



# Baltic Alliance for Apprenticeships (BAfA)

Enhancing the attractiveness of VET systems in the Baltic states through work-based learning and apprenticeships

## LITHUANIA, LATVIA, ESTONIA

**Title of the practice (in original language)**

Baltijas mācekļības alianse

**Who is implementing the practice?**

- Ministry of Education and Science, Latvia
- Ministry of Education and Science, Lithuania
- Ministry of Education and Research, Estonia

**Which other organisations are involved in the practice?**

- Social partners: Employers' Confederation of Latvia, Free Trade Union Confederation of Latvia
- National Centre for Education of Latvia
- Qualifications and Vocational Education and Training Development Centre, Lithuania
- Foundation Innove, Estonia

**What are the main objectives of the practice?**

BAfA aims to raise the status and enhance the attractiveness of VET in the Baltic states by involving national social partners and VET provider organisations in the development of effective approaches. Particular emphasis is placed on the promotion and implementation of work-based learning (WBL) and apprenticeship-type schemes.

**When was the practice implemented?**

Since 2015 (ongoing)

**Who is targeted by the practice?**

VET stakeholders in the Baltic states

**What activities are/were carried out?**

- Studies on work-based learning feasibility and implementation.
- Technical assistance to national VET stakeholders in the form of expert working groups, round table discussions, information and dissemination seminars.
- VET and work-based learning promotion campaigns.
- Joint Baltic-wide seminars and conferences (e.g. on the training of in-company trainers in WBL, on establishing closer links between VET institutions of the Baltic states as well as on joint VET programmes)
- Joint Erasmus+ projects involving ministries and stakeholders from the three Baltic countries:
  - "National Authorities for Apprenticeships: Implementing Work Based Learning in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia (WBL-Balt)", 2014-2017;
  - "Testing New Approaches to Training VET and Workplace Tutors for Work Based Learning - TTT4WBL", 2017-2020

<b>What activities are/were carried out?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Baltic policy meetings on VET and work-based learning implementation and quality improvement.</li> </ul>
<b>What are the sources of funding?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Erasmus+ programme</li> <li>National budgets</li> </ul> <p>While there is currently no specific budget line for BAfA, the two Erasmus+ projects that come under it have a total budget of EUR 1.5 million (WBL-Balt: EUR 300 000; TTT4WBL: EUR 1.2 million) and are co-financed by the EU and the three Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania).</p>
<b>What are/were the outputs: people reached and products?</b>	<p><b>People Reached</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Around 65 VET institutions.</li> <li>Several tens of thousands of VET students and their families via work-based learning information campaigns – in presence and via portals</li> <li>Around 900 employers and employers' organisations.</li> <li>Sector representatives – most key economic sectors in the Baltic states: ICT, engineering industry, mechanics and metal trades, electricity, construction, wholesale and retail sales, health protection, social work and counselling, child care and youth services, hotel, restaurants and catering, crafts.</li> <li>Public bodies and social partners, such as the Employers, Confederation of Latvia, Chamber of Trade and Commerce of Latvia, Free Trade Union confederation of Latvia, Lithuanian Business Employers' Association, Lithuanian Confederation of Industrialists, Lithuanian Trade Union, Estonian Employers' Confederation.</li> <li>International partners – the BAfA has been presented at the Baltic Meeting of Ministers, the Baltic Assembly, in bilateral meetings with the relevant ministries of Germany and Switzerland, to the German-Baltic Chamber of Trade (AHK), the European Commission, CEDEFOP, the International Labour Organisation, the World Bank, EU Member States via international meetings and conferences, and relevant stakeholders in other countries – e.g. Serbia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Kazakhstan, Kirgizstan, Georgia.</li> </ul> <p><b>Products</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BAfA visual identity.</li> <li>Studies on the feasibility and practical implementation of work-based learning, including peer learning and exchange of best practices.</li> <li>Promotion campaigns on VET and work-based learning.</li> </ul>
<b>What are the outcomes: medium-term results or effects?</b>	<p>While official results and statistics have not yet been released, there is the acknowledgment that many VET institutions and companies are benefiting from BAfA to develop WBL systems and standards. BAfA has undoubtedly raised VET stakeholders' awareness of the importance of WBL and is highly likely to influence policymaking and VET legal frameworks across the three Baltic states.</p>
<b>What are the lessons learnt and success factors?</b>	<p><b>Lessons learnt</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The importance of social dialogue for the promotion of work-based learning: social partners across the three Baltic states have been actively involved in WBL discussions (and apprenticeship type schemes), in the promotion of BAfA, and in the development of national legislation in the field.</li> <li>The importance of sharing experience and best practices with other EU Member States and third countries: successful approaches developed in the Baltic states have been presented to other countries with school-based VET systems to inspire pilot initiatives likely to contribute to the introduction of new legislation.</li> </ul>

**What are the lessons learnt and success factors?**

**Success factors**

- Regular communication between VET stakeholders across all three Baltic states on WBL developments – at ministerial level, as well as among VET providers.
- Regular discussions on joint strategic approaches at policy level and in broader European contexts.

**What are key source(s) of information?**

Link to practice website: <http://www.izm.gov.lv/lv/izglitiba/profesionala-izglitiba/baltijas-maceklibas-alianse>