



European  
Commission



---

# Regional webinar for Candidate Countries and EAfA Partner Countries

European Alliance for  
Apprenticeships

19 November 2021

*Employment,  
Social Affairs  
and Inclusion*



# Contents

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>6</b>
1.1	Welcome and introductory remarks .....	6
1.2	EU policy developments .....	6
1.3	Funding opportunities for regional development .....	7
1.4	Perspectives from the Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the European Union.....	8
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Highlights and latest developments in work-based learning and apprenticeships .....</b>	<b>11</b>
2.1	Albania .....	11
2.2	North Macedonia .....	12
2.3	Montenegro .....	12
2.4	Serbia.....	13
2.5	Turkey .....	13
<b>3.0</b>	<b>The EAfA: Latest developments and Partner Countries.....</b>	<b>17</b>
3.1	European Alliance for Apprenticeships Developments .....	17
3.2	Welcoming new EAfA Partner Countries .....	18
3.2.1	Israel.....	18
3.2.2	Moldova .....	19
3.3	Looking forward to Belgrade 2022 .....	19
3.3.1	Digitalisation and work-based learning .....	20
3.3.2	Youth Guarantee .....	20
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Conclusions and closing of the seminar .....</b>	<b>23</b>



# **1.0** **Introduction**

# 1.0 Introduction

---

The fifth regional event jointly organised by ETF and EAfA took place on 19 November 2021 in webinar format. The event, which brought together 56 participants, explored the latest policy developments in work-based learning (WBL) practices in Candidate Countries and welcomed two new Partner Countries, Israel and Moldova, to the EAfA.

## 1.1 Welcome and introductory remarks

**Speaker: Cesare Onestini**, Director, European Training Foundation (ETF)

The event marked the fifth regional event co-organised by ETF and the Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (DG EMPL) of the European Commission. Previous regional meetings were organised in Turkey (2016), Montenegro (2017), Albania (2018), and North Macedonia (2019).

ETF is committed to developing more and better apprenticeships by supporting Candidate Countries to adopt relevant initiatives in this area. The progress in adopting WBL systems made in recent years by Candidate Countries shows the results of the efforts of everyone involved.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown that although digital and online means have some limitations when it comes to delivering quality apprenticeships, new ideas and solutions have also arisen. EAfA initiatives are as important as ever to help build resilience and support citizens to develop and share new practices in a post-pandemic world. In the context of the European Year of Youth 2022, ETF and EAfA will strengthen their commitment to supporting youth, putting even more emphasis on the development of apprenticeships and the Youth Guarantee offer.

## 1.2 EU policy developments

**Speaker: Ana Carrero**, Deputy Head of Unit, Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (DG EMPL), European Commission

Since the 2015 Riga Declaration, many things have happened. In November 2020, the **Osnabrück Declaration**<sup>1</sup> was agreed, setting out policy actions for the period 2021–2025. The Osnabrück Declaration focuses on the following main areas:

- Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET;
- Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – Relevance of continuing VET and digitalisation;
- Sustainability – A green link in VET;

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.etf.europa.eu/en/news-and-events/news/eu-stakeholders-agree-vocational-education-way-forward-osnabruck-declaration>

- European Education and Training Area and international VET.

Progress has been made in the implementation of the 2018 Council Recommendation on a **European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships (EFQEA)**<sup>2</sup>. A recent Commission report<sup>3</sup> shows that the seven criteria on learning and working conditions are in place in most of the Member States, however further progress is needed in implementing criteria on framework conditions.

The **Youth Support Package** is another relevant EU policy document that helps to ensure that VET programmes at all levels include WBL components. This is key to addressing youth unemployment, to better matching the skills needs of companies, and to improving the overall relevance of VET attractiveness.

Within the context of recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, the European Commission is launching initiatives to support Member States to successfully prepare for the green and digital transitions. The **Council Recommendation on environmental sustainability for learners of all ages and at all levels of education**<sup>4</sup>, for example, aims to develop stronger policies on education for environmental sustainability, climate education, biodiversity and related topics. Additionally, the updated **Digital Education Action Plan**<sup>5</sup> sets out more ambitious targets in terms of basic digital skills. In this area, related initiatives, such as the **SELFIE WBL tool**<sup>6</sup>, offer support to countries, schools and companies to better navigate the digital transition.

