprenticeships of 15 October 2013, **BELGIUM** will undertake the following measures to increase the quality, supply and attractiveness of apprenticeships.

### **Preliminary remark:**

The Belgian institutional setting regarding dual learning will change on the first of July 2014. The federated entities (Regions and Communities) will become competent for more aspects of this matter as a result of a further transfer of competences in the framework of the sixth state reform. This will enable them to rationalise and harmonise all forms of dual learning, that currently exist at different institutional levels.

Furthermore, as far as the Flemish Region/Community is concerned, the existing legislation in the area of “learning and working” is currently being evaluated, while a reform of secondary education is also ongoing. The Walloon Region and French Community from their side have set up a system of indicators and permanent evaluation of all measures taken, especially through the Marshall Plan.

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Please describe in 1-3 sentences the main objectives of this reform/initiative.

- *Strengthen the attractiveness of apprenticeships;*
- *Address the mismatches between supply and demand of skills, by reinforcing the educational and entrepreneurial partnership and by forecasting the emergence of new professions;*
- *Enhance the quality of apprenticeships, improving the perspective of concrete post-trainee recruitment;*
- *Rationalise and harmonize the functioning of apprenticeships;*

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Please describe the reform/initiative, by providing an overview of the next steps to increase the supply, quality and attractiveness of apprenticeships, along the common guiding principles defined in the Declaration. (Max. 15 lines).

A wide variety of measures to improve the quality of learning and apprenticeships and to increase the number of places available, is already in place, some measures for several years, others more recently (cf. contributions by the federated entities, in annex to this questionnaire).

In light of the sixth state reform and the devolution of competences it entails, the federal government will increase the accessibility to apprenticeships in the beginning of 2014, via the adoption of a unified social security regime for all forms of dual learning.

Without prejudice to the final policy decisions resulting from ongoing evaluations and future implementation of the sixth state reform, following “next steps” envisaged by the federated entities can be highlighted (non exhaustive list, cf. annexes for more detail):

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/139011.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/139011.pdf)

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- *Transnational project in view of examination of relevant apprenticeship practices abroad;*
  - *Harmonisation towards a single status for apprentices or towards a single type of contract, providing an apprenticeship plan suitable for every apprentice;*
  - *Creation of a trans-system dual learning institute, aimed at promoting and developing dual learning systems;*
  - *Reinforcement of the professional training institutes and its courses' content;*
  - *Simplification of incentive structure for companies offering apprenticeships;*
  - *Cross-cutting initiative aimed at enhancing the quality of partnerships and initiatives between education and vocational training;*
  - *Specific programmes to curb school dropout, to address mismatches between supply and demand of skills;*
  - *Specific, custom-made support in study orientation and career guidance, and further professionalisation of the intake, screening and guidance of students in the dual learning system;*
  - *A further valorisation of the involvement of the sectorial social partners.*

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What is the **added value** of the reform/initiative beyond business as usual? Please include information on expected outcomes, as well as targets or indicators of success if possible. (Max. 10 lines)

Added value of new initiatives will derive from:

- a more transparent regulatory framework (guidance and financial incentives)
- rationalisation of different types of contracts
- an even more integrated approach between the instances in charge of employment, training and education
- better adaptation to labour market developments
- increasing the number of apprentices in dual learning systems
- administrative simplification
- a better involvement and increased interest of companies offering apprenticeships

The relevant public services have developed indicators and tools to assess ongoing initiatives. However, it is premature to know the results of recently implemented or planned initiatives.

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What partners will be involved in the reform/initiative at the national and the European levels?

A wide variety of relevant partners and stakeholders are systematically being involved: sectorial social partners (business federations and trade unions), advisory boards (economic and social councils, boards of education, bodies in charge of the promotion of equal opportunities,...), and operators for training and work placement.

