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IO2

Toolkit

Mob4App Toolkit for SMEs, apprentices and VET students

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Introduction

Apprentices benefit from international mobility since it allows them to learn new professional and technical skills, develop independence, and improve their foreign language skills.

Cultural exchange encourages creativity strengthens a **company's** skill base, and attract foreign talent, which benefits the enterprises involved.

Despite the positive effects of VET mobility on apprentices' professional, personal, and social skills, as well as broad benefits for businesses, figures from the Erasmus+ National Agencies evaluations show that only a small number of apprentices have participated in mobility experiences in other EU countries in recent years.

Furthermore, many companies and schools that serve as sending organizations (VET), as well as EU hosting organizations, do not know how to support young apprentices prior to, during, and after their mobility experience.

As a result, the **Mob4App's Toolkit for companies and apprentices** fills a gap in the sector by providing a practical tool for Companies (SMEs) and Apprentices that will provide key information, guidance and practical tools useful to support them in applying and managing long-term mobility.

This **Toolkit** is the second product of MOB4APP project, co-financed by the European Commission under the Erasmus+ programme, KA202 – Strategic Partnerships - Development of Innovation for VET sector.

Prior to the development of this Intellectual Output, surveys have been run by all the partners' countries (Italy, Netherlands, Germany, Spain, Poland and Belgium). We collected more than 60 responses from SMEs and more than 40 from VET Professionals from June 2021 till September 2021.

Thanks to those surveys, we were able to gain enough knowledge regarding the guidance and support needed in order to implement long-term apprenticeship mobility from their perspective.

In the following section, you'll find an overview about the structure and the notions available in this toolkit.

After the testing phase, a final version of this document will be finalized and published.



COMMON SECTION (COMPANIES and APPRENTICES)

Table of contents

The focus of this document is on **SMEs, apprentices and VET students**.

This is **part I** of the Mob4app Digital Toolkit: it is dedicated to the legal framework in your country and in Europe regarding long-term mobilities for apprenticeship and contractual rules.

- **Part II:** it contains useful information for **SMEs** to provide them the needed info and tools to host a long-term mobility for apprenticeship
- **Part III:** it contains useful information for **apprentices and VET students** to help them get acquainted with the possibilities regarding long-term mobilities abroad for apprenticeship

Below, you can find the table of contents of this document. Each section is clickable. You can either follow the path in the order or just read the chapter you are interested in.

To facilitate the readability of th edocument, each chapter is divided in the same way:

- Introduction
- Aim
- Description
- Websites
- Relevat Article
- Tips

At the end, you can find the glossary that contains all the important key words used in this toolkit.



Legal Framework

Tools and resources to understand the main regulations at European and national level on long-term mobility for apprentices

Introduction

This chapter contains useful information and tools related to the regulations governing apprenticeships and the long-term mobility of apprentices at the European and national levels.

Aim

When you plan to apply for a long-term mobility opportunity for apprentices (i.e. from 3 to 12 months), regardless of whether you are a company or an apprentice, it is important to check the European and national regulations that apply to you. The following tools enable companies and apprentices, and in particular people in charge of managing these type of experiences, to understand the set of laws that regulate the subject.

Description

Apprenticeships are regulated by national laws and countries have their own specific definitions, processes and tools for managing and implementing apprenticeships. Most European countries have apprenticeship schemes, which have a stable/valid legal basis and are mainstreamed at a systemic level. They are fundamentally different in their strategic function and purpose, with implications for the way they are defined and placed within national education and training systems.

We can say that every apprenticeship scheme has the following common features:

- compulsory learning and/or working in a company, whether in combination, or not, with learning at a provider of education and training services
- contractual link between the learner and the company.

In Europe, there are two main categories of apprenticeship:

- (a) Apprenticeships as an education and training system, which provides people with comprehensives skills and abilities in a specific vocation (clear and established education and training function).
- (b) Apprenticeships as a method to deliver VET within the formal VET system, which provides another way to deliver VET in order to obtain formal VET qualifications by bringing people into the labour market (mixed education and employment functions).

The European Commission strongly recommends the long-term mobility of apprentices as a key experience in developing transversal skills and in improving employability. In recent years, long-term, transnational mobility opportunities have become a key policy initiative in apprenticeship schemes for the European Commission. Despite this strong commitment, cross-country mobility opportunities for apprenticeships have still not been sufficiently implemented.