The development of international partnerships is fundamental to the improvement of VET programmes (i.e. to make them more effective and relevant to the labour market). By cooperating at international level, stakeholders can speed up the transition to innovation and creating champions for improved practices across national frontiers. In this respect, the Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans<sup>7</sup> is an important resource for Candidate Countries, helping them to access EU funding for the development of VET and apprenticeships through international cooperation.

In the future, it is expected that eastern and southern neighbouring countries joining the EAfA as Partner Countries will open further opportunities for international cooperation.

### 1.3 Funding opportunities for regional development

**Speaker: Neil Taylor**, Head of Kosovo European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)

---

<sup>2</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32018H0502%2801%29>

<sup>3</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&furtherNews=yes&newsId=10070>

<sup>4</sup> <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/8e89305c-bc37-11ea-811c-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

<sup>5</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/education/education-in-the-eu/digital-education-action-plan\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/education/education-in-the-eu/digital-education-action-plan_en)

<sup>6</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/education/schools-go-digital\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/education/schools-go-digital_en)

<sup>7</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP\\_20\\_1811](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_20_1811)

The EBRD is one of the major institutional investors in the Western Balkans. To date, it has invested over EUR 14.6 billion in over 800 projects in the region (with about two-thirds of these projects in the private sector). The projects focus on supporting the transition toward inclusive, competitive, well-governed, green, resilient and integrated market economies. Recently, the EBRD has updated the forecast in the Western Balkans to 6.4% growth in 2021.

Within its investment portfolio, EBRD keeps the **inclusivity of vulnerable groups** (e.g. women and youth) at the forefront. EBRD partners with learning and training organisations to create more opportunities for disadvantaged groups by developing demand-driven skills systems. There are many good examples of progress in this area in Partner Countries; for example, a new training and development centre in North Macedonia, and the development of a dual system in Bosnia and Herzegovina to provide on the job learning for local high school students.

Matching skills continues to be a challenge for many of the businesses EBRD works with. Matching skills is a dynamic process, as new technologies and business practices give rise to new skills and competences needs. As a result, a new, dynamic way to adapt is needed to be able to address new market realities. The COVID-19 pandemic, for example, has undoubtedly accelerated the digitalisation process, and in turn the need to re-equip the workforce with skills to match demand.

The EBRD also offers policy support, for example through:

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in Serbia to support the process of drafting the law on internships;
- Support to the tourism and hospitality sectors in Albania, which have been hit particularly hard by the pandemic;
- Bringing together universities and businesses to develop and offer more quality apprenticeships in North Macedonia;
- A private sector youth initiative in Bosnia and Herzegovina which emphasises support for dual education reform; the EBRD is looking into rolling this out in other economies in the Western Balkans.

## 1.4 Perspectives from the Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the European Union

**Speaker:** **Jasmina Poličnik**, Secretary at the Upper Secondary, Short-Cycle Higher Vocational and Adult Education Directorate at the Ministry for Education, Science and Sport, Presidency of the Council of the EU Team

Among Slovenia's main priorities<sup>8</sup> under the Presidency of the Council<sup>8</sup> are increasing the EU's resilience to crisis, and recovery of the EU economy based on the digital and green transitions.

---

<sup>8</sup> <https://slovenian-presidency.consilium.europa.eu/media/i4qnfeqt/programme-sl-presidency-en.pdf>



Given the current labour situation, the circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, the demographic forecast, and the economic cycles, the Presidency's activities will be geared towards ensuring greater labour market integration and strengthening labour market resilience.

Education policy should enable citizens to reach their full potential and develop their competences in the context of lifelong learning. Whether it is formal, non-formal or informal learning, there should be open access for all learners. This is a key message of many EU initiatives, including the Council Resolution for a renewed EU Agenda for Adult Learning for the next decade<sup>9</sup>. The Resolution aims to increase and improve the provision of high-quality adult learning opportunities.

The importance of WBL in addressing challenges linked to lack of skills and skills mismatches is increasingly recognised. An upcoming Council Recommendation for blended learning approaches sets out further steps to combine blended learning environments and tools in both primary and secondary education with the aim to contribute to more resilient education and training systems. The Recommendation recognises apprenticeships as one of the most effective approaches to learning and highlights how blended learning could support vocational education and training in dealing with disruptions as those brought by the Covid-19 pandemic.

