



European  
Commission

## “Get Together!”

European Alliance for Apprenticeships (EAfA)

— 13 February 2020, Brussels

The event opened the calendar year by gathering over 85 members of the European Alliance for Apprenticeships (EAfA) to discuss various prevalent themes and their work on apprenticeships. During the second part of the event, participants worked together closely, zooming in on different key issues of apprenticeships and sharing experiences. This event was the first of a series of events and workshops planned throughout 2020. It marked the 25th meeting since the EAfA launch in 2013 and demonstrated that the alliance has developed into a wide and active community of stakeholders.



EAfA event participants

### EQUALITY AND APPRENTICESHIPS

Ensuring vulnerable groups have equal access to apprenticeships is an important topic for the EAfA and was consequently subject to discussion in the first panel. Speakers highlighted country-based experiences and national strategies aiming to strengthen equality and inclusion in apprenticeships. In Scotland, the government-led Apprenticeship Equality Action Plan aims to address the under-representation of female apprentices in the construction industry and increase their retention. In Portugal, the Lisbon City Council has responded to the recent influx of refugees and migrants through an updated inclusion strategy promoting lifelong learning to attain the compulsory education level of refugees. In Iceland, municipalities address the inclusion of students with disabilities in apprenticeships, ensuring that caretaking agreements between employers and educational institutions are made. The benefits of an inclusive and diverse workforce were highlighted by the European Roma Grassroots Organisations (ERGO) who presented the ‘Place for All – Campaign on Inclusive Workplaces’ aiming to support young Roma people in finding jobs, including apprenticeships.



Panel speakers from left to right: Callum Grigor, Senior Apprenticeship Policy Manager, Scottish Government; Maria Manuel Casal Ribeiro, International Internships Coordinator & Trainer, Câmara Municipal de Lisboa; Amana Ferro, European Roma Grassroots Organisations (ERGO) Network; and Akeem Cujo Oppong, Director, Island Panorama Centre

### APPRENTICESHIPS OF THE FUTURE

The second panel explored the future of apprenticeships in addressing the reskilling needs of a changing workforce. Speakers presented good practice examples and possible scenarios to address a better match with future skills needs. It is estimated that between 14% and 47% of current jobs will be automated by 2050. This calls for flexible learning environments, with an increased focus on social-emotional skills and self-regulated learning. Examples of how AI technology can support e-learning and learning in the future were presented. Finally, the panel presented potential new approaches to apprenticeships, such as self-employment and apprenticeship models that may need to be re-designed to take into account evolving work patterns and the acquisition of new skills and knowledge.



Panel speakers from left to right: Arja Krauchenberg, Vice-President, LLLP Lifelong Learning Platform; Vitor Alhandra, Vice-President, APETEC; Irvine Abraham, Enterprise & International Manager, Northern Regional College

**“More and more in the future, we will need a lifelong learning approach to education.”**  
Claudio Masotti Vice-President of the European Parents Association

## HIGHER EDUCATION AND APPRENTICESHIPS

Higher education apprenticeship (HEA) programmes are a powerful tool used to promote work-based learning (WBL) and ease students' transitions from school to work. Strong University-business partnerships are key in designing HEA programmes. These formally combine and alternate remunerated company-based training with school-based education that leads to nationally recognised qualifications. From October 2017-2019, Erasmus+ co-funded the ApprenEnt project consortium focused on refining HEA, developing tools to support collaboration and coordination between universities and businesses. The ApprenEnt consortium leader, the European University Continuing Education Network (EUCEN) presented the results of the project. Subsequently, the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE) presented a toolkit developed to advise organisations on how to deliver quality apprenticeships.

## PARALLEL WORKSHOPS

During the three parallel workshops, participants had the opportunity to exchange good practices and identify key issues and solutions on some three key topics related to apprenticeships. Some key points of each workshop are summarised in the boxes below.

### Workshop A: Image of Apprenticeships

The image of apprenticeships can be further promoted through the celebration of successes and further disseminated through different communication activities. This can support the expansion of apprenticeship networks to new sectors (i.e. IT sector)

### Workshop B: Recognition of Qualifications

Structured social partner dialogue can help to streamline the recognition of qualifications. Efforts should continue to involve more social actors to engage in developing joint action, in particular between VET providers and employers.

### Workshop C: Apprenticeships and Skills

Skills forecasting is becoming increasingly difficult due to rapid technological advancements. Apprenticeships can support and respond to up-skilling and re-skilling labour market needs, taking into account different stakeholders' needs.

## EUROPEAN APPRENTICES NETWORK (EAN)

The event was also an opportunity for the European Apprentices Network (EAN) to meet and update the EAfA network on the latest developments. The EAN gathers apprentices at European level to ensure that their voice is heard in discussions on VET and apprenticeships. This year, the EAN is actively seeking new members and encourages submissions before 19 February 2020 to ensure that the new members are up-to-speed and can participate in this year's activities.



New EAfA member welcome ceremony

## WELCOME TO THE NEW EAfA MEMBERS!

The event was also an opportunity to welcome new members to the alliance. To date, about 319 pledges from 36 countries have been submitted to the alliance. EAfA members benefit from Apprenticeship Support Services (AppSS), which include online resources and networking opportunities, allowing them to connect, learn and act. Find out more details [here](#).



#ApprenEU  
Find more information about the event [here](#)  
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- For EAfA members only [here](#)  
- For non-EAfA members [here](#)