



11th meeting of the European Alliance for Apprenticeships Dublin, 16-17 April 2018

Short summary

General remarks

- The European Commission organised the **11th meeting of the European Alliance for Apprenticeships (EAfA)** in **Dublin on 16-17 April 2018** in cooperation with the EAfA member [Teachers' Union of Ireland](#) and **Connect Trade Union** and with financial support from **ESB (Electrical Supply Board, Ireland)**.
- The objective of the event was to promote a positive perception and increase the status of apprenticeship as a quality and attractive career option, particularly from a trade union perspective.
- Around 50 members of the EAfA and of the European Apprentices Network (EAN) attended the meeting, in addition to over 100 participants representing Irish organisations.

Main content of the meeting

- The plenary meeting started with an **introductory session** including a welcome address by **Patricia King**, the General Secretary of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, and a video message from **Marianne Thyssen**, the European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility. This was followed by a keynote speech delivered by **John Halligan T.D.**, Minister of State for Training, Skills, Innovation, Research and Development.
- **Norbert Schöbel** from the Commission informed about the latest developments in apprenticeships at European level, e.g. the newly adopted **European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships**, the **state of play of EAfA** and the strong involvement of social partners in the platform, as well as the **apprenticeship support services** to be launched in November in Vienna during the Vocational Skills Week 2018.
- **Ashwani Aggarwal** from the **International Labour Organisation** delivered a presentation on the role of social partners in the governance of apprenticeship schemes. The role of teachers and trainers in ensuring quality apprenticeships was introduced by **Irina Jemeljanova** from **CEDEFOP**.
- A separate session was dedicated to presentations on the **apprenticeships system in Ireland** from various actors involved in its design and implementation. Speakers included **Paddy Kavanagh** from the Connect Trade Union, **Michael Conry** from ESB (the largest employer of apprentices in Ireland), **Fiona Maloney** from ETBI, **Ruaidhri Neavyn** from HEA, **Dr Mary Liz Trant** from SOLAS, **Alex Keys** from QQI and **Dermot Carey** from CIF.
- The panel discussion **What can Europe do to support quality apprenticeships?** involved representatives from social partners (**Susan Flocken** from ETUCE and **Claire McGee** from BusinessEurope), VET providers associations (**Gilberto Collinassi**) and the **European Apprentices Network (Frédéric Piccavet)**. It was followed by a lively debate with the audience, in particular on the issue of decent pay/compensation to apprentices.
- Two rounds of two **parallel workshops** took place in the afternoon, each benefiting from presentations and contributions from EAfA members and Irish organisations:
 - *Workshop 1: National practices to enhance the quality of apprenticeships* with presentations from **EURASHE** (Supporting apprenticeships between professional higher education and SMEs – Apprenticeship Quality Toolkit), **ReKreata I/S** (The Positive Quality Spiral concept - How the apprentice can actually raise quality in the company) and the **Scottish Government** (Improving the supply, quality and image of apprenticeships in Scotland)



- *Workshop II: The role of trade unions in national governance systems* with presentations from the **National Federation of Education (FNE)** in Portugal, and three Irish trade unions: **Teachers' Union of Ireland**, **Building and Allied Trades' Union** and **Plasterers' Union of Ireland**.
- *Workshop III: Offering quality mobility experiences to apprentices* with presentations from **Johann August Robling Europa Schule** from Germany (Exchange of apprentices at the Europa School under Erasmus+) and **Anglesairlanda** from Spain (Apprentice mobility experiences).
- *Workshop IV: National social partners contributing to advancing quality apprenticeship opportunities* with presentations from the **Chamber of Commerce of Catalonia** (How apprenticeships improve employment opportunities and the quality of jobs – the results of a survey), the **European Builders Confederation** (EBC experience in EAfA – improving the image of the construction sector), and **CCCA-BTP** from France (apprenticeships in the construction sector and engagement to EAfA).
- The closing session included a short reporting back from the four workshops and some closing remarks from **Dr Anne Murphy** from the Dublin Institute of Technology. **Norbert Schöbel** from the European Commission draw the following conclusions:
 - 1) **The Irish system:** Participants got a comprehensive picture of the Irish system which finds itself in the middle of a transition from traditional to new sectors. Michael Conry from ESB for instance said that "*We invest in apprenticeships because its works*". However, participants also learned from other speakers how difficult it is to pass the message to new sectors such as hospitality, insurance, finances or ICT. There was a clear commitment from the Minister to substantially increase the supply of apprenticeships and to ensure quality and decent working conditions.
 - 2) **The issues at stake:** Participants learnt that the problem is not necessarily a financial one, but the issue is more about the value of apprenticeships and decent pay and working conditions. This would also include meaningful social dialogue, quality leaderships and a stronger focus on in-company trainers. In addition, it was concluded that sectoral approaches may often be quite effective.
 - 3) **The role of the EU:** The EU should continue its focus on the support of teachers and trainers collaboration, on research and innovation, on supporting SMEs and entrepreneurship as well as mobility. In addition, the EU should continue to get close to national, regional and local events and activities, through initiatives such as the European Vocational Skills Week.-
- On the **second day** of the meeting **four site visits** took place: participants visited the apprenticeship training centre of the **Electrical Supply Board (ES)** in Portlaoise, the Glanbia food processing production facility in Laois, the Ballyfermot vocational training centre in Dublin and the Dundalk Institute of Technology.
- The **European Apprentices Network** held an internal working meeting in the margins of the event.

