



Study on a comprehensive overview on traineeship arrangements in Member States

Final Synthesis Report

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Final Synthesis Report



Federal Institute for
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Executive Summary

Introduction

The main objective of this study was to provide an overview of traineeship arrangements in all 27 Member States and to collect the most up-to-date information about different forms of traineeships across the EU. Traineeships are seen as an effective mechanism which allows young people to familiarise themselves with the world of work, thus facilitating their transition from education (or a period of inactivity or unemployment) to employment. However, there are also growing concerns across the EU about the quality and fairness of traineeships as well as their effectiveness as a school-to-work transition mechanism.

The availability and quality of information on traineeships is rather uneven across the EU. This study is a response to the need for a comprehensive EU-wide robust traineeship-related evidence base. It was conducted by a consortium involving the Institute of Employment Studies (IES, UK) as the lead co-ordinator, the Istituto per la Ricerca Sociale (IRS, Italy) and the Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung (BIBB, Germany) as key partners as well as a network of regional and national experts.

The study's methodological approach combined a range of qualitative methodologies which included stakeholder interviews at both EU and national levels; a quasi-systematic literature review; a comparative mapping exercise based on information collected in each Member State; and case studies. For the purposes of this study the following five types of traineeships were examined:

- **Traineeships which form optional or compulsory part of academic and/or vocational curricula** (i.e. traineeships during education);
- **Traineeships in the open market** which, after completion of studies, provide graduates with work-related experience before they find stable employment;
- **Traineeships as part of active labour market policies (ALMPs)** for unemployed young people with the explicit aim to facilitate their labour market transition;
- **Traineeships which form part of mandatory professional training**, e.g. law, medicine, teaching, architecture, accounting, etc.; and
- **Transnational traineeships.**

Key Findings of the Study

This section presents a summary of the study's key findings and recommendations.

Increased Policy Focus on Traineeships as Mechanisms which facilitate Young People's Labour Market Entry

The dramatic rise in youth unemployment and employment precariousness combined with considerable skill mismatches have prompted Governments across the EU to **increasingly focus on traineeships** as effective school-to-work transition mechanisms. As a result, traineeships are increasingly integrated into ALMPs and/or form an integral part of educational courses. In view of the proliferation of traineeships undertaken by young people in the open market, Member States have also sought to raise the quantity and quality of such traineeships through either well-structured programmes and/or regulations or voluntary quality charters aimed at providing some protection to trainees.

Funding of Traineeships

Across Member States the most common methods of financing the various types of traineeships include European and national/regional funds; institutional assistance, e.g. university grants; personal financing; and company resources. Where public funding is available, this often involves considerable support from European funds, notably the European Social Fund (ESF). Personal financing is particularly common in open market traineeships where, in many cases, trainees receive no or insufficient compensation. As a result, they have to rely on other funding sources such own savings and family support.

Lack of a Common Definition of Traineeships

There is a great discrepancy across all Europe in the extent to which traineeships and/or trainees are clearly defined. In relation to the **definition of traineeships**, in most Member States there is either a legal definition or, at least, a common national understanding of the concept of a traineeship. In general, in almost all countries where a common definition of traineeship exists, there is a strong link between education and work experience. Across Member States the **common defining characteristics of legal frameworks relating to traineeships** are: (i) the general educational purpose; (ii) the practical element of learning; and (iii) the temporary character of the traineeship.

Plurality of Regulatory Frameworks for Traineeships

Across Europe there is a plurality and variety of legislation and regulations governing traineeships. This legislative/regulatory diversity exists not only between Member States, but also between the different types of traineeships themselves. This, in turn, reflects the fact that the concept of traineeship itself is very diverse. Traineeships related to education/training and ALMPs tend to be the most regulated, while open market traineeships are subject to much less regulation.

Traineeship-related legislation can be found in laws and regulations associated with either education and training policies or employment policies, including ALMPs. It usually seeks to define and regulate traineeships, the trainee status and associated terms and conditions. Some Member States seek to regulate directly traineeships-related issues (e.g. by Laws which explicitly apply to traineeships). Traineeships which form part of academic study curricula are typically regulated, organised and overseen independently and autonomously by the educational institution itself.

It should be noted that **legislative and regulatory frameworks do not necessarily guarantee the quality of traineeships**. Rather, **it is the implementation of regulations and the robust monitoring of the entire process which play a key role in ensuring quality traineeships**. There is particular concern about the inadequacy of regulations for traineeships in the open market.

Great Diversity of Traineeships

Between and within Member States the study identified a wide range of traineeships:

- **Traineeships linked to educational programmes:** Across the EU it has become increasingly common for traineeships to be integrated into curriculum requirements for both higher vocational and academic education qualifications. Although traineeships have been more common in upper secondary and higher vocational education and training, they are now becoming an integral part of academic curricula in most Member States. The proportion of students undertaking traineeships or work placements as part of higher

education studies varies widely across Member States, from 87 per cent in the Netherlands to 22 per cent in Italy.¹

- **Traineeships in the open market:** In recent years there has been an expansion of traineeships which young people undertake after graduation, not least because employers increasingly put a premium on them having acquired work experience through such placements. These traineeships have attracted most criticism since they tend to be unregulated and associated with reports of questionable employer practices including low quality, poor terms and conditions, including low or no pay, etc.
- **Traineeships linked to ALMPs:** These are aimed at unemployed young people, typically with no or a low level of skills. However, in recent years, especially since the Great Recession, traineeship programmes have expanded to include work placements offered to graduates with the aim of facilitating their labour market transition.
- **Traineeships as part of mandatory professional training:** Across Member States there are certain professions where there is a legal requirement to undertake a compulsory traineeship as part of mandatory professional training, e.g. medicine, law, education/teaching, architecture, etc. These traineeships are typically a pre-requisite for licence to practice and tend to be both well-defined and tightly regulated. However, issues of trainee exploitation can emerge due to incorrect implementation of regulations.
- **Transnational traineeships:** Across all Member States there is evidence of growing popularity of transnational work-related mobility. EU mobility programmes, notably the Leonardo da Vinci and Erasmus programmes, have increased the number of transnational work placements across most Member States. A growing number of countries are actively promoting traineeships abroad, either through EU or other international youth mobility programmes such as AIESEC and IAESTE as well as through national initiatives.

Sectors where Traineeships are more common

The type, range and profile of sectors where traineeships are more prevalent differ, to some extent, according to the specific type of traineeships. In certain sectors traineeships are a compulsory part of mandatory professional training (see previous section). In addition, there are a number of sectors where traineeships are increasingly common, including the creative industries, media/journalism, the public sector, third sector/NGOs, hospitality, business administration and financial services. Some of these sectors such as the creative industries, media/journalism and the third sector/NGOs have also been associated with questionable employer practices. The latter include low or poor learning content; poor working conditions; inadequate compensation; using trainees as substitutes for regular staff; repeatedly renewing traineeship contracts without offering a permanent position etc.