---

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.daad-brussels.eu/en/2021/07/09/slovenia-takes-over-the-new-eu-presidency-priorities-in-education-and-research/>

# **2.0** Developments in work-based learning and apprenticeships

## 2.0 Highlights and latest developments in work-based learning and apprenticeships

Since 2016, five Candidate Countries have joined the EAfA, with work-based learning (WBL) introduced in all countries to date. Representatives from each country presented the latest policy developments.

### 2.1 Albania

**Speaker:** **Koli Sinjari**, Secretary General, National Chamber of Crafts

By 2020, the Work-Based Learning Regulation was implemented by all VET providers in Albania. A survey on the state of play of the first year of implementation was recently conducted, and the results show that different school–business partnerships have been established.

A plan for the optimisation of VET providers has been drafted, and implementation is underway. Ten Sectoral Committees are being established to offer guidance. Smaller schools will be clustered around Multi-Functional Centres (MFCs), which will offer multidisciplinary training courses (i.e. both vocational education and short-term vocational training). The MFCs will operate as regional hubs linking learners and potential employers, as well as reflecting on the cross-cutting needs of the local community. Additionally, capacity building of 45 liaison coordinators is going to be set up with the support of KulturKontakt<sup>10</sup>, an organisation that works in close collaboration with Albanian educational institutions to support ongoing reforms in VET.

Two national agencies have been reorganised to implement a modernised legal framework and better support WBL. The private sector has a crucial role in designing qualifications in line with the Albanian Qualification Framework (AQF) levels. As such, 'establishing relationships and cooperation with businesses' is set out as one of five quality assurance dimensions for VET providers' self-assessment.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the National Agency for Vocational Education, Training and Qualifications (NAVETQ) supported VET Providers with guidelines and tools for virtual teaching, learning, and student assessment processes (including practical components). Several additional measures were also introduced in the context of WBL:

- Capacity building of VET teachers in relation to digital skills;

---

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.dcdualvet.org/en/portfolio-items/ada-albania-2/>

- Revision of teacher training programmes, and introduction of a dedicated module on using digital solutions in teaching;
- Introduction of blended learning modalities in short-term courses (e.g. electricians);
- Development and implementation of a workshop on digitalisation run by the Chamber of Crafts to provide information on how digital solutions can be used to optimise company processes.

Looking forward, there are some challenges and further steps that need to be taken within WBL practices, including the consolidation of tripartite mechanisms; awareness-raising activities among businesses to improve cooperation with VET providers; professional development of in-company trainers from a methodological point of view; and improvement of the culture of cooperation between VET providers and the private sector.

## 2.2 North Macedonia

**Speaker:** **Zoran Jovchevski**, Advisor from the National VET Centre

Full implementation of VET was achieved in North Macedonia in the school year 2019/20. Since then, more than 9,000 students seek employers for the realisation of WBL across 75 schools, with over 7,000 jobs places provided by more than 1,000 employers.

Recent developments include a new law on vocational education with novelties for dual education, WBL and Regional VET Centres. The qualification model, which is required by certain companies, has been developed and reformed with the guidance of the World Bank. Progress on training of in-company mentors has also been made, with 750 mentors from 430 companies trained. Additionally, the digitisation of materials for teacher training and certification is in progress, and a plan for the professional development of teachers has been prepared.

Future developments to enhance WBL in North Macedonia include adoption of a new law on vocational education, and preparation of bylaws that would operationalise dual education and WBL; continuation of in-company mentors training and strengthening of capacities among coordinators from schools; and monitoring the effects of implementation of the reformed qualifications, taking appropriate measures if any weaknesses occur. Some potential future challenges include building a system for monitoring and evaluation of WBL, and accomplishing the complete digitalisation of the training and certification of teachers.

## 2.3 Montenegro

**Speaker:** **Marko Vukašinović**, Head of the Directorate for Planning and Implementation of EU Funds, Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports

The regulation on dual education includes the law on vocational education, adopted in 2017. Rights and responsibilities of students and employers are regulated by individual contracts on practical education between employers, students' parents,

and schools. Students' wages for the first and second grades are funded from the National Budget, while for third grade, it is funded by the employer.