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Contact information:

### ***Federal level***

Office of **Monica De Coninck**, Belgian Minister of Employment.  
02/238.28.11 | [info@deconinck.belgium.be](mailto:info@deconinck.belgium.be)

**Federal Public Service Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue**  
<http://www.emploi.belgique.be>

### **Flemish government and administration**

Office of **Philippe Muyters**, Flemish Minister for Finance, Budget, Work, Town and Country Planning and Sport.  
02/552.67.00 | [kabinet.muyters@vlaanderen.be](mailto:kabinet.muyters@vlaanderen.be)

Office of **Pascal Smet**, Flemish Minister for Education, Youth, Equal Opportunities and Brussels Affairs  
02/552.68.00 | [kabinet.smet@vlaanderen.be](mailto:kabinet.smet@vlaanderen.be)

**Department of Work and Social Economy**  
Griet Smet: 02/553.44.05 | [griet.smet@wse.vlaanderen.be](mailto:griet.smet@wse.vlaanderen.be)

**Department of Education and Training**  
Goedele Verhaeghe: 02/553.95.74, | [goedele.verhaeghe@ond.vlaanderen.be](mailto:goedele.verhaeghe@ond.vlaanderen.be)

### **Walloon Region and French Community**

Office of **André Antoine**, Walloon Minister of Budget, Finance, Employment, Education and Sports  
Philippe Mattart, chef de cabinet  
[philippe.mattart@gov.wallonie.be](mailto:philippe.mattart@gov.wallonie.be) – [jenifer.clavareau@gov.wallonie.be](mailto:jenifer.clavareau@gov.wallonie.be)  
[www.antoine.wallonie.be](http://www.antoine.wallonie.be)

**SPW - Département de l'Emploi et de la Formation professionnelle**  
081/33.31.11 | [emploi@spw.wallonie.be](mailto:emploi@spw.wallonie.be) | <http://emploi.wallonie.be>

Office of **Marie-Martine Schyns**, Minister of Education en social promotion of the French Community  
Baudouin Duelz, chef de cabinet | [Baudouin.duelz@gov.cfwb.be](mailto:Baudouin.duelz@gov.cfwb.be)  
<http://schyns.cfwb.be>

**FWB – Enseignement et recherche scientifique**  
02/690.81.00 | [www.enseignement.be](http://www.enseignement.be)

### **Brussels Capital Region**

Office of **Céline Frémault**, Minister of Employment, Economy, Foreign Trade and Scientific Research of the Brussels-Capital Region  
02/508.79.11 | [info@fremault.irisnet.be](mailto:info@fremault.irisnet.be) | [www.fremault.irisnet.be](http://www.fremault.irisnet.be)

**MRBC – Administration de l'Economie et de l'Emploi**  
02 /800.34.52 | [www.werk-economie-emploi.irisnet.be](http://www.werk-economie-emploi.irisnet.be)

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Office of **Rachid Madrane**, State Secretary of the Brussels-Capital Region, responsible for Town Planning, Collection and Processing of Waste and Environmental Maintenance And Minister, Member of the Board of the French Community Commission (COCOF), responsible for Vocational Training, Culture, School Transport, Social Services, Family, Sport and International Relations  
02/506.34.11 | [info@madrane.irisnet.be](mailto:info@madrane.irisnet.be) | [www.madrane.be](http://www.madrane.be)

**Bruxelles Formation**

<http://www.bruxellesformation.be>

## **German Speaking Community**

Office of **Olivier Paasch**, Minister of Education, Formation/Training and Employment of the German-speaking community  
087/59.64.00 | [kab.paasch@dgov.be](mailto:kab.paasch@dgov.be)

## European Alliance for Apprenticeships

### Planned reforms / initiatives - Flanders

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Considering the Council Declaration<sup>2</sup> on the European Alliance for Apprenticeships of 15 October 2013, **Flanders** will undertake the following measures to increase the quality, supply and attractiveness of apprenticeships.

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#### 1. Main objectives of the reform / initiative

The Flemish Parliament Act on “learning and working” (decreet betreffende het stelsel van leren en werken), which came into effect in 2008, proposed an ambitious reform of the system: ensure the full-time engagement of as many young people as possible, improve compatibility between part-time vocational secondary education (DBSO, offered by Centres for Part-time Education - CDOs) and entrepreneurial apprenticeship (leertijd, offered by the SYNTRA centres ), offer every young person a custom career track, issue fully-fledged vocational qualifications and provide the potential to transition to higher education (= equality with the qualifications gained through traditional education).