Great Variety of Trainee's Terms and Conditions

The trainee's rights, terms and conditions vary considerably both between different types of traineeship and Member States. For example, traineeships linked to study curricula and mandatory professional training have more clearly defined terms and conditions as opposed to those in the open market. The issue of trainees' terms and conditions has increasingly become the focus of lively political debate across the EU. As a result, **a number of Member States with the aim of improving the trainee's terms and conditions have introduced or are in the process of developing new legislative/regulatory measures and/or quality frameworks.**

¹ Brennan, J. Patel, K., and Tang, W., (2009). *Diversity in the Student Learning Experience and Time devoted to Study: A Comparative Analysis of the UK and European Evidence*, Report to HEFCE by the Centre for Higher Education Research and Information, The Open University, April

Growing Emphasis on Quality Assurance

In a number of Member States and for certain types of traineeships the study identified widespread concerns about the quality of traineeships. **A number of countries have actively sought to improve this quality by strengthening quality assurance mechanisms.** These include **traineeship-related legislation** (e.g. the 2011 Cherpion Law in France) as well as specific **quality frameworks** either regulated by public institutions (e.g. educational establishments, public employment services etc.) or developed by the social partners, or promoted on a voluntary basis by employer associations, professional bodies and even governments (e.g. the 2011 *Common Best Practice Code for High Quality Internships* in the UK). Quality assurance standards may be compulsory or voluntary.

Effectiveness of Traineeships

Across the EU there is a **growing awareness of the benefits of traineeships in terms of facilitating the school-to-work transition.** However, there is an uneven and rather patchy body of evaluation literature on the effectiveness of traineeships. The available literature appears to indicate **the most effective traineeships are those undertaken during education** and, in some instances, those linked to well-structured ALMPs. The main success factors of these traineeships seem to be i) their strong links with the labour market; ii) a well-structured approach; iii) active engagement of stakeholders, including employers; and iv) robust quality assurance mechanisms.

Recommendations

This study has highlighted a number of traineeship-related areas where further action is required either at EU and/or national levels.

- There is a **need for a clear definition of traineeships at EU level.** Given the great variety of traineeships, this definition may outline the key aims and features of these schemes, while leaving some space for the specificities of particular types.
- There should be **more support to include traineeships as a part of study curricula,** where possible traineeships should take place during studies and not after graduation.
- A concerted effort should be made at both EU and national levels to **increase the supply of traineeships,** especially in SMEs.
- There is a **need for a Quality Framework for Traineeships** offering clear and practical guidelines about high quality traineeships.
- There is a **need for some financial support to trainees,** especially those from less privileged backgrounds.
- Steps should be taken to **encourage open and transparent recruitment processes** for traineeships.
- There is a need for **more robust data on and evaluation of all types of traineeships at both national and EU levels.** This includes both quantitative and qualitative data which can be used for assessing the quantity, quality, impact and effectiveness of traineeships.

Résumé

Introduction

Cette étude a pour principal objectif d'offrir un aperçu des dispositions relatives aux stages appliquées dans les 27 pays membres et de rassembler les informations les plus récentes concernant les diverses formes de stages qui existent au sein de l'UE. Les stages sont considérés comme un mécanisme efficace qui permet aux jeunes de se familiariser avec le monde du travail et qui facilite ainsi leur transition de l'éducation (ou d'une période d'inactivité ou de chômage) vers l'emploi. Toutefois, la qualité, l'équité des stages et leur efficacité en tant que mécanisme de transition de l'école vers le travail sont des sources de préoccupations croissantes à travers l'UE.

La disponibilité et la qualité des informations relatives aux stages sont assez inégales dans l'ensemble de la communauté. Cette étude vise à répondre au besoin de l'établissement d'une base de connaissances solide en termes de stages d'un point de vue communautaire. L'étude a été réalisée par un consortium réunissant l'Institute of Employment Studies (IES, Royaume-Uni) en tant que coordinateur principal, l'Istituto per la Ricerca Sociale (IRS, Italie) et le Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung (BIBB, Allemagne) en tant que premiers partenaires ainsi qu'un réseau d'experts régionaux et nationaux.

L'approche méthodologique de l'étude regroupe un ensemble de méthodologies qualitatives qui comprennent des entretiens avec les parties concernées aux niveaux européen et national, une étude documentaire quasi-systématique, un exercice comparatif de cartographie basé sur des informations recueillies dans chaque état membre et des études de cas. Afin de réaliser cette étude, cinq catégories de stages ont été examinées:

- **Les stages qui sont une composante optionnelle ou obligatoire d'un cursus universitaire et/ou professionnel** (soit des stages réalisés durant les études);
- **Les stages sur le marché libre** (hors études ou non-conventionné) qui offrent aux diplômés, après la fin des études, une expérience professionnelle avant qu'ils trouvent un emploi stable;
- **Les stages effectués dans le cadre des Politiques actives du marché de l'emploi** destinées aux jeunes qui sont au chômage et visant expressément à faciliter leur transition vers le marché du travail;
- **Les stages qui font partie d'une formation professionnelle obligatoire**, ex : droit, médecine, enseignement, architecture, comptabilité, etc.; et
- **Les stages transnationaux.**

Résultats clés de l'étude

Cette section propose une synthèse des principaux résultats et recommandations de l'étude.

Une importance accrue accordée à la politique sur les stages vus comme des mécanismes facilitant l'entrée des jeunes sur le marché du travail

La hausse dramatique du chômage chez les jeunes et la précarité de l'emploi associée à une inadéquation importante de compétences ont poussé les gouvernements des états membres à **considérer de plus en plus les stages** comme des mécanismes efficaces de transition de l'école vers le travail. Les stages sont donc de plus en plus intégrés aux Politiques actives du marché de l'emploi et/ou font partie intégrante des cours d'enseignements. Au vu du nombre croissant de stages effectués par des jeunes sur le marché libre, les états membres ont aussi cherché à améliorer la qualité et à augmenter le nombre de ces stages à travers

des programmes bien structurés et/ou des réglementations ou des chartes volontaires de qualité qui ont pour objectif d'offrir une certaine protection aux stagiaires.

Financement des stages

Les méthodes les plus utilisées par les états membres pour financer les différents types de stages sont des financements européens et nationaux/régionaux, une aide institutionnelle (ex : bourses universitaires), financements personnels et d'entreprise. Si des financements publics sont à disposition, ils impliquent souvent un soutien considérable provenant de fonds européens, notamment du Fonds social européen (FSE). Les financements personnels se retrouvent en particulier pour les stages effectués sur le marché libre où, dans bien des cas, les stagiaires ne sont peu voire pas du tout rémunérés. Ils doivent donc se tourner vers d'autres sources de financements comme des fonds personnels ou un soutien de la part de la famille.