Research will be conducted on the results of dual education for the school year 2020/2021. A methodological framework for student tracking is also being prepared. The piloting of the methodology for student tracking is planned for 2022. Furthermore, work is underway to improve cooperation between schools and employers in the implementation of dual education; training of in-company trainers; practical training of teachers (e.g. pedagogical and digital competencies); and improvement of the mechanisms for ensuring the quality of practical education in companies.

## 2.4 Serbia

**Speaker: [Gabrijela Grujić](#)**, Assistant Minister, Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a dedicated team was established to monitor lessons learned for dual education. The aim was to adequately provide students in dual educational with the opportunity to continue quality education in a state of emergency. This was achieved through the involvement of many schools and companies in the development of video material. The mobilisation of this work was possible thanks to a well-established cooperation between schools and companies in the implementation of vocational education.

As a result, the online database now contains 764 lessons, also covering WBL. A promotional video was developed to illustrate the benefits and opportunities of this approach to WBL for the learners, including being able to look at the material and practice several times, and gain practical experience right after the online training.

Further progress has also been made in the establishment of regional training centres. In line with the national lifelong learning policy, the government is working on the establishment of 12 regional training centres to foster dual education for all. These training centres will provide young people and adults alike the opportunity to be educated and trained, e.g., on new machinery.

The establishment of such centres as a form of support for both formal dual education and non-formal education (through training, vocational training, additional training, and re-training of staff) will contribute to increase the relevance of the education system to the needs of the learners, employees, and employers.

## 2.5 Turkey

**Speaker: [Süleyman Akgül](#)**, Head of the Work Based Vocational Education Department of DG VET, Ministry of National Education

In 2016, apprenticeship training was included in the scope of compulsory education and 'Vocational Education Centres' were structured as Vocational and Technical Secondary Education Institutions.

Within apprenticeship training, the Vocational Training Centre Programme (VTC Programme) has been developed – a type of programme in which the theoretical education given at schools and the practical education given at businesses are applied

in an integrated manner. Apprenticeship students receive one or two days of theoretical training at school, and the remaining days of practical training at businesses. Training leads to obtaining the Journeyman/Master's certificate and diploma.

The 'Diploma programme' and the curricula followed by students at the Vocational Education Centres started to be implemented as of the 2019–2020 academic year. As of August 2020, a 'Compensation programme' started, so that those who had obtained a Journeyman/Master's certificate in previous years from the Vocational Training Centres could complete the relevant courses and receive a Vocational High School diploma. In Vocational Education Centres, diplomas are given with a Journeyman/Master's certificate in 33 fields and 181 occupational branches. The employment rate after graduation is approximately 90%.

The COVID-19 pandemic had an impact in the digitalisation of WBL approaches. Distance learning was implemented using the Education Information Network (EBA) Platform and additional training on new technologies had to be conducted to accommodate to the new reality imposed by the pandemic.



# **3.0** The European

**Alliance for Apprenticeships:  
Latest developments and  
Partner Countries**



## 3.0 The EAfA: Latest developments and Partner Countries

**Facilitator:** **Stefan Thomas**, Senior Human Capital Development Expert – Work Based Learning, ETF

Participants were introduced to the second part of the webinar, focusing on the latest developments of the EAfA and Partner Countries.

### 3.1 European Alliance for Apprenticeships Developments

**Speaker:** **Norbert Schöbel**, Team Leader, Apprenticeships and Future-Proofing Skills, International Cooperation, DG EMPL

To date, the EAfA is composed of 38 countries, and 366 pledges from stakeholders. Since its start, it is calculated EAfA members have established more than 1 million apprenticeship places.

The EAfA's objectives were renewed under six priorities in 2020:

1. Encouraging commitment among Member States and companies to quality and effective apprenticeships by fostering national apprenticeship coalitions;
2. Incentivising support to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to provide a stable supply of quality and effective apprenticeships;
3. Mobilising local and regional authorities as catalysts for apprenticeships within the local business environment;
4. Strengthening social dialogue through more active involvement of national social partner organisations;
5. Proactively engaging European sectoral social dialogue committees on apprenticeships, with a view to obtaining agreement on joint sectoral pledges;
6. Supporting the representation of apprentices in Member States by re-launching the European Apprentices Network (EAN).