EU legislation takes the form of:

- Treaties establishing the European Union and governing the way it works
- EU regulations, directives and decisions - with a direct or indirect effect on EU Member States.

From the legal point of view, the European Commission, the European Parliament and the European Council support transnational mobility opportunities for apprentices through:

- Directives and recommendations
- Funding programmes

Legal Framework

Tools and resources to understand the main regulations at European and national level on long-term mobility for apprentices

Description

The recommendations and Directives define the rights, strategic guidelines and standards for improving the opportunities for apprentices in general.
The financing programmes provide EU Member States and organisations with resources to implement long-term mobility opportunities for apprentices and VET learners.

Websites



EU law (EUR-Lex)

Most recent
legislative
documents

Summaries of
EU legislation

Tools for finding the EU legislation in effect

This is an EU law platform containing documents (directives, regulations, decisions, international agreements and other acts) in different languages

This is a selection of the latest legislative documents available on EUR-Lex

This is an overview of legislation by subject area

EU directives and recommendations on apprenticeships

Council
Declaration of 15
October 2013

The Council Declaration of 15 October 2013 established the European Alliance for Apprenticeships through which a large number of governments have submitted concrete commitments on the next steps to increase the quantity, quality and supply of apprenticeships.

Directive
2014/54/EU

DIRECTIVE 2014/54/EU OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 16 April 2014 introduces measures to facilitate the freedom of movement for workers (and apprentices) in the EU.

COUNCIL
RECOMMENDATION
15/03/2018

The COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION of 15 March 2018 on a European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships defines some criteria for effective, quality apprenticeships that Member States should implement

Communication
01/07/2020

The communication from the commission to the european parliament, the council, the european economic and social committee and the committee of the regions of 1 july 2020 puts apprenticeships and international mobility at the centre of the eu strategy to support youth employment after the covid pandemic.

Council
Recommendation
24/11/2020

The COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION of 24 November 2020 on vocational education and training (VET) for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience, provides EU Member States with guidelines for developing a modern VET system.

Legal Framework

Tools and resources to understand the main regulations at European and national level on long-term mobility for apprentices

Websites

Erasmus+

European Social Fund

Youth Guarantee

Relevant Articles



Funding Programs

Erasmus+ is the EU's programme to support education, training, youth and sport in Europe.

The European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) is the European Union (EU)'s main instrument for investing in people.

Member States commitment to ensure that all young people under the age of 25 years receive a good-quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education.

[Council recommendation for Youth Guarantee](#)

[Programme Guide Erasmus+](#)

Contractual rules

Legal criteria and EU Legislation for SMEs to understand the main programmes and procedures in order to apply for long-term apprenticeship mobility opportunities at the European level

Introduction

This section contains an overview of the legal requirements for SMEs to develop the process of long-term mobility of apprentices. In addition, some specific elements that can be found in various combinations in existing apprenticeship systems are also examined.

Aim

Since apprenticeships result in technical, transversal and soft skills that employers in Member States are looking for, it is worth looking at the overall European framework. The goal is to be able to develop and expand the supply of apprenticeships. Therefore, the main objective is to find out what legal success criteria the various employers, especially SMEs, can adopt to develop effective and quality apprenticeship opportunities.

Description

Apprenticeships, nowadays, are an important placement opportunity for people at the European level and, therefore, are useful in alleviating unemployment.

It should be pointed out that each European Union Member State has its own specific rules on apprenticeships.

However, the European Union has tried to find aspects that could be applied across all Member States in order to create some kind of common alignment across the Union.

Nevertheless, while there are EU countries that have implemented apprenticeship programmes effectively, there are other countries in which apprenticeships have not been very successful.

European SMEs usually do not have structures in place to employ apprentices and the value proposition is not always clear to SMEs.

The main objectives of the “**Supporting Apprenticeships between Professional Higher Education & Small and Medium Enterprises (SAPS)**” project are to improve SME perceptions of hiring apprentices.

But what are the practical, easy-to-use management criteria for SMEs to ensure the quality of apprenticeships and the beneficial cooperation of all parties?

On 5 October 2017, the European Commission published a proposal for a Council Recommendation on Quality and Effective Apprenticeships. This was followed by the Council Recommendation on a European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships (EFQEA) in 2018.

Before coming to 2018, it should be pointed out that two years earlier, in 2016, the European social partners and Member States adopted an Opinion on the framework of the Advisory Committee on Vocational Training (ACVT). This opinion was adopted in the famous “A shared Vision for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships and Work-Based Learning”.