Absence de définition commune du concept de stage

Les manières de définir clairement les stages et/ou les stagiaires divergent fortement d'un état membre à l'autre. Pour **définir les stages**, une définition juridique existe dans la plupart des états membres ou, du moins, une entente commune existe au niveau national sur le concept de stage. De manière générale, dans pratiquement tous les pays qui appliquent une définition commune de stage, un lien fort existe entre éducation et expérience professionnelle. Dans l'ensemble des états membres, les **caractéristiques communes définissant les cadres juridiques relatifs aux stages** sont: (i) l'objectif éducatif en général; (ii) l'élément pratique de l'apprentissage; et (iii) l'aspect temporaire du stage.

Pluralité des cadres réglementaires pour les stages

Dans l'Europe entière, il existe une pluralité et une variété de lois et réglementations qui régissent les stages. Cette diversité législative/réglementaire existe non seulement entre les pays membres mais aussi entre les différents types de stages. Cela montre par ailleurs que le concept de stage lui-même prend plusieurs formes. Les stages dans le cadre d'un enseignement/formation et des Politiques actives du marché de l'emploi sont souvent les plus réglementés, tandis que les stages sur le marché libre ne sont pas soumis à autant de réglementations.

La législation en matière de stage se retrouve dans les lois et les réglementations relatives aux politiques d'enseignement et de formation ou aux politiques d'emploi, y compris les Politiques actives du marché de l'emploi. Elle vise le plus souvent à définir et à réglementer les stages, le statut du stagiaire et les conditions de réalisation du stage. Certains pays membres souhaitent réglementer de manière plus directe les questions liées aux stages (avec des lois qui s'appliquent expressément aux stages par exemple). Les stages qui font partie de cursus d'études universitaires sont généralement réglementés, organisés et supervisés de manière indépendante et autonome par l'institution d'enseignement elle-même.

Il est à noter que **les cadres législatifs et réglementaires ne garantissent pas nécessairement la qualité des stages**. C'est davantage **la mise en œuvre des réglementations et une supervision solide de tout le processus qui joue un rôle clé pour assurer la qualité des stages**. L'inadéquation des réglementations pour les stages sur le marché libre suscite des inquiétudes particulières.

Grande diversité des stages

L'étude a identifié une grande diversité de stages au sein des états membres et entre les pays:

- **Stages associés à des programmes d'enseignement:** Dans l'ensemble de l'UE, il devient de plus en plus courant d'intégrer les stages aux exigences de cursus pour des diplômes universitaires ou professionnels de l'enseignement supérieur. Bien que les stages soient plus courants dans des cursus professionnels et de formation de l'enseignement secondaire et supérieur, ils deviennent désormais parties intégrantes des cursus universitaires dans la plupart des états membres. La part des étudiants qui font un stage dans le cadre de leurs études supérieures varie considérablement selon les états membres, de 87 pourcent aux Pays-Bas à 22 pourcent en Italie.²
- **Stages sur le marché libre:** Ces dernières années, le nombre de stages effectués par les jeunes après la fin de leurs études a augmenté, notamment parce que les employeurs souhaitent de plus en plus que les jeunes diplômés acquièrent une première expérience professionnelle à travers des stages. Ces stages sont les plus critiqués car ils sont souvent non réglementés et associés à des pratiques d'employeurs douteuses qui offrent une qualité de formation médiocre, de mauvaises conditions de stages et de maigres voire aucune rémunération.
- **Stages associés aux Politiques actives du marché de l'emploi:** Ces politiques sont destinées aux jeunes sans emploi qui n'ont généralement aucune ou peu de qualifications. Cependant, ces dernières années, en particulier depuis la Grande récession, des programmes de stage se sont développés et comprennent maintenant des périodes de professionnalisation offerts aux diplômés dans le but de faciliter leur transition vers le marché du travail.
- **Stages dans le cadre d'une formation professionnelle obligatoire:** Dans tous les pays européens, les candidats à certaines professions ont pour obligation juridique d'effectuer un stage obligatoire dans le cadre de la formation professionnelle exigée, ex: médecine, droit, éducation/enseignement, architecture, etc. Ces stages sont généralement un pré-requis pour obtenir l'autorisation d'exercer et sont à la fois souvent bien définis et réglementés de manière stricte. Toutefois, une mauvaise mise en œuvre des réglementations peut susciter des questions quant à l'exploitation de stagiaires.
- **Stages transnationaux:** Les mobilités transnationales liées au travail sont de plus en plus courantes dans l'ensemble des pays de l'UE. Les programmes européens de mobilité, tels que les programmes Leonardo da Vinci et Erasmus, ont fait accroître le nombre de stages transnationaux dans la plupart des états membres. De plus en plus de pays font une promotion active des stages à l'étranger, soit par l'intermédiaire de l'UE, soit grâce à des programmes internationaux pour la mobilité des jeunes tels qu'AIIESEC et IAESTE ainsi que des initiatives nationales.

Secteurs accueillant le plus de stagiaires

Le type, le genre et le profil des secteurs dans lesquels les stages sont les plus nombreux dépendent, dans une certaine mesure, de la catégorie spécifique du stage. Dans certains secteurs, les stages font partie intégrante d'une formation professionnelle obligatoire (voir la section précédente). D'autre part, les stages deviennent de plus en plus courants dans des secteurs comme les industries créatives, les médias/journalisme, le secteur public, le secteur tertiaire/ONG, l'hôtellerie, l'administration des affaires et les services financiers. Certains de ces secteurs comme celui des industries créatives, les médias/journalisme et le secteur tertiaire/ONG sont aussi associés à des pratiques d'employeurs douteuses : des contenus d'apprentissage de piètre qualité, des conditions de travail médiocre, une rémunération inadéquate, l'utilisation de stagiaires pour remplacer un salarié, des renouvellements incessants de conventions de stage sans qu'un poste permanent ne soit proposé, etc.