Although an evaluation study has been commissioned, the results of this study are not expected until the end of 2014 at the earliest. In preceding years it has however come to light that not all objectives were achieved with the same degree of success and that there is a pressing need to adapt the system.

Awaiting the evaluation study of the Flemish Parliament Act and other policy developments (such as the Belgian state reform, infra paragraph on Butterfly Agreement) we could stipulate following **main objectives** of a future reform:

- Better management of the work component in the “learning and working” system, which is based on a clear regulatory framework that sets out clearly the responsibilities, rights and obligations of the parties involved. It also encourages input from and cooperation between a variety of stakeholders, removing the mismatch between supply and demand.
- Specific support in study and career guidance, as well as further professionalization of the intake, screening and guidance of students in the “learning and working” system.
- Increase in the involvement of the sectoral social partners in the creation of more and better work experience placements and ensuring the skills required are in line with the labour market need, etc.
- Making the “learning and working” system transparent and (more) attractive by aligning and harmonising the various contracts.
- A transparent regulatory framework that gives employers appropriate incentives to offer sufficient work experience placements and that ties in with the specific needs of SMEs.

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<sup>2</sup>

[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/139011.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/139011.pdf)

- A transparent regulatory framework that also gives schools appropriate incentives to align the training to the needs of the labour market. These incentives could be financial or non-financial.
- Offer special support to early school leavers or students at risk , to ensure that the apprenticeship system allows all students to obtain a qualification.

## **2. Description of the reform / initiative to increase the supply, quality and attractiveness of apprenticeships, along the common guiding principles defined in the Declaration**

Numerous activities and policy developments have been set in motion that will have an impact on the ambition on working towards an optimisation of the “learning and working” system in Flanders.

### Evaluation of The Flemish Parliament Act on “learning and working” (decreet leren en werken)

In 2014 The Flemish Parliament Act will be evaluated. The results of this evaluation are not expected until the end of 2014.

### Butterfly Agreement (6<sup>th</sup> Belgian state reform)

The Butterfly Agreement provides that Flanders be transferred a package of competencies from the federal level. With regard to apprenticeship schemes, this includes the transfer of an important contract type used, the start and traineeship bonus and the regulation of . the Social Security target group reductions (which are important to mentors & low-skilled young people).

The transfer of competencies opens the way to a more integrated education and labour market in the area of “learning and working”. With it, every type of training agreement in the “learning and working” system will be regionalised. The next Flemish government (elections May 2014) will decide how this agreement will be implemented within its region. Identical social security status (federal level)

Another positive development is that there is a move at the federal level towards an identical social security status for all young people in Belgium (and Flanders ) who are engaged in an apprenticeship scheme. A law is about to be proposed (“programme law on alternating courses”) to amend the existing laws and Royal Decrees.

### Transnational ESF project ‘towards optimisation of the learning and working system in Flanders’

Through this transnational ESF-project we want to examine good practices on apprenticeship schemes abroad. These cases will inspire Flanders to reform and optimise the “learning and working” system in Flanders. We hope to gain insight in:

- how the intake, screening and guidance of students take place, how students are supported in their choice of study and career path and in the search for work experience placement, and the partners and authorities involved;
- the conditions (industrial law) of the training agreement between employer, training provider and student;
- the structural organisation of dual learning systems and the involvement of employers and (sectoral) social partners: who takes responsibility for what? How can the visions of the partners involved be combined into a single, shared vision;

- how the government can offer companies and organisations financial support in an effective and transparent manner to encourage them to offer traineeships and provide the necessary guidance, and how it might give students financial incentives to persevere and obtain a formal qualification;
- the funding models for dual learning systems, and the origins of the various financial resources supporting the model;
- how supply and demand are related, how work experience placements can be adapted to match developments on the labour market and how the skills required can be linked to actual needs.
- In relation to this it would also be interesting to look at how other countries fit validation of non-formal and informal learning into the apprenticeship system.