The recently published [EAfA Action Plan for 2022](#) covers different activities and events, including the next Joint EAfA-ETF Regional seminar with Candidate Countries and EAfA Partner Countries to take place in Belgrade in September 2022. Other events planned for 2022 include:

- High level event: *The European Alliance for Apprenticeships on track!* In collaboration with the Austrian railways (March 2022)
- High level event: *Relaunch of the European Apprentices Network in the European Year of Youth* In collaboration with Fundación Bertelsmann and Generalitat de Catalunya, Barcelona (March 2022)

- *EAFa get together!* event, Brussels (June 2022)

Moreover, in line with the EAFa's priorities and Members' feedback, activities such as webinars and live discussions will be continued, while new activities will also be introduced. In 2022, EAFa will also develop a series of podcasts to discuss apprenticeships and the four main EAFa objectives. Discover the [EAFa 2022 calendar of activities](#).

## 3.2 Welcoming new EAFa Partner Countries

Two Partner Countries, Israel and Moldova, were welcomed to the EAFa, demonstrating continued growth of the community of active stakeholders, and growing commitment to collaboration.

### 3.2.1 Israel

**Speaker:** **Mr Nitzan Mimrod**, Head of the Bureau of Vocational Training and Manpower Development, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the State of Israel

*"By joining the Alliance, we aim to encourage the development of more apprenticeship placements, to help citizens develop skills matching the needs of the labour market."* **Nitzan Mimrod**



The Vocational Training and Manpower Development Division at the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the State of Israel aims to offer vocational training and human capital development that can provide jobseekers and unqualified workers with the necessary skills to match national labour market needs. The Division aims to encourage citizens to pursue professional fulfilment by continuously developing their skills through a relevant and adaptive training system. By joining the EAFa, Israel aims to increase cooperation, knowledge sharing and professional development with other countries in order to encourage the development of more apprenticeship placements in the country.

The Division is responsible for youth training in over 60 VET schools and supervises VET in over 22 sectors, including marketing, electronics, cybersecurity, IT, media and graphic design, and culinary arts, among others. Many of the funded programmes are directed towards specific target groups such as the ultraorthodox, Arab-Israeli or Ethiopian communities, people with a disability, youth at risk, or independent parents.

In recent years, responding to large-scale transformations happening in the labour market (e.g. booming tech industry, remote working, etc.), the Division have started a broad reform process, including structural and pedagogical changes. This reform aims on the hand to introduce new advanced learning methods based, including digital and remote courses, and on the other hand to strengthen digital literacy and digital skills development in all sectors.

### 3.2.2 Moldova

**Speaker:** **Silviu Gîncu**, Head of the Vocational Education and Training Department of the Ministry of Education and Research of the Republic of Moldova

*"The EAFA represents a great opportunity to learn from experiences from other countries in Europe and best practices."* **Silviu Gîncu**



EAFA represents a great opportunity for Moldova to learn from the experience and best practices of other countries in the development of apprenticeship systems.

The implementation of dual VET in the Republic of Moldova started in 2014 from the initiative of one private company and one professional school. During the following year, the dual VET system extended gradually to more than 25 VET institutions and more than 85 companies. The dual VET system was developed according to four major pillars:

- 1) **Development of the legal normative framework in order to ensure high quality standards for apprenticeship.** The latest major development is the dual VET law, promoted by the Ministry of Education and Research and soon to be approved by the Parliament. This law will represent an important step forward for the development of dual VET.
- 2) **Development of an institutional framework, strengthening the role of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry of the Republic of Moldova in the apprenticeship system.**
- 3) **Extension of dual VET through the involvement of an increased number of VET providers and companies.** The Action Plan of the Government for 2020–2022 allocate a specific budget to the development of dual VET programmes.
- 4) **Improving attractiveness of dual VET for companies and students.** Progress has been made in this area, the introduction of specific tax benefits encouraged companies to join VET programmes and hire students and apprentices.