² J. Brennan, K. Patel et W. Tang (2009). Diversity in the Student Learning Experience and Time devoted to Study: A Comparative Analysis of the UK and European Evidence, rapport destiné au HEFCE (Higher Education Funding Council for England) réalisé par le Centre for Higher Education Research and Information, The Open University, avril

Grande variété des conditions de réalisation du stage

Les droits du stagiaire et les conditions de stage qui lui sont appliquées varient de manière considérable en fonction des différents types de stage et entre les états membres. À titre d'exemple, les stages associés à des programmes d'études et de formation professionnelle obligatoire voient leurs conditions de réalisation mieux définies que les stages sur le marché libre. La question des conditions du stagiaire devient de plus de plus le sujet central d'un débat politique animé à travers l'UE. Ainsi, **dans le but d'améliorer les conditions du stagiaire, certains pays membres ont mis en place ou sont en train de développer de nouvelles mesures législatives/réglementaires et/ou des cadres de qualité.**

Importance croissante accordée à l'assurance-qualité

Dans un certain nombre d'états membres et pour certains types de stages, l'étude a démontré que des inquiétudes généralisées existaient quant à la qualité des stages. **Plusieurs pays ont cherché activement à améliorer la qualité des stages en renforçant les mécanismes d'assurance-qualité.** Ces mécanismes comprennent une **législation en matière de stages** (telle que la loi Cherpion en France) ainsi que des **cadres de qualité spécifiques** qui sont soit réglementés par des institutions publiques (ex: établissements scolaires ou universitaires, services publics pour l'emploi, etc.), soit développés par les partenaires sociaux ou encouragés spontanément par des associations d'employeurs, des institutions professionnelles et même par les gouvernements (ex: Le *2011 Common Best Practice Code for High Quality Internships* au Royaume-Uni). Les normes d'assurance-qualité peuvent être obligatoires ou optionnelles.

Efficacité des stages

Dans tous les pays européens, **les effets bénéfiques du stage qui facilitent la transition de l'école vers le travail sont de plus en reconnus.** Cependant, l'ensemble des documents servant à évaluer l'efficacité des stages est plutôt inégal et incomplet. La documentation disponible semble indiquer que **les stages les plus efficaces sont ceux effectués durant les études** et, dans certains cas, ceux associés aux Politiques actives et bien structurées du marché de l'emploi. Les principaux facteurs de réussite de ces stages semblent être liés à i) leur lien étroit avec le marché du travail; ii) une approche structurée de manière adéquate; iii) un engagement actif des parties concernées, y compris des employeurs; et iv) des mécanismes d'assurance-qualité solides.

Recommandations

Cette étude met en évidence un nombre de domaines liés au stage dans lesquels des progrès restent encore à faire au niveau européen et/ou national.

- **Une définition claire de la notion de stage doit être établie au niveau européen.** Compte tenu de la grande variété de stages, cette définition pourrait exposer les buts et traits principaux de ces opportunités, tout en laissant quelque place aux particularités de stages spécifiques.
- **Davantage de soutien est nécessaire pour que les stages fassent partie des programmes d'études;** ces stages devraient avoir lieu, autant que possible, durant la période d'enseignement et non après la fin des études.
- Un effort conjoint doit être fait au niveau national et européen pour **augmenter l'offre de stages,** en particulier dans les PME.
- **L'établissement d'un Cadre de qualité pour les stages** offrant des lignes directrices claires et pratiques pour des stages de haute qualité est nécessaire.

- La mise en place d'un **soutien financier pour les stagiaires** est nécessaire, en particulier ceux qui sont issus des milieux les plus défavorisés.
- Des mesures doivent être prises pour **encourager des procédures de recrutement ouvertes et transparentes** pour les stages.
- Le rassemblement de **données plus solides** et **d'évaluations de tous les types de stages existants au niveau national et européen** doit se faire. Cela doit comprendre des données à la fois quantitatives et qualitatives qui peuvent être utilisées pour évaluer la quantité, la qualité, l'impact et l'efficacité des stages.

Zusammenfassung

Einführung

Das Hauptziel der vorliegenden Studie war es, einen Überblick über die Gestaltung von Praktika in den 27 Mitgliedsländern zu gewinnen und aktuelle Informationen über die unterschiedlichen Formen von Praktika innerhalb der EU zu sammeln. Praktika werden als wichtiges Instrument betrachtet, um junge Menschen mit der Arbeitswelt vertraut zu machen und damit den Übergang zwischen Bildungsweg (oder einer Auszeit oder einer Phase der Arbeitslosigkeit) und Arbeitsleben zu erleichtern. Allerdings gibt es innerhalb der EU wachsende Bedenken zu Qualität und Fairness von Praktika sowie zu der Frage, ob Praktika ein effizientes Instrument zur Gestaltung des Übergangs von Ausbildung zu Beschäftigung darstellen.

Die Verfügbarkeit und Qualität von Informationen zu Praktika variiert innerhalb der EU recht stark. Diese Studie stellt eine Antwort auf den Bedarf nach Schaffung einer alle EU-Länder umfassenden Erkenntnisbasis zu Praktika dar. Sie wurde von einem Konsortium durchgeführt, an dem das Institute of Employment Studies (IES, Großbritannien) als Konsortialführer, das Istituto per la Ricerca Sociale (IRS, Italien) und das Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung (BIBB, Deutschland) als Partner sowie ein Netzwerk aus nationalen und regionalen Experten beteiligt waren.

Der methodische Ansatz der Studie kombiniert eine Reihe von qualitativen Methoden. Dazu zählten Experteninterviews mit Akteuren auf nationaler sowie auf EU-Ebene, eine Literaturrecherche, eine vergleichende Bestandsanalyse auf Grundlage der in den Mitgliedsstaaten gesammelten Informationen sowie Fallstudien. Zum Zwecke der vorliegenden Studie wurden fünf Typen von Praktika untersucht:

- **Praktika, die ein verpflichtender oder optionaler Teil eines akademischen oder beruflichen Ausbildungscurriculums sind** (z.B. Praktika während des Besuchs einer Bildungseinrichtung)
- **Praktika auf dem freien Markt**, die Absolventen arbeitsrelevante Erfahrungen bieten bevor diese eine dauerhafte Beschäftigung finden
- **Praktika als Teil aktiver Arbeitsmarktpolitik** für arbeitssuchende junge Menschen, die das ausdrückliche Ziel verfolgt deren Übergang in den Arbeitsmarkt zu fördern
- **Praktika als verpflichtender Teil eines beruflichen Ausbildungsweges**, z.B. in den Bereichen Recht, Medizin, Lehrtätigkeit, Architektur, Buchhaltung etc. und
- **Transnationale Praktika.**

Wichtigste Ergebnisse der Studie

Dieser Abschnitt enthält eine Zusammenfassung der wichtigsten Ergebnisse und Empfehlungen der Studie.

Verstärkte Aufmerksamkeit der Politik für Praktika als Mechanismus, um jungen Menschen den Eintritt in den Arbeitsmarkt zu erleichtern

Der dramatische Anstieg von Jugendarbeitslosigkeit und prekärer Beschäftigung, die einhergehen mit einer erheblichen Diskrepanz zwischen den erworbenen und den am Arbeitsmarkt benötigten Qualifikationen haben Regierungen in ganz Europa dazu veranlasst, ihre Aufmerksamkeit zunehmend auf Praktika als Instrument für einen erfolgreichen Übergang von der Ausbildung in den Beruf zu richten. Dementsprechend werden Praktika

zunehmend in Maßnahmen zur aktiven Arbeitsmarktpolitik integriert und/oder sind ein integraler Bestandteil von Bildungsgängen. In Anbetracht der erheblichen Zunahme von Praktika junger Menschen auf dem offenen Markt haben die Mitgliedstaaten darüber hinaus versucht, sowohl Quantität als auch Qualität solcher Praktika durch gut strukturierte Programme und/oder Vorschriften oder freiwillige Qualitätschartas zu steigern und damit einen Schutz von Praktikanten zu erreichen.