Working group: harmonisation of statutes (steered by the Flemish E&T Dept, with high involvement of the Dept. Work and Social Economy).

The main objective of the working group 'harmonisation of statutes' was to formulate proposals to review and simplify the existing range of contracts. The multitude of contracts, for both training and employment, make the system not particularly attractive/transparent to employers at present and not particularly inviting to students (many differences among employers and students). At the end of 2013 this working group ended with a concept paper that presents its first outcomes.

Sector agreements (sectorconvenants)

The subject of bridging the gap between education and the labour market is one of the legislative spearheads of the Flemish instrument 'sector agreements'. The sector covenants are based on a content framework that gives the sectors a guidance on the themes that are important in our education and labour market policies and that are important for the sector. The sector covenants are centred around 3 themes:

- The connection between education and labour market (for example actions that work on the quality of workplace learning, careers guidance, ...)
- Skills development and competency management
- Increase the diversity on the labour market

Through these agreements a great amount of sectors have made arrangements with the government to create more and better workplaces for part-time education and/or entrepreneurial apprenticeships.

### **3. Added value of the reform / initiative beyond business as usual Expected outcomes, as well as targets or indicators of success**

At the moment it is too early to report on the added value of the reform of the "learning and working" system in Flanders because the reform is not implemented yet. Therefore we have to wait until the next government takes decisions about the Belgian sixth state reform and the results of the evaluation of the Flemish Parliament Act on "learning and working" will be available. In order to prepare this thorough reform of the "learning and working" system, there are different reflection exercises going on to support the next government to make the right, strategic decisions.

#### **4. Partners that will be involved in the reform/initiative at the national and the European levels**

##### Partners in Flanders

##### **Final target group:**

- Students and their parents
- Companies/non-profit organisations/government services (local authorities, etc.)
- Centres for Part-time Education (CDOs) and SYNTRA centres

##### **Other stakeholders**

- **Public labour market partners**
  - o The Department of Work and Social Economy
  - o The Flemish Agency for Entrepreneurship Training Syntra Flanders
  - o The ESF Agency )
  - o the Flemish Service for Employment and Vocational Training (VDAB)
- **Educational partners**
  - o The Department of Education and Training (E&T) The Flemish Education Council (VLOR - **strategic advisory council for the policy area of Education and Training**)
  - o The Regional Discussion Platform (ROP)
- **Social partners/ Private labour market partners**
  - o The interprofessional social partners (SERV / VESOC partners) and the sectoral social partners (entrepreneurial apprenticeship commissions, sector funds/joint apprenticeship committees, sector advisors, etc.) that represent the interests of employers and employees

#### **5. Contact information, date**

Department of Work and Social Economy

Griet Smet: 02/553.44.05, [griet.smet@wse.vlaanderen.be](mailto:griet.smet@wse.vlaanderen.be)

Department of Education and Training

Goedele Verhaeghe: 02/553.95.74, [goedele.verhaeghe@ond.vlaanderen.be](mailto:goedele.verhaeghe@ond.vlaanderen.be)



## Contribution de la Wallonie et Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles

### Alliance européenne pour l'apprentissage

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Considering the Council Declaration<sup>3</sup> on the European Alliance for Apprenticeships of 15 October 2013, **BELGIUM – Bruxelles formation- COCOF** will undertake the following measures to increase the quality, supply and attractiveness of apprenticeships.