Follow-up

- Information about the next upcoming EAfA meetings will be sent out in due course, with reimbursement opportunities for EAfA members.



Annex

11th EAfA stakeholder meeting, 16-17 April 2018, Dublin

List of participating EAfA members

Family Name	First Name	Country	Affiliation, Organisation	Participant's Function/Position
Bartsoka	Maria	Greece	OAED (Manpower Employment Organization)	Head of Unit
Bolognini	Paola	France	CCCA-BTP	Internationalization of Competences Advisor
Bosch	Narcis	Spain	General Council of Chambers of Commerce of Catalonia	CEO
Böttcher	Karsten	Germany	Berufliche Schule des Unstrut-Hainich-Kreises "Johann August Röbling" EUROPA SCHULE	Chef of Department
Castillo	Jordi		Xarxa FP	Secretary General
Cofacci	Cristina	Italy	Enel Group	Industrial Relations Manager
Collinassi	Gilberto	Italy	ENAI NET (EVTA)	R&D Director
Colonnese	Flavia		European Youth Forum/European Apprentices Network	
Colston	Hannah	United Kingdom	European Apprentices Network	
Corrêa	Herminio		European Parents Association (EPA)	Ambassador
Dam	Roosmarijn		EAN, Jongeren Organisatie Beroepsonderwijs	Chairman
Dammerer	Harald	Macedonia	EVN Macedonia, Employers Association	Executive Director
Fahey	Alan	Ireland	SAP SSC Ireland	Vocational Training Coordinator
Fandrejewski	Matthäus		CESI Youth	President
Fenech	Pauline	Malta	General Worker's Union	Director of Studies
Flocken	Susan	Belgium	ETUCE	Director



Garrido Angaron	Laia	Spain	Fundación Bertelsmann	Project Manager
Gjorgiev	Robert	Macedonia	VET Centre	Deputy director
Grdosic	Marko	Belgium	EURASHE - European Association of Institutions in Higher Education	Project Manager
Grigor	Callum	United Kingdom	Scottish Government	Apprenticeship Policy Manager
Hjorth	Hans Thomas	Denmark	ReKreatia I/S	Manager
Huschka	Klaus-Jürgen	Germany	Internationaler Bund (IB) /EVBB	Regional Director
Hybschmann	Peter	Denmark	European Apprentices Network	
Jakubek-Grootjans	Elzbieta	Belgium	EAN - OBESSU	Secretary General
Kenny	Aidan	Ireland	Teachers' Union of Ireland	Assistant Secretary General
Kinross	Peter Benjamin	United Kingdom	National Society of Apprentices/European Apprentice Network	Apprentice Engagement Officer/EAN Support
Lacinová	Sandra	Czech Republic	ŠKODA AUTO	
Lauwereyns	Lieve	Belgium	European Federation of Education Employers / GO! Education of the Flemish Community	Apprenticeship coordinator
Mare	Pasqualino	Italy	ETF	
Naglitsch	Lotta	Sweden	National agency for education	Direktor Apprenticeship center
Nunes	Conceição	Portugal	SINDEP	Vice General Secretary
O'KEEFFE	LISA	Spain	ANGLESAIRLANDA	COORDINATOR AND ADVISOR ON WORK PLACEMENTS
Orpen	Frederique	France	Chambre de Commerce et d'industrie	trainer , project manager on apprenticeship and mobility
Piccavet	Frederic		European Apprentices Network	Representative



SANTOS	JOAQUIM	Portugal	FNE - NATIONAL FEDERATION OF EDUCATION	NATIONAL SECRETARIAT - ASSISTANT TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL
Santos	Lucília	Portugal	European Universities for Continung Education Network - EUCEN / Universidade de Aveiro (PT)	Associate Professor
Sauli Miklavčič	Alicia Leonor		EURASHE	Board Member
Schoebel	Norbert		European Commission	Team leader
Sigchos Jiménez	Fernando		European Builders Confederation EBC	Policy Officer/Project Manager
Šoš	Ivan	Slovakia	OZ PSaV of Slovakia/ member of ETUCE	Vice-president responsible for secondary education, VET and apprenticeship
Spiridon	Diana		European Commission	Policy officer
Spizzichino	Flavia	Italy	CIOFS-FP	European Project officer
Stolz	Manuel	Austria	European Apprenticeship Network	Member
Tarantino	Francesco	Italy	IFOM	Director
Tutzauer Lindqvist	Sylvia	Sweden	National Agency for Education (Skolverket)	Director of Education
Úlovcová	Helena	Czech Republic	National Institute for Education	deputy director
Urbain	Michel	Belgium	Office Francophone de Formation en Alternance (OFFA)	Project manager
Vaněčková	Zuzana	Czech Republic	YFJ - European Youth Forum	Board Member
Varnai	Tamas		European Commission	Policy officer
VIEJO RODRIGUEZ	JOSE ANTONIO	Spain	FUNDACION LABORAL DE LA CONSTRUCCION	CHIEF TRAINING OFFICER
Walter	Jana	Germany	Bertelsmann SE & Co KGaA	Office Manager
Wood	Graham	United Kingdom	NGi (UK) Limited	Director
Xhomaqi	Brikena		Lifelong Learning Platform	Director