Finanzierung von Praktika

Die in den Mitgliedstaaten üblichsten Modelle zur Finanzierung der verschiedenen Arten von Praktika umfassen europäische sowie nationale / regionale Fonds, finanzielle Hilfe von Institutionen wie z.B. Universitäten, private Mittel sowie Zahlungen des Praktikumsanbieters. Zur Verfügung stehende öffentliche Gelder stammen oft zu einem erheblichen Teil aus EU-Mitteln und dabei insbesondere aus dem Europäischen Sozialfonds (ESF). Selbstfinanzierung ist besonders bei Praktika auf dem freien Markt verbreitet, im Rahmen derer Praktikanten in vielen Fällen keine oder nur unzureichende Entlohnung erhalten. Infolgedessen müssen sie sich auf andere Finanzierungsquellen, wie etwa eigene Ersparnisse oder familiäre Unterstützung verlassen.

Das Fehlen einer gemeinsamen Definition von Praktika

In Europa gibt es sehr große Unterschiede hinsichtlich einer klaren Definition von Praktika bzw. Praktikanten. In Bezug auf die **Definition von Praktika** gibt es in den meisten Mitgliedstaaten entweder eine gesetzliche Definition oder zumindest ein gemeinsames nationales Verständnis über das Konzept eines Praktikums. Generell lässt sich festhalten, dass in fast allen Ländern mit einer allgemein anerkannten Definition von Praktika eine starke Verbindung zwischen Bildung und Arbeitserfahrung besteht. Unter allen Mitgliedsstaaten gibt es **übliche Definitionsmerkmale von rechtlichen Rahmenbedingungen im Zusammenhang mit Praktika**; diese sind: (i) der allgemeine Ausbildungszweck; (ii) das praktische Element des Lernens; und (iii) der zeitlich befristete Charakter eines Praktikums.

Vielfalt der rechtlichen Rahmenbedingungen von Praktika

In ganz Europa gibt es eine Vielzahl und Vielfalt an Gesetzen und Vorschriften, die Praktika regeln. Diese gesetzgeberische / regulatorische Vielfalt differiert nicht nur zwischen den Mitgliedstaaten, sondern auch in Bezug auf die Arten von Praktika. Dies wiederum spiegelt die Tatsache wider, dass das Konzept des Praktikums selbst sehr mannigfaltig ist. Praktika, die in Zusammenhang mit Bildung / Ausbildung oder einer aktiven arbeitsmarktpolitischen Maßnahme stehen sind in der Regel stärker reguliert, während Praktika auf dem freien Markt weitaus weniger Regulierung unterliegen.

Praktikumsbezogene Rechtsnormen können in Gesetzen und Vorschriften zu allgemeiner oder beruflicher Ausbildung sowie zur Beschäftigungspolitik, einschließlich der aktiven Arbeitsmarktpolitik, gefunden werden. In der Regel wird mit diesen Rechtsnormen versucht, Praktika zu definieren sowie den Status des Praktikanten und die damit in Verbindung stehenden Bedingungen zu regeln. Einige Mitgliedstaaten richten regulative Maßnahmen direkt auf praktikumsrelevante Sachverhalte (z.B. in Form von Gesetzen, die explizit auf Praktika anwendbar sind). Praktika, die Teil eines akademischen Ausbildungscurriculums sind, werden üblicherweise von den Bildungseinrichtungen individuell und unabhängig geregelt, organisiert und überwacht.

Es ist anzumerken, dass **gesetzliche und regulatorische Rahmenbedingungen nicht notwendigerweise eine Garantie für eine hohe Qualität von Praktika** darstellen. **Vielmehr sind es die Implementierung der Vorschriften sowie die effektive Überwachung des gesamten Prozesses, die eine wesentliche Rolle bei der**

Gewährleistung von qualitativ hochwertigen Praktika spielen. Besondere Bedenken gibt es hinsichtlich unzureichender Regelungen von Praktika auf dem freien Markt.

Große Vielfalt von Praktika

Zwischen und innerhalb der Mitgliedstaaten gibt es eine große Bandbreite an Praktika:

- **Praktika in Verbindung mit Ausbildungsprogrammen:** In der gesamten EU ist es zunehmend üblich, dass Praktika als verpflichtender Teil in den Lehrplan integriert sind. Dies gilt sowohl für den Bereich der beruflichen als auch für den der akademischen Bildung. Während Praktika bislang vor allem in der höheren Schulbildung sowie der Berufsbildung üblich waren, entwickeln sie sich nun in vielen Mitgliedstaaten zu einem integralen Bestandteil akademischer Curricula. Der Anteil der Studenten, der Praktika als Teil einer Hochschulausbildung absolviert, variiert jedoch sehr stark zwischen den Mitgliedstaaten; so beträgt der Anteil in den Niederlanden 87 per cent und in Italien nur 22 per cent.³
- **Praktika auf dem freien Markt:** In den letzten Jahren haben sich Praktika von jungen Absolventen und Absolventinnen zunehmend ausgebreitet. Dies geschah nicht zuletzt deshalb, da Arbeitgeber diejenigen, die auf dem Wege solcher Praktika Berufserfahrung erworben haben, bevorzugen. Diese Form von Praktika hat die meiste Kritik erfahren, da sie zu geringer Regulierung tendiert und sie im Zusammenhang mit Berichten über fragwürdige Praktiken von Arbeitgebern steht. Die Kritik richtet sich gegen die geringe Praktikumsqualität sowie schlechte Arbeitsbedingungen, wie etwa geringe oder nicht vorhandene Bezahlung usw.
- **Praktika als Teil einer aktiven Arbeitsmarktpolitik:** Diese Praktika richten sich in der Regel an arbeitslose Jugendliche, die über ein sehr niedriges Bildungsniveau verfügen. Allerdings sind in den letzten Jahren, insbesondere als Folge der Wirtschaftskrise, Praktikumsprogramme entstanden, die sich an Absolventen richten und das Ziel haben, diesen den Übergang in den Arbeitsmarkt zu erleichtern.
- **Praktika als verpflichtender Teil eines beruflichen Ausbildungsweges:** In den Mitgliedstaaten gibt es bestimmte Berufe, in denen Praktika als Teil der Ausbildung gesetzlich vorgeschrieben sind. Dazu gehören zum Beispiel die Bereiche Medizin, Recht, Erziehung/Unterricht, Architektur, etc. Diese Praktika sind in der Regel Voraussetzung, um den betreffenden Beruf praktizieren zu dürfen und sind meist eindeutig definiert sowie streng reguliert. Allerdings können Fälle von Ausbeutung der Praktikanten auftreten, die auf mangelhafte Anwendung bestehender Vorschriften zurückzuführen sind.
- **Transnationale Praktika:** In allen Mitgliedstaaten gibt es Hinweise auf wachsende Beliebtheit von transnationaler Mobilität im beruflichen Kontext. EU-Mobilitätsprogramme, insbesondere das Leonardo da Vinci sowie das Erasmus-Programm, haben zu einem Anstieg der transnationalen Praktika beigetragen. Eine wachsende Zahl von Ländern fördert aktiv Praktika im Ausland, sei es durch EU- oder andere internationale Mobilitätsprogramme für junge Menschen, wie etwa AIESEC und IAESTE, sowie durch nationale Initiativen.