For the upcoming period, priorities will be focused on the following objectives: increasing quality of training for students in dual education; capacity building of companies providing training to increase the quality of their teaching practices; and further development of dual VET. In this context, the Republic of Moldova is certain that cooperation with EAFA will provided access to relevant know-how, good and innovative practices, helping to improve the quality of dual VET in the country.

### 3.3 Looking forward to Belgrade 2022

**Facilitator:** **Emmanuelle Roure**, Team Leader for Neighbourhood, International Affairs Unit, DG EMPL, European Commission

Ms Emmanuelle Roure presented the session focusing on the main challenges and opportunities regarding digitalisation and youth initiatives in Partner Countries.

Participants were encouraged to reflect on two topics being planned for discussion at the next ETF-EAfA regional event planned in Serbia in 2022 and share feedback, best practices and examples to help shape the next event.

### 3.3.1 Digitalisation and work-based learning

**Speakers:** **Lida Kita**, Senior Human Capital Development Expert, Social Inclusion, and Country Liaison for Israel, Serbia and Turkey, ETF; **Alessandro Brolpito**, Senior Human Capital Development Expert, Digital Skills and Learning, ETF.

Several EU programmes allow stakeholders to access funding, know-how and networks to enhance WBL systems and programmes. Among the many benefits of taking part in EU programmes, being part of an ecosystem composed of the private sector, EU institutions, and research institutions is definitely an added value that can pave the way to innovation and new solutions. EU programmes are being used, for example, to enhance WBL through a pedagogical use of digital technology, for remote and hybrid learning, including a social inclusion dimension. The TurkTraktor project, presented through a short video, is a concrete example of the use of a virtual model of a production environment to enhance WBL approaches for students with impairments.

Digital technology also offers new solutions for apprenticeship for all students, offering more personalised learning pathways. However, there are also challenges in integrating digital solutions in the learning environment. The [SELFIE tool](#) can support addressing these challenges. Last month, a new version of SELFIE was launched, including a section dedicated to companies and in-company trainers, supporting the development of a shared strategy between VET schools and companies offering WBL for the introduction of digital solutions in VET programmes. In 2015, ETF in collaboration with European Commission supported the adoption of SELFIE in many of the Partner Countries. The next ETF-EAfA event in Belgrade could also be a good opportunity to take stock on these developments.

### 3.3.2 Youth Guarantee

**Speaker:** **Cristina Mereuta**, Senior Human Capital Development Expert, Coordinator for Active Labour Market Policies, ETF

Ms Cristina Mereuta presented an overview of the Youth Guarantee theme to be discussed at the next regional event in Belgrade.

As it is now clear, young people were among the most hit by the pandemic. Hence, in the context of the European Year of Youth 2022, the ETF-EAfA event will be the opportunity to discuss youth support measures and in particular Youth Guarantee and its of apprenticeships and WBL components.

Western Balkan countries have committed to adopt Youth Guarantee implementation plans by June 2022, so the event will explore the concrete measures planned for implementation.

The event will also discuss key lessons learnt in the implementation of Youth focused measures and challenges to be addressed as the pandemic-related need for increased digitalisation of training schemes and other challenges, the green and digital transition of labour markets and the need for specific set of skills, the consolidation

of partnerships, challenges related to completion of reforms and legislative changes and accompanying measures that are required to support NEETs in re-entering education and employment.

# 4. Conclusions

## 4.0 Conclusions and closing of the seminar

**Speakers:** **Norbert Schöbel**, Team Leader, DG EMPL, European Commission; **Georgios Zisimos**, Head of Policy Advice and EU Programming Unit, ETF

ETF and DG EMPL remain committed to creating more and better apprenticeships by promoting increased collaboration. The meeting demonstrated progress made by EAfA Member and Candidate countries in terms of the different angles on WBL practices as well as examples of how apprenticeships can play a major role in the digital and green transition. Moreover, welcoming two new partnering countries to the EAfA at the event, also demonstrated how the Alliance keeps growing with increasing commitments in WBL.

Closing the fifth regional event, a special thanks was extended to speakers and organisers for the fruitful discussion. Participants were furthermore encouraged to contribute to the design of the next regional event in Serbia in 2022 sharing inputs and best practices with the organisers.

For any comments or questions please contact: [EAfA.events@ecorys.com](mailto:EAfA.events@ecorys.com)