Trade organisations (BusinessEurope, CEEP, ETUC, UEAPME) examined the cost-effectiveness of apprenticeships, while the European Trade Union Confederation focused on the quality of apprenticeships.

All the work done by European social partners and the ACVT’s Opinion provided a substantial part of the input to the proposal for a Council Recommendation.

Contractual rules

Legal criteria and EU Legislation for SMEs to understand the main programmes and procedures in order to apply for long-term apprenticeship mobility opportunities at the European level

Description

In this Recommendation, the framework provides a total of fourteen criteria for defining effective, quality apprenticeships. These criteria ensure both the development of work-related skills and the personal development of apprentices. Furthermore, they are addressed to both apprentices and employers, such as SMEs.

These criteria are in line with national or sectoral requirements and collective agreements.
However, it should be noted that the diversity of vocational education and training (VET) systems in the EU has been taken into account and that Member State skills in the field of VET are respected.

The first seven criteria cover the **learning and working conditions**:

- **Written contract**: An apprenticeship should be based on a written contract between the employer, the apprentice, and the vocational training institution.
- **Learning outcomes**: Comprehensive learning outcomes should be defined by employers and vocational training institutions. Therefore, this is another key criterion that manages the role of employers as they must ensure both work-related skills development and vocational development.
- **Pedagogical support**: In-company trainers should have the skills to collaborate closely with VET providers and teachers. This is because it is crucial to keep up to date with their skills.
- **Workplace component**: At least half of the length of the apprenticeship should be spent in the workplace, and there should also be the chance of mobility opportunities abroad. This is a criterion that applies to both employers and apprentices.
- **Pay and/or compensation**: In this case, it is made clear that apprentices should receive remuneration and/or compensation. Cost-sharing agreements between employers, apprentices and public authorities should be taken into account.
- **Social protection**: apprentices should be entitled to social protection, including insurance coverage
- **Work, health and safety conditions**: the host workplace should comply with relevant rules and regulations on working conditions, especially regarding health and safety legislation.

Then, we have the criteria for **framework conditions**:

- **Regulatory framework**: there should be a regulatory framework that is clear and consistent. Moreover, it must be based on partnerships and transparent dialogue between all stakeholders.
- **Involvement of social partners**: Social partners, including at the sectoral level, should be involved in the design, governance and implementation of apprenticeship programmes.
- **Support for companies**: Financial and/or non-financial support should be provided to companies, and in particular small, medium and micro enterprises.
- **Flexible programmes and mobility opportunities**: There should be flexible entry requirements and there should be opportunities for education and training. Transnational mobility is essential and should be part of the apprenticeship programme.

Contractual rules

Legal criteria and EU Legislation for SMEs to understand the main programmes and procedures in order to apply for long-term apprenticeship mobility opportunities at the European level

Description

- **Career guidance and raising awareness:** Career guidance, mentoring and learner support should be provided to ensure a successful outcome and to reduce the risk of dropping out.
- **Transparency:** transparency and access to apprenticeship opportunities should be guaranteed in all Member States.
- **Quality assurance and graduate tracking:** there should be quality assurance of apprenticeships and the employment and career progression of apprentices should be monitored so that their progress can be followed from the beginning.

Therefore, it is up to each Member State to develop appropriate instruments and policies based on these criteria.

Websites



EU law (EUR – Lex)

Legal acts (EUR – Lex)

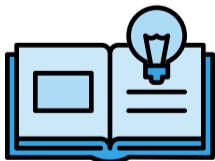
Relevant Articles



Specifically, to find the treaties currently in effect and the founding treaties to regulate working conditions (see Article 153 (2) and Article 153 (1) point b of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union – TFEU).

To access EU legal acts, including regulations, directives, decisions, recommendations and opinions.

- [European Quality Charter on Internships and Apprenticeships](#)
- [Joint Declaration establishing the European Alliance for Apprenticeships on 2/07/13](#)
- [Joint Statement “Towards a Shared Vision of Apprenticeships”](#)
- [A shared Vision for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships and Work-Based Learning.](#)
- [EESC Opinion: European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships:](#)
- [SAPS – Supporting Apprenticeships between Professional Higher Education & Small and Medium Enterprises](#)



Apprenticeships are **regulated** internally by the different legal systems in the Member States. However, there are some elements which are present, to varying degrees and in different combinations, in existing apprenticeship systems.