Branchen, in denen Praktika besonders häufig sind

Art, Bereich und Profil der Branchen, in denen Praktika besonders häufig vorkommen, unterscheiden sich zu einem gewissen Grad nach Art des Praktikums. In bestimmten Bereichen sind Praktika obligatorischer Teil der beruflichen Ausbildung (siehe vorheriger Abschnitt). Darüber hinaus gibt es eine Reihe von Branchen, in denen die Zahl der Praktika

³ J. Brennan, K. Patel et W. Tang (2009). Diversity in the Student Learning Experience and Time devoted to Study: A Comparative Analysis of the UK and European Evidence, rapport destiné au HEFCE (Higher Education Funding Council for England) réalisé par le Centre for Higher Education Research and Information, The Open University, avril

zunimmt. Dazu zählen die Kreativwirtschaft, Medien / Journalismus, dritter Sektor/NGOs, Gast- und Hotelwirtschaft, Betriebswirtschaft und Finanzdienstleistungen. Einige dieser Branchen, wie etwa die Kreativwirtschaft, Medien/Journalismus sowie dritter Sektor / NGOs werden mit fragwürdigen Arbeitgeberpraktiken in Verbindung gebracht. Zu den missbräuchlichen Praktiken zählen geringe und schlechte Lerninhalte, schlechte Arbeitsbedingungen, unzureichende Bezahlung, Beschäftigung von Praktikanten als Ersatz für reguläre Mitarbeiter, wiederholtes Verlängern von Praktikantenverträgen ohne das Angebot einer Festanstellung etc.

Große Unterschiede in den Praktikumsbedingungen

Die Praktikantenrechte und Praktikumsbedingungen unterscheiden sich erheblich; sowohl zwischen den verschiedenen Arten von Praktika als auch zwischen den Mitgliedstaaten. Zum Beispiel haben Praktika, die in ein Curriculum eingebettet sind, oder solche die obligatorische Voraussetzung zur Ausübung eines bestimmten Berufes sind, wesentlich klarer definierte Konditionen als Praktika auf dem offenen Markt. Die Frage der Praktikantenrechte und Praktikumsbedingungen ist in der gesamten EU zunehmend zum Inhalt einer lebhaften politischen Debatte geworden. In Folge dieser Debatte wurden oder werden mittelfristig in einer Reihe von Mitgliedstaaten gesetzliche/regulatorische Maßnahmen ergriffen und/oder Qualitätsrahmen eingeführt, die das Ziel verfolgen, die Situation der Praktikanten zu verbessern.

Qualitätssicherung als zunehmender Schwerpunkt

Die vorliegende Studie hat gezeigt, dass es in einer Reihe von Mitgliedstaaten sowie bei bestimmten Arten von Praktika eine weit verbreitete Besorgnis um Qualitätsmängel gibt. **Eine Reihe von Ländern hat sich aktiv darum bemüht, diese Qualität durch die Stärkung von Qualitätssicherungsmechanismen zu verbessern.** Zu den ergriffenen Maßnahmen zählen **Rechtsvorschriften mit Praktikumsbezug** (z.B. das 'Cherption-Gesetz' in Frankreich aus dem Jahr 2011) sowie spezifische **Qualitätsrahmen**, die entweder von öffentlichen Einrichtungen (z.B. Bildungseinrichtungen, Arbeitsverwaltungen etc.) oder von den Sozialpartnern entwickelt wurden. Darüber hinaus wurden Qualitätsstandards auf freiwilliger Basis von Arbeitgeber- und Berufsverbänden und sogar Regierungen (*Common Best Practice Code for High Quality Internships* in GB, 2011) gefördert. Qualitätssicherungsstandards können sowohl obligatorisch als auch freiwillig sein.

Effektivität von Praktika

In der gesamten EU gibt es ein **wachsendes Bewusstsein für die Vorteile von Praktika im Hinblick auf die Erleichterung des Übergangs von der Ausbildung in den Beruf.** Hinsichtlich der Effektivität von Praktika ist die vorliegende Evaluationsliteratur jedoch uneinheitlich und eher lückenhaft. Die vorliegende Literatur lässt den Schluss zu, dass die **effektivsten Praktika diejenigen sind, die während der Bildungsphase durchgeführt werden.** Darüber hinaus gibt es Beispiele für effektive Praktika im Rahmen von gut strukturierten Arbeitsmarktmaßnahmen. Die wichtigsten Erfolgsfaktoren dieser Praktika scheinen folgende zu sein: i) ihre starken Bindungen an den Arbeitsmarkt; ii) ein gut strukturierter Ansatz; iii) aktives Engagement der Beteiligten, die Arbeitgeber eingeschlossen; iv) effektive Mechanismen der Qualitätssicherung.

Empfehlungen

Diese Studie hat eine Reihe von Bereichen aufgezeigt, die mit dem Thema Praktikum in Verbindung stehen und in denen weitere Maßnahmen erforderlich sind, entweder auf EU- und/oder auf nationaler Ebene.

- Es besteht die **Notwendigkeit einer klaren EU-weiten Definition von Praktika**. Angesichts der Vielzahl von Praktikumsarten sollte diese Definition Hauptziele und Funktionen von Praktika beinhalten, jedoch Spielraum lassen für die Spezifika der unterschiedlichen Ausprägungen.
- Es sollte **mehr Unterstützung dafür geben, Praktika in Studien- und Ausbildungscurricula zu integrieren**, da Praktika, immer wenn möglich, während der Ausbildungsphase und nicht nach dem Abschluss stattfinden sollten.
- Eine konzertierte Anstrengung auf EU- sowie auf nationaler Ebene soll das **Angebot von Praktikumsplätzen erhöhen**, insbesondere in Unternehmen kleiner und mittlerer Größe.
- Es besteht ein **Bedarf für einen Qualitätsrahmen für Praktika**, der klare und praktische Leitlinien für qualitativ hochwertige Praktika bietet.
- Es besteht **Bedarf nach einer gewissen finanzieller Unterstützung von Praktikanten**, insbesondere für diejenigen aus sozial benachteiligten Schichten.
- Es sollten Schritte unternommen werden, um **offene und transparente Einstellungsverfahren für Praktika zu fördern**.
- Es besteht ein Bedarf nach **mehr aussagekräftigem Datenmaterial über Praktika sowie Evaluationen aller Praktikurstypen sowohl auf EU- als auch auf nationaler Ebene**. Dies umfasst quantitative und qualitative Daten, die für die Bewertung von Quantität, Qualität, Bedeutung und Effektivität der Praktika genutzt werden können.

