



Apprenticeship Toolbox

Providing comprehensive, online information on the dual apprenticeship systems in Austria, Denmark, Germany, Luxembourg and Switzerland

AUSTRIA, DENMARK, GERMANY, LUXEMBOURG, SWITZERLAND

Title of the practice (in original language)

Apprenticeship Toolbox

Who is/was implementing the practice?

Lead partner in each country:

- Austrian Reference Point for Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training
- Danish Ministry for Children, Education, and Gender Equality (lead partner in partnership)
- German Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training
- Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation
- Luxembourgish Ministry of Education, Children and Youth

Which other organisations are/were involved in the practice?

Other partners/ national stakeholders involved in each country:

- Austrian Federal Ministry of Education and Women's Affairs
- German Federal Ministry of Education and Research
- Austrian Federal Ministry of Science, Research and Economy
- Swiss Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education, and Research
- Social partner representatives of participating countries

What are/were the main objectives of the practice?

The aim of the project was to create an online database – a “one-stop-shop” – housing reports and information on the different approaches to dual apprenticeships in the five participating countries. All five countries are regularly approached by countries in and outside the EU to inform about their apprenticeship system. The strategic ambition of the project was to support policy learning and promote apprenticeship systems and vocational education and training (VET) policy experimentation under the European Alliance for Apprenticeship (EAfA) and beyond.

When was the practice implemented?

2014 - 2016

The toolbox website is still operational and the partners continue their cooperation. Partners plan to implement a new project to further continue and enrich the toolbox. The plan is to make the toolbox more interactive and to engage with a broad base of stakeholders i.e. through web-seminars with academic experts, policy experts, employers' associations and workers representative organizations.

Who is/was targeted by the practice?

Policy / decision-makers in other countries that are either considering or undertaking reforms to develop their vocational education and training systems into dual apprenticeship systems.

What activities are/were carried out?

The following activities were carried out during the project period:

- Country Synthesis Reports: One of the first actions was for each country to prepare a synthesis report on the main features and framework conditions of its dual apprenticeship system. This would inform the basic content of the Toolbox.
- Country workshops: Three workshops have been organised in the project (in AT, DE, LU) each organised under a specific focus area: AT: Key features of the five European apprenticeship systems; DE: Involvement of companies, role of social partners, attractiveness of apprenticeships; LU: Quality assurance in apprenticeship systems. Each of these topics were explored in greater depth, assisted by external experts and social partners. In each workshop materials i.e. synopsis reports and other specific information according to the topic for the Toolbox were presented and discussed. After each workshop, the material was further analysed and developed.
- Development of the Toolbox: The partners reviewed the different approaches of the participating countries, and based on the insights gained, developed the structure and content of Toolbox.
- European Seminar: The partners organised a European seminar in Brussels in September 2016 to present the Toolbox and support the formation of new partnerships. The target group covered all countries involved in the EAfA. The workshops involved experts in the area of VET.

Looking to the future, a new project application is planned for 2018 to continue to develop the Toolbox and to make it more interactive by using webinars (that would be announced on the Toolbox website) to invite interested stakeholders to exchange on current challenges experienced by apprenticeship systems.

What are/were the sources of funding?

The project funding came from the Erasmus+ Programme, Key Action 3 - support for national policy reform - call for proposals on "National Authorities for Apprenticeships". In total, 9 projects were funded under this Call. The EU funding received for this project was EUR 108 762. Since 2016 the partners have continued the cooperation at their own expense.

What are/were the outputs: people reached and products?

People Reached

- Just under 100 people attended the European seminar, many of whom were amongst the target group.
- Over 1 500 online clicks of the website have been registered since the launch of the Toolbox website in October 2016.
- The Toolbox is now used as a resource by policymakers in VET and in the context of international peer learning activities such as those organised by UNEVOC.
- The Toolbox can be used by researchers and builds the basis for comparative research on dual apprenticeship systems.

Products: main features of the Toolbox

- The Toolbox is organised under the following categories:
 - 1) Governance and Regulations
 - 2) Social Partners and Companies
 - 3) Financing
 - 4) Programmes and Pathways
 - 5) Standards and Matching
 - 6) Training and Teaching
 - 7) Attractiveness and Excellence
- The country synthesis reports include a description of the main features and framework conditions of the five dual apprenticeship systems.

What are/were the outcomes: medium-term results or effects?

Since its launch, the partners have been using the Toolbox as a source and reference point in their own activities and have found it highly valuable for the further promotion of dual / apprenticeship-based VET and for the EAfA. Due to the success of the collaboration, the partners continue their work to ensure continued updating, development and dissemination of the Toolbox. The dissemination of the Toolbox to other EAfA countries and stakeholders has been successfully achieved through the European seminar and a range of national and international dissemination activities. Users have found the Toolbox highly useful and have reported that they are “very likely to share the toolbox with their colleagues and peers”.

What are/were the lessons learnt and success factors?

Lessons Learnt

- The partners and national stakeholders involved (named above) have gained new insights they believe will support ongoing developments in their VET systems and enrich their international capacity-building activities to promote apprenticeship in other countries.

Success Factors

- A well-functioning and reliable partnership among the project members due to close collaboration and open dialogue. The project used focus group meetings inviting other relevant stakeholders, such as social partners or relevant people from ministries from various countries interested in this topic, to quality check the approach and guide the building of the toolbox.
- Organising an international peer review in the framework of UNEVOC to promote the content and functionalities of the Toolbox after its launch, receiving very positive feedback.
- Ongoing national and international dissemination activities such as assisting at various national events and international conferences to promote the toolbox.
- Regular update of the Toolbox to ensure that it remains a valuable information source for the users.
- Ensuring the Toolbox offers original documents in different languages, so that it is more accessible linguistically.

What are key source(s) of information?

<http://www.apprenticeship-toolbox.eu>
<https://www.bibb.de/en/63177.php>
http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/education/library/others/reform-compendium-2014_en.pdf p. 22 – official project description