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#### 1. Mesures actuelles

- ✓ **Renforcement de l'offre de formation en alternance au travers des CEFA** (centres d'enseignement et de formation en alternance).
- ✓ **Gestion collective de l'offre d'enseignement à travers les « bassins scolaires »** : 10 instances de pilotage décentralisées qui veillent à garantir un lien entre les formations offertes dans l'enseignement obligatoire avec les besoins socio-économiques locaux.
- ✓ **Création de 31 Centres de Technologies Avancées (CTA)** : ce sont des centres développés au sein d'établissements scolaires, avec des équipements de pointe, et qui accueillent des publics scolaires (tous niveaux), des demandeurs d'emploi et des travailleurs.
  - Valeur ajoutée : des économies d'échelle sont réalisées car il est impossible d'équiper toutes les écoles de la même manière ; les formations gagnent en qualité car les jeunes sont confrontés à des équipements neufs et hautement technologiques.
- ✓ **Veille des Métiers** : surveillance du marché de l'emploi via l'identification continue des métiers en pénurie et adaptation de l'offre de formation
- ✓ **Déploiement d'un réseau de Centres de Compétences labellisés** : 25 centres de compétences en Wallonie, proposant des outils de pointe pour assurer une formation de qualité aux demandeurs d'emploi, formateurs et étudiants.

#### 2. Mesures récentes

- ✓ **Réforme de l'alternance** : création d'un statut commun des jeunes de 15 à 25 ans en formation en alternance dans l'enseignement comme dans la formation professionnelle et création d'un institut de la Formation en alternance (OFFA) pour coordonner la mesure et promouvoir l'alternance + contrat unique + plan de formation adapté pour chaque jeune + renforcement de la reconnaissance des certifications de la Formation Professionnelle.
  - Valeur ajoutée : simplification administrative – accroissement de la qualité – promotion de l'alternance – plus grande implication des entreprises.
- ✓ **Formation alternée des demandeurs d'emploi** : une formation pratique auprès d'un employeur + une formation auprès d'un opérateur de formation afin de permettre au jeune demandeur d'emploi (18-25 ans + personnes en cellule de reconversion) d'acquérir des

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<sup>3</sup>

[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/139011.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/139011.pdf)

compétences professionnelles nécessaires sur le marché du travail pour exercer une activité professionnelle : 18 mois de formation dont 20 à 50% de formation auprès d'un opérateur de formation et 50 à 80% de formation pratique en entreprise.

- ✓ **Métiers d'avenir** : identification des métiers d'avenir sur base de l'identification et de l'analyse des facteurs d'évolution sectorielles et leurs effets sur le marché du travail afin d'améliorer et de mieux adapter l'offre de service. Il s'agit de prévoir quels sont les métiers de demain qui seront également porteurs d'emploi et de préparer l'offre de formation en conséquence.
  - Valeur ajoutée : l'adaptation de référentiels, l'introduction de nouveaux modules de formation en rapport avec l'évolution sectorielle, le développement d'actions d'orientation et de sensibilisation des jeunes et des demandeurs d'emploi à de nouveaux métiers.
- ✓ **Promotion des métiers techniques et manuels** : organisation des actions de démonstration et d'animation sur les métiers techniques et manuels à destination des jeunes de 10 ans et plus et des demandeurs d'emploi de 25 ans et plus afin d'une part de renforcer l'intérêt pour les métiers scientifiques et techniques auprès des jeunes, du public et du monde de l'entreprise et d'autre part, de développer les collaborations entre acteurs.
  - Valeur ajoutée : création de synergie et de collaboration entre partenaires de l'enseignement, de la formation et du monde de l'entreprise et échange des bonnes pratiques.
- ✓ **Développement d'expériences d'immersion en entreprise** : à mi-chemin entre le stage traditionnel et l'alternance, l'immersion associe l'école et l'entreprise dans la formation du jeune.
  - Valeur ajoutée : la formation est plus en adéquation avec les besoins de l'entreprise ; le jeune est plus motivé car il perçoit plus directement le métier dans ses composantes réelles ; l'entreprise est partenaire de la formation.
- ✓ **Généralisation progressive des stages en entreprise** : un décret définit et balise les types de stages et les rend progressivement obligatoires de manière telle que chaque jeune qui suit un enseignement qualifiant ait une expérience en entreprise.
  - Valeur ajoutée : la formation sera encore plus pratique et le jeune sera acculturé au monde professionnel.
- ✓ **Changement culturel dans l'enseignement qualifiant par le développement de la « certification par Unités d'acquis d'apprentissage (CPU) »** : la CPU met en œuvre les ECVET (crédits européens) et facilite donc la mobilité interne et externe des élèves ; elle promeut une culture de la réussite plutôt que le recours au redoublement (source de retard et puis d'abandon scolaire) en valorisant les acquis des élèves.
  - Valeur ajoutée : la motivation des élèves s'accroît (et donc celle des enseignants) ; la remédiation est continue et soutient les élèves dans leurs apprentissages ; le redoublement ne se pratique plus et l'abandon scolaire diminue.
- ✓ **Essais- métiers** : organisation des essais d'un ou de plusieurs métiers en pénurie de main d'œuvre et actions d'orientation pratiques à destination des jeunes et des demandeurs d'emploi, en centre de formation du FOREM, de l'IFAPME et des autres opérateurs de formation et d'insertion via des appels à projets.
  - Valeur ajoutée : meilleure orientation des jeunes et des demandeurs d'emploi dans la formation qui leur convient.