1. Introduction

This report has been prepared by the Institute for Employment Studies (IES), the Istituto per la Ricerca Sociale (IRS) and the Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung (BIBB) for DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (DG EMPL) as part of an EU-wide study aimed at providing a comprehensive and comparative overview of traineeship arrangements across Member States (MS). This report summarises findings from 27 national reports and 10 case studies compiled by an EU-wide network of regional and national experts. The 27 National Reports can be found in Annex I and the associated 10 case studies in Annex II. This study is complementary to that on the apprenticeship supply in Member States, also commissioned by DG EMPL.

The Final Synthesis Report is structured as follows: the next section presents the relevant EU-level policy context, including the Youth Opportunities Initiative. Chapter **3** provides an overview of national policies focusing on the extent to which traineeships form part of youth-related policies, with particular emphasis on facilitating youth transitions into the labour market. Chapter **4** presents traineeship-related legislative and regulatory frameworks and definitions. Chapter **5** focuses on the availability of and access to various forms of traineeships; the sectors and types of organisations where traineeships are prevalent; and the traineeship-related financing systems across the EU. Chapter **6** provides an overview of prevailing practice and content of various forms of traineeships, including questionable employer practices. Chapter **7** outlines the trainee's terms and conditions associated with various forms of traineeships, while Chapter **8** provides information about quality assurance policies, initiatives and procedures. Chapter **9** discusses the traineeship-related drawbacks and benefits for trainees, employers, educational institutions and other relevant parties as well as the effectiveness and impact of various forms of traineeships in helping young people's transition into the labour market. Finally, the last Chapter summarises the study's main findings, conclusions and recommendations.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study was to provide an overview of traineeship arrangements in all 27 MS and to collect the most up-to-date information about different forms of traineeships at both European and national levels. Traineeships are seen as an effective mechanism which allows young people to familiarise themselves with the world of work and thus facilitates their transition from education (or a period of inactivity or unemployment) to employment. However, there have also been growing concerns about the quality of traineeships and their effectiveness as a mechanism for easing the transition into the labour market. Therefore, the study gathered detailed information about traineeships in the following key areas of interest:

- *The recent development of traineeships across Europe in terms of availability and access.* The aim was to provide a comprehensive overview of the types of traineeships which have become more popular with trainees and/or are more widely used by employers in different MS; the sectors where traineeships are expanding; and the professions for which traineeships are more prevalent. Additionally, data have been gathered on issues relating to the transparent, equitable and fair access to quality traineeships.
- *The role of traineeships in the policy debate across MS, especially in relation to youth-related education, training and employment policies.* The aim here was to both explore and develop a better understanding of the importance of traineeships in national policy contexts as well as examine the extent to which national policy makers place priority on traineeships in order to help school-to-work transitions and/or support the labour market entry of unemployed young people. The study also examined the extent to which traineeships were explicitly promoted as distinct policy interventions in the form of

traineeship programmes, or were embedded in other youth-related education, training and employment policies with broader objectives.

- *The legislative/regulatory frameworks governing traineeships across all 27 MS.* Legislative frameworks are highly diverse across Europe, with the terms 'trainee' and 'traineeship' referring respectively to different types of status (student, worker, volunteer, etc.) and/or various aims, objectives and functions of such placements (e.g. school-to-work transition, work experience, placement linked to study curricula, etc.). In view of this diversity, the study aimed at providing an EU-wide comprehensive overview of legislative/regulatory frameworks and related definitions. Crucially, it also sought to clarify the distinction between apprenticeships and traineeships.
- *Existing quality frameworks for traineeships.* When the study was commissioned, little information was available on whether and how quality frameworks have been developed across MS as well as the extent to which such frameworks apply to specific types of traineeships. Indeed, one key aim of this study was to map out existing quality frameworks and identify the level of regulation which these offer to different types of traineeships. A critical element in this exercise was to explore the potential impact of regulation and/or quality frameworks on the supply and quality of traineeships.
- *Practices and content of traineeships.* Additionally, the study looked into the practices and content of various forms of traineeships with the aim of providing a clear picture of 'what is actually happening on the ground'. The way the various types of traineeships are implemented in practice can vary remarkably between MS. In some cases, traineeship arrangements do not comply with existing regulatory and/or quality frameworks, which usually stipulate trainee's terms and conditions. Indeed, in the face of growing concern and allegations about trainee exploitation, the study also investigated the extent to which there are questionable employer practices in relation to different types of traineeships, sectors and professions.
- *Overall assessment and impact of traineeships.* Finally, the study looked at the quality of traineeships and their effectiveness and impact in terms of improving young people's employability by allowing them to gain work-related experience; enabling them to acquire technical and general skills deemed relevant to employer requirements; enhancing their employability and thus contributing to better employment outcomes; etc. In addition to benefits for trainees, the study also identified traineeship-related advantages for employers and other involved stakeholders (e.g. educational institutions).

1.2 Methodology

The study used a combination of methods to ensure a research approach which was both comprehensive and multi-faceted. In particular, the methodological approach combined a range of qualitative methodologies which included stakeholder interviews, a quasi-systematic literature review, a comparative mapping exercise and case studies. It also collected numerical/quantitative traineeship-related information from all countries with a view to estimating the magnitude of the phenomenon in terms of coverage and take-up of traineeships.

