



# Education & Business Cooperation

Enhancing cooperation through educational partnerships and Apprenticeship Ambassadors

## GERMANY

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

Zusammenarbeit von Wirtschaft und Schule zur Berufsorientierung

**Who is implementing the practice?**

Chambers of Commerce and Industry (CCI) of the Baden-Württemberg Region

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

- The project partners are:
- Ministry of Economics for Baden-Württemberg
  - Ministry of Education for Baden-Württemberg
  - Employers' Associations of Baden Württemberg
  - Chambers of Crafts of Baden Württemberg
  - Federation of German Trade Unions
  - Regional Agencies of the German Federal Employment Agency

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

- As part of a more general policy to enhance school-business cooperation, various measures were put in place. Two of them are further set out in this practice overview:
- Educational partnerships – businesses give school pupils an insight into vocational education and training, professional pathways and career opportunities.
  - Apprenticeship Ambassador – apprentices speak with school pupils about their apprenticeship experience and assist with questions on future orientation
- The aims of the general policy are:
- To optimise the vocational orientation of young people to ensure they make realistic and better career choices
  - To avoid young people dropping out during vocational training
  - To increase young people's employability
  - To enable employers to recruit qualified staff to support the regional economy
  - To reduce youth unemployment in the region
- The aims of the Apprenticeship Ambassadors are:
- To avoid shortage of supply in bottleneck occupations
  - To help businesses meet future skills needs
  - To increase personal and professional competencies of apprentices
  - To help schools enrich their career guidance work
- The aims of the educational partnerships are:
- To enable each school to establish a partnership with local businesses
  - To improve exchange between businesses and schools
  - To give pupils more insight into various occupations

<b>When was the practice implemented?</b>	2008 (ongoing): Educational Partnerships 2011 (ongoing): Apprenticeship Ambassador
<b>Who is targeted by the practice?</b>	School pupils, businesses, apprentices, parents, teachers, VET instructors, school communities
<b>What activities are carried out?</b>	<p>The project involves setting up Educational Partnerships between schools and companies. The CCI and project partners (named above) help draw up contracts to establish the partnerships. The contracts include a detailed description of the activities to be undertaken. Areas of cooperation include: companies advising school pupils on the completion of job applications, offering practical skills tests and simulated job interviews, organisation of joint events for apprentices and school pupils e.g. IT courses or working together on tasks in the companies' training centres.</p> <p>Several years into the delivery of the project, a new approach was introduced by CCIs, namely the creation of Apprenticeship Ambassadors (Ausbildungsbotschafter). The Ambassador role is taken on by apprentices, who visit school classrooms and provide information about the trade that they are in, their occupational profile and what it is like to be an apprentice. Their overall goal is to inspire young people to take on an apprenticeship themselves. They are supported in their mission by the CCIs, which provide training to the apprentices on their Ambassador role and coordinate the programme of school visits.</p>
<b>What are the sources of funding?</b>	<p>Initial funding to set up Educational Partnerships: 2 340 000 Euro from January 2010 to December 2014 from the Ministry of Economics for Baden-Württemberg.</p> <p>Ongoing funding for Apprenticeship Ambassadors: 1 800 000 Euro from April 2015 to December 2017 from the Ministry of Economics for Baden-Württemberg</p> <p>In addition, thousands of companies invest a large amount of human and financial resources to cooperate with their partner schools, including enabling their staff and apprentices to support the programme.</p>
<b>What are the outputs: people reached and products?</b>	<p><b>People reached</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Around 2 000 schools and a large number of apprentices and qualified employees from 5 000 companies cooperate in Educational Partnerships every year.</li> <li>• Around 4 000 Apprenticeship Ambassadors covering 200 recognised training occupations visit schools in Baden-Württemberg each year. By autumn 2017, about 10 000 school visits have been completed, reaching more than 270 000 pupils</li> </ul> <p><b>Products</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training course and training materials for the apprentices to use in sessions with pupils e.g. presentations, handouts, etc.</li> <li>• Promotional and information materials, such as flyers, handouts, website, social media and YouTube channels with round about 60 video portraits of Apprenticeships<sup>1</sup></li> <li>• Certificates to honour the engagement of companies, apprentices and schools</li> <li>• Events, e.g. the annual convention for Apprenticeship Ambassadors</li> </ul>
<b>What are the outcomes: medium-term results or effects?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The project has promoted vocational training. This is important in the face of an ageing society and a strong tendency for school students to choose academic rather than vocational education.</li> <li>• The project has also contributed to increasing the number of apprentices with upper secondary education qualification in the period 2013 to 2017 (39.3 % in 2017)<sup>2</sup>.</li> </ul>

1 <http://www.gut-ausgebildet.de/>

2 <http://www.bw.ihk.de/veroeffentlichungen/pressemitteilungen/pressemitteilungen-container/AusbildungsAngebote-leistungsstarke-Jugendliche-und-Studienabbrecher>

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

- The institutionalised, direct and long-lasting cooperation between companies and schools has resulted in a much better understanding of relationships between “the economy” and “the educational system”. Both teachers and company representatives are much more aware of their respective roles after the cooperation. The measures have created a win-win-situation for both sides, companies and schools.

Results from a survey evaluating the Apprenticeship Ambassador show<sup>3</sup>:

- More than 70% of the school pupils taking part in the programme find it useful in helping them choose their career path.
- More than 90% of the participants acting as Apprenticeship Ambassadors find that their interpersonal skills have improved as a result.
- 70% of teachers found that the intervention by Apprenticeship Ambassadors has increased interest among pupils for the apprenticeship scheme.

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

**Lessons learnt**

- Parents have to be involved in the process of vocational orientation and therefore, special channels of communication are needed. The CCIs and project partners introduced “Senior Apprenticeship Ambassadors” (a role held by enterprise staff) to inform and convince parents of the benefits of the apprenticeship scheme.
- Regional support structures like CCIs are necessary to initiate and stabilise the close network described between companies and schools, and to create a positive climate for cooperation.

**Success factors**

- Lasting regional supporting network of institutions for companies and schools.
- Partnership approach fostering a close cooperation among all implementing partners.
- High media coverage helped reach out to the target group.
- Regular focus groups meetings with coordinators of the Ambassador programme helped ensure quality of the programme and recruitment of young people as Ambassadors.
- A one-day training course for Ambassadors to acquire key presentation skills, gain confidence and to build a network with other young people.

**What are key sources of information?**

Evaluation Prof. Zinn (2014) University of Stuttgart, Prof. Göhrlich (2010) Seminar Weingarten)

IHK website: <http://www.bw.ihk.de/veroeffentlichungen/pressemitteilungen/pressemitteilungen-container/Ausbildung-Angebote-leistungsstarke-Jugendliche-und-Studienabbrecher>

Presentation on the results of the practice: <http://www.gut-ausgebildet.de/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Evaluation-Initiative-Ausbildungsbotschafter1.pdf>

3 A survey has been carried out to evaluate the impact of the Apprenticeship Ambassador's Programme - <http://www.gut-ausgebildet.de/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Evaluation-Initiative-Ausbildungsbotschafter1.pdf>