### 3. Mesures planifiées pour la prochaine législature

- ✓ **Développement et simplification des systèmes d'incitants aux entreprises** accueillant des stagiaires en alternance : réduction groupes-cibles envers le tuteur et le jeune en alternance + financement de la formation au tutorat + financement de projets inter-opérateurs de formation
  - Valeur ajoutée : simplification administrative pour l'entreprise + soutien financier aux entreprises pour lutter contre la pénurie de places d'accueil + qualité du tutorat.
- ✓ **Elargissement du statut unique du jeune en alternance** aux étudiants en master en alternance.
- ✓ **Démarche transversale QUALITE** entre l'Enseignement et la Formation Professionnelle : expérimentation actuellement en cours dont le but est de réaliser les constats des démarches qualité préexistantes et de tendre vers l'application de critères qualité transversaux enseignement – formation professionnelle au regard des préceptes européens en la matière.
- ✓ **Concertation (assises annuelles) entre les décideurs et acteurs de terrain de l'enseignement, de l'emploi et de la formation :** pour répondre aux défis de demain (décrochage scolaire – évolution des métiers – adaptation des référentiels – actions coordonnées)
- ✓ **Développement de programmes spécifiques de lutte contre l'abandon scolaire** par une collaboration renforcée entre l'enseignement et le secteur de l'aide à la jeunesse.
- ✓ **Renforcement des processus d'orientation** dans lesquels les élèves sont accompagnés pour développer un projet personnel de scolarité et d'insertion socio-professionnelle.
- ✓ **Mise en œuvre du cadre francophone des certifications** et développement de la mobilité entre opérateurs d'enseignement, de formation et de validation des acquis de l'expérience.
- ✓ **Elargissement des bassins scolaires aux bassins de vie** rassemblant également les opérateurs de formation professionnelle pour une gestion plus collective de l'offre de formation.

### 4. Contact Information :

**Marie-Martine Schyns**, Ministre de l'Enseignement obligatoire et de promotion sociale

Baudouin Duelz, chef de cabinet

[Baudouin.duelz@gov.cfwb.be](mailto:Baudouin.duelz@gov.cfwb.be)

<http://schyns.cfwb.be/>

**André Antoine**, Ministre Wallon de l'Emploi et de la Formation

Philippe Mattart, chef de cabinet

Rue d'Harscamp, 22 – 5000 NAMUR

[philippe.mattart@gov.wallonie.be](mailto:philippe.mattart@gov.wallonie.be) – [jenifer.cavareau@gov.wallonie.be](mailto:jenifer.cavareau@gov.wallonie.be)

[www.antoine.wallonie.be](http://www.antoine.wallonie.be)

## EUROPEAN ALLIANCE FOR APPRENTICESHIPS

### MEMBER STATE – PLANNED REFORMS/INITIATIVES

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Considering the Council Declaration<sup>4</sup> on the European Alliance for Apprenticeships of 15 October 2013, **BELGIUM – Bruxelles formation- COCOF** will undertake the following measures to increase the quality, supply and attractiveness of apprenticeships.

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Please describe in 1-3 sentences the **main objective** of this reform/initiative.