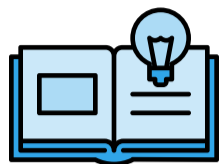
Firstly, it should be pointed out that an apprentice is contractually bound to the employer and receives remuneration, as the above-mentioned criteria also state. In addition, the apprenticeship position is regulated in a legal framework.

The employer is the party responsible for the business part of the programme.

Roles and responsibilities of key actors (the State, employer organisations, trade unions, chambers of commerce, schools, VET providers, companies) at the national, regional and local levels (regional and local levels are clearly defined and distributed).

Contractual rules

Legal criteria and EU Legislation for SMEs to understand the main programmes and procedures in order to apply for long-term apprenticeship mobility opportunities at the European level



In addition, employer organisations and trade unions are actively engaged at all levels.

However, there is a kind of cooperation between learning venues.

There is co-operation, co-ordination and a clear distribution of responsibilities between the different locations.

A school, a company and an apprentice develop a training plan together, based on the curriculum.

When a company cannot ensure the acquisition of all required learning outcomes, there are arrangements to compensate for this (e.g. inter-company training centres, cooperation between companies).

The issue of **supporting participation** in companies is also crucial.

Firstly, the rights and obligations of companies offering training are laid down in law.

It should be borne in mind that:

- There are strategies and initiatives to marketing apprenticeships and informing companies of the advantages of taking on apprentices, their responsibilities and the incentives available.
- There are some minimum requirements for companies wishing to offer apprenticeships, apprenticeship positions and/or an accreditation procedure.

Crucially, companies, especially SMEs, receive non-financial support to implement apprenticeships.

However, there is also recognition and rewards for companies that provide quality apprenticeships.

From a financial point of view, the State is responsible for financing vocational training institutions and/or paying subsidies to hire apprentices.

In addition, it should be pointed out that there are incentives (subsidies, tax deductions) to encourage companies to take on apprentices, in general and/or in specific vocational sectors.

The European Quality Charter for Traineeships and Apprenticeships establishes the basic quality principles for traineeships and apprenticeships in order to become a valuable and quality experience throughout Europe.

People have a right to quality opportunities. Indeed, there are necessary standards to ensure that traineeships and apprenticeships are truly quality experiences. The Quality Charter states that there are three key elements:

- Learning content
- Rights
- Remuneration

This Quality Charter has been used as an advocacy tool to influence institutional processes on quality transitions. Furthermore, it was also used to initiate a conversation with employers and encourage them to provide quality opportunities for young people.

The background of the page features a light-colored, crumpled paper texture on the left side. On the right side, there are abstract watercolor washes in shades of teal, blue, and green, creating a layered, artistic effect.

GLOSSARY

Glossary

A

Applicant

Any participating organisation which submits a grant application.

Apprentice

A person who works for another in order to learn a trade, someone who follows an apprenticeship learning scheme .

Apprenticeship

The period of time spent working as an apprentice. This is akin to job training that involves following and studying a master of the trade on the job instead of in school. A combination of on-the-job training and related instruction in which apprentices learn the practical and theoretical aspects of a highly skilled vocation.

Assessment of learning outcomes

The process whereby the knowledge, skills and competences of an individual are appraised against predefined criteria (learning expectations, measurement of learning outcomes). Assessment is typically followed by certification and validation.

B

Beneficiary

When a project is approved for an Erasmus+ grant, the applicant organisation becomes a beneficiary by signing a contract with the National or Executive Agency that selected the project. If the application was made on behalf of other participating organisations, the partners may become co-beneficiaries of the grant.

C

Company's tutor

Someone with specific job-related skills and a vocation/commitment to training, someone who is in charge of the development of the intern, in terms of both technical and professional aspects.

Consortium

Two or more participating organisations which team up to prepare, implement and follow up a project or an activity within a project. A consortium may be national (i.e. involving organisations established in the same country) or international (involving participating organisations from different countries).

Criterion/Criteria

A standard or principle to judge, evaluate or select something. Company tutor

E

Employer

An employer is the person or organisation that you work for.

ECVET

European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) is a technical framework for the transfer, recognition and (where appropriate) accumulation of an individual's learning outcomes with a view to achieving a qualification.

Glossary

E

EQF

European Qualifications Framework (EQF): this is a translation tool that helps explain qualifications awarded in different countries and by different education and training systems, and helps compare them. Its eight levels are described in terms of knowledge, skills and competences.

Erasmus Pro

This is an initiative under the Erasmus+ Programme. This initiative included under Key Action 1 (learning mobility) aims to facilitate and promote 50,000 work placements of 3 to 12 months for VET learners and recent graduates between 2018 and 2020.

Eures

Set up in 1993, EURES is a cooperation network between the European Commission and the EEA's Public Employment Services (PES). Switzerland also cooperates in EURES. EURES helps workers and employers who wish to benefit from the right of free movement of workers within the EEA.

Europass

A standardised CV format, which allows the trainee to present his/her skills and the qualifications gained after the training period.

Europass Library

It is a free online space, linked to your Europass profile, where you can store files related to your career and studies.

Europass Mobility

It is a document which describes the skills you develop on a particular mobility experience.

Europass Profile

It is a tool that can be used by organisations – employers, volunteer organisations, recruiters, guidance practitioners, youth organisations, education and training institutions and more – as part of the support and services they offer to people.

G

Grants

Subsidies to support the individual's or the company's investment in education and training.

I

Intermediary Organization

This is an organisation active in the labour market or in the fields of education, training and youth work. Its role may be to share and facilitate the administrative procedures of the sending higher education institutions and to better match student profiles with the needs of enterprises in case of traineeships and to jointly prepare participants.

Intermediary's tutor

A person at the foreign destination who acts as a mediator between all the involved parties and helps the trainee locally

Glossary

L

Learning Agreement

This is the document which defines the learning outcomes to be acquired during the mobility opportunity by the apprentice, agreeing the assessment procedures and how learning achievements will be documented, specifying the roles of the partners involved and under which conditions credits can be transferred (validation and recognition).

Learning Outcome

The set of knowledge, skills and competences an individual acquires and/or is able to demonstrate after successfully completing a learning process, either formal, non-formal or informal. These are statements of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do upon completing a learning process, which are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competence.

M

Memorandum of Understanding

This specifies the terms of the partnership, the roles of the parties involved and the Learning Objectives. It details the conditions under which the identified learning outcomes from the trainee's course syllabus can be achieved, assessed, validated and potentially transferred.

Mentor

The experienced person, acting as a role model, guide or coach, who provides guidance and support to an apprentice.

N

National Agency

A body in charge of managing the implementation of the Programme at the national level in a Member State or in a third country associated with the Programme. One or more National Agencies may exist in any one country.

O

Organisation

An organisation is an entity — such as a company, an institution, or an association — comprising one or more people and having a particular purpose.

P

Platform

A piece of technology or software that connects users with other members of a community to create mutually beneficial opportunities.

Q

Quality Commitment

This refers to the principles under the European Quality Charter for Mobility and defines each project participant's responsibilities, e.g. the sending institution, the hosting institution and the trainee.

R

Receiving organisation (or hosting)

It's the organization in charge of receiving students/staff from abroad and offering them a study/traineeship programme or a programme of training activities, or benefiting from a teaching activity.

Glossary

R

Receiving organisation's tutor

Someone with specific job-related skills and a vocation/commitment to training, someone who is in charge of the development of the intern, in terms of both technical and professional aspects.

Recommendation

This is one of two forms of a non-binding EU act. The other form being opinions. Although recommendations do not have any legal consequences, they may offer guidance on the interpretation or content of EU law.

Regulations

A binding legislative act that must be applied, in its entirety, across the EU.

S

Sending organization

The VET organisation, school or another kind of institution at which the participant is studying or where he/she has recently finished studying. When the sending organisation is also the applicant, it assumes all project coordination and implementation tasks. In the case of a consortium, arrangements regarding selection, grant payments, preparation, monitoring and recognition related to the mobility period might vary as they can be shared among members.

Sending organisation's tutor

Sending organisation's tutor: a project coordinator or a teacher who brings together all the involved parties, handles mobility standards and criteria, and acts as general supervisor.

Skills

These are the abilities to apply knowledge and to use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems. In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, skills are described as cognitive (involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) or practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments).

SMEs

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are non-subsidiary, independent firms which employ fewer than a given number of employees. This number varies by country. The most frequent upper limit designating an SME is 250 employees, as in the European Union. They are defined in the EU Recommendation 2003/361.

T

Targeted mobility scheme

The initiative to test innovative methods to implement intra-EU job mobility opportunities and tackle the needs of specific target groups, economic sectors, vocations and countries

Tutor

The person in charge when considering the personality, learning needs and preferences of the apprentice being tutored, to create a context or a process in which the apprentice ends up building his/her own knowledge and learning path.