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Please **describe the reform/initiative**, by providing an overview of the next steps to increase the supply, quality and attractiveness of apprenticeships, along the common guiding principles defined in the Declaration. (Max. 15 lines)

Dans le cadre du Plan de relance pour l'emploi du Gouvernement fédéral, la **Commission communautaire française (COCOF)** et Bruxelles Formation (organisme public en charge de la formation professionnelle des adultes francophones en Région de Bruxelles-Capitale) ont lancé en 2013 les **stages de transition en entreprise** de 3 à 6 mois pour les chercheurs d'emploi âgés de moins de 30 ans disposant au maximum du diplôme d'enseignement secondaire supérieur et inscrits comme demandeurs d'emploi inoccupé depuis minimum 5 mois. L'objectif est de créer à Bruxelles 1.650 places de stage. Bruxelles Formation assure la gestion administrative et pédagogique de la mesure ainsi que le **suivi des stagiaires en entreprise** pour la bonne réalisation du **plan de formation**. Les entreprises communiquent les offres de stages de transition à **Actiris** (Service public régional de l'emploi) qui identifie les bénéficiaires parmi les chercheurs d'emploi inscrits.

À côté de cette initiative, Bruxelles Formation met en œuvre d'autres formules de **stages de fin de formation** qualifiante en entreprise (4 à 6 semaines) ainsi que des **Formations professionnelles individuelles en entreprise (FPI)** - de 4 semaines à 6 mois - qui combinent contrat de formation et contrat d'emploi.

Dans le cadre des politiques croisées emploi/formation, la Région de Bruxelles-Capitale et la Cocof se sont engagées à augmenter le nombre de places de FPI en collaboration avec les Fonds sectoriels et/ou de formation ainsi que des entreprises. 350 entreprises accueillent plus de 500 stagiaires /an.

What is the **added value** of the reform/initiative beyond business as usual? Please include information on expected outcomes, as well as targets or indicators of success if possible. (Max. 10 lines)

**Il s'agit d'une approche globale** impliquant tant le service public de l'emploi que l'organisme bruxellois de formation professionnelle et ses partenaires. Les deux organismes collaborent pour la **promotion** des mesures mentionnées ci-dessus au niveau des chercheurs d'emploi et des employeurs tant publics que privés. L'encadrement des candidats est renforcé sur le plan pédagogique et de

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<sup>4</sup>

[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/en/lisa/139011.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lisa/139011.pdf)

l'accompagnement en entreprise ; les procédures pour les entreprises sont **simplifiées**. Le coût mensuel pour l'entreprise est de 200€/mois. Un dispositif d'évaluation continue accompagne cette action.

What **partners** will be involved in the reform/initiative at the national and the European levels?

- Fédérations patronales et organisations syndicales
- Fonds sectoriels et/ou de formation;
- Entreprises ;
- Employeurs publics (y compris les CPAS)
- Secteur associatif / organismes d'insertion socioprofessionnelle (ASBL)

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**Contact information, date:**

Office of **Céline Frémault**, Minister of Employment, Economy, Foreign Trade and Scientific Research of the Brussels-Capital Region  
02/508.79.11 | [info@fremault.irisnet.be](mailto:info@fremault.irisnet.be) | [www.fremault.irisnet.be](http://www.fremault.irisnet.be)

**MRBC – Administration de l'Economie et de l'Emploi**  
02 /800.34.52 | [www.werk-economie-emploi.irisnet.be](http://www.werk-economie-emploi.irisnet.be)

Office of **Rachid Madrane**, State Secretary of the Brussels-Capital Region, responsible for Town Planning, Collection and Processing of Waste and Environmental Maintenance And Minister, Member of the Board of the French Community Commission (COCOF), responsible for Vocational Training, Culture, School Transport, Social Services, Family, Sport and International Relations  
02/506.34.11 | [info@madrane.irisnet.be](mailto:info@madrane.irisnet.be) | [www.madrane.be](http://www.madrane.be)

**Bruxelles Formation**  
<http://www.bruxellesformation.be>