This multi-pronged approach was designed to meet the particular challenges which characterised this study, such as:

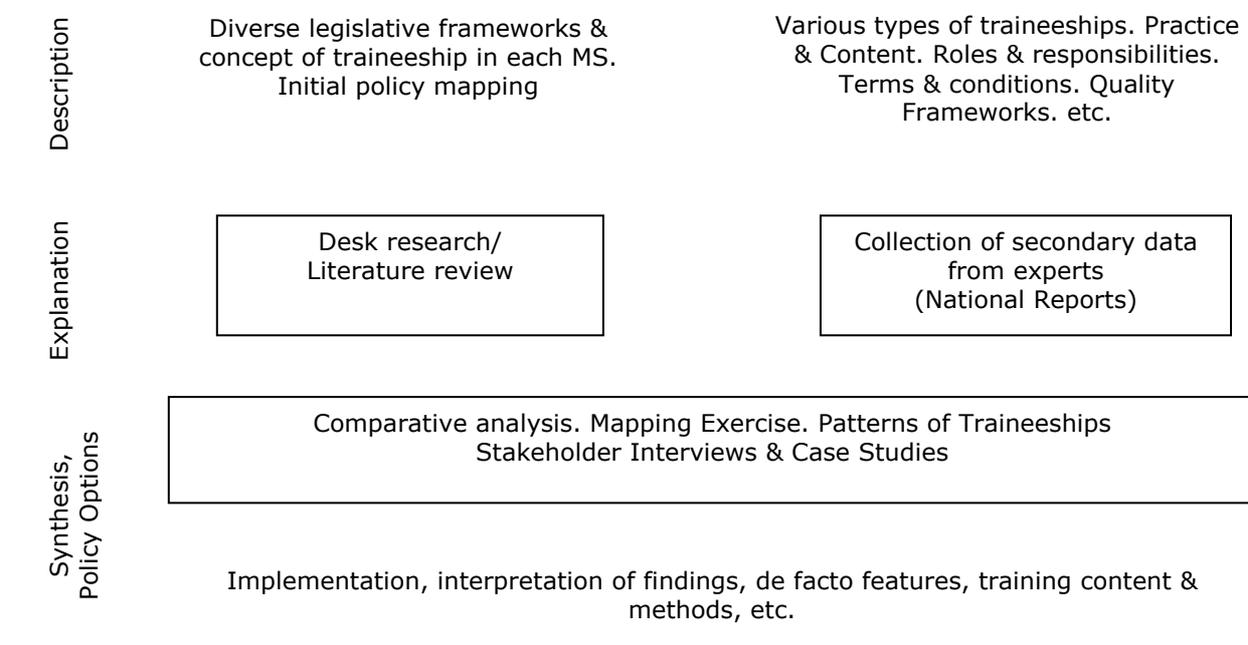
1. *diversity of institutional, cultural and legal contexts* both across and within countries;
2. *different forms of traineeships*: traineeships and other work-based learning placements are loose concepts across educational levels. Even though all traineeship arrangements share *learning in a work environment* as their key distinctive feature, this may mean anything from just getting a first impression of work to actively supporting the development of work-related competences;
3. *varying degrees of formalisation*: the type of functions and learning objectives of traineeship arrangements are accompanied by varying degrees of formalisation. Crucially, traineeship arrangements are, in many instances, characterised by a low degree of formalisation, notably traineeships in the open market;
4. *multiple perspectives*: different stakeholders, e.g. trainees, employers, staff, educational institutions and policy makers, hold different views about the purpose and practice of traineeships.

To address this complexity in the most effective way, the study adopted a conceptually inter-related methodological approach comprising three main strands:

- Literature review aimed at defining the concept of trainee and traineeship(s); identifying the various types of traineeships; and providing a thorough account of traineeship-related policies;
- Collection and analysis of secondary data on traineeships in each Member State, including legislative frameworks and quality assurance mechanisms; and
- Stakeholder interviews at EU and national levels combined with 10 in-depth case studies in selected countries.

The Figure below outlines this methodological approach.

Figure 1.1: Methodological Approach



1.2.1 Literature Review and Defining the Concept of Traineeship

The aim of the literature review was to provide a thorough account of the policy context and legal framework which applies to traineeship arrangements in the various MS. The literature review collected and analysed systematically traineeship-related information based on

official documents, including primary legislation and regulations as well as policy documents and statements; other key published material (e.g. books; academic journals; research articles, studies and reports; etc.); 'grey' literature (e.g. unpublished research reports; material from websites, including websites which focus specifically on traineeships; etc.); etc.

The review provided an extensive overview at EU level of the different systems and practices of traineeships across MS in terms of: (i) the concept of 'traineeship' and 'trainee'; (ii) the legislative/regulatory frameworks which apply to traineeship arrangements across MS, including laws and regulations defining the trainee's terms and conditions; (iii) national/regional policies and programmes; (iv) practice, content and implementation of various forms of traineeships; (v) distribution of roles and responsibilities; (iv) existing quality assurance mechanisms; etc.

On the basis of the literature review, the study examined the existing wide-ranging variety of traineeships with the aim of narrowing down the focus of the research and grouping types of traineeships into meaningful clusters. This scoping analysis allowed the research team in collaboration with the Commission to identify five types of traineeships as the main focus of the study (see Box below).

Types of Traineeships examined

- **Traineeships which form optional or compulsory part of academic and/or vocational curricula** (i.e. internships during education)
- **Traineeships in the open market** which, after completion of studies, provide graduates with on-the-job experience before they find stable employment
- **Traineeships as part of active labour market policies (ALMPs)** for unemployed (as well as low-skilled or unskilled) young people with the explicit aim to facilitate their labour market transition
- **Traineeships which form part of mandatory professional training**, e.g. law, medicine, teaching, architecture, accounting, etc.
- **Transnational traineeships.**

Apprenticeships which are a particular scheme of formally combining the world of education with that of work are outside the scope of this study. Relevant comparative information can be found in the report *Apprenticeship Supply in Member States*, which complements our findings.

1.2.2 Collection and Analysis of Traineeship-related Information in 27 Member States

The aim of this strand of research was to verify and expand the initial findings which emerged from the desk research and to gather reliable and up-to-date information in each MS. To ensure the collection of comparable data on traineeship-related legislation, policy, practice and content across the EU a standardised template was used in all MS.

This part of the study explored the following areas:

- The extent to which traineeships are compulsory or optional part of academic and/or vocational training pathways; whether traineeships are widespread amongst young people, including graduates; the trainee's terms and conditions, including remuneration, associated with various forms of traineeships;

- Sectors in which traineeships are prevalent and which actively pursue the recruitment of trainees; and sectors which have a reputation for questionable employer practices as regards traineeships;
- Monitoring and implementation of legislative/regulatory frameworks (e.g. legislation, case law, governance and quality issues, etc.) as well as the role of different actors in the funding, provision and regulation of traineeships (e.g. employers, trainees, educational institutions, public authorities, trade unions, etc.);
- Current debates and emerging issues around traineeships, including the plurality of views among government, social partners, employers, educational institutions, trainees, trainee associations and platforms, youth organisations, student unions, media, etc.;
- Existing national data or published research on traineeships in each MS, as well as gaps in the available data;
- Quality aspects of traineeships, including prevailing practices, learning content, skills development, trainee's terms and conditions, etc. Linked to this aspect of research was the identification and mapping out of quality assurance initiatives across the EU;
- The relative importance accorded to traineeships over time and the impact of the Great Recession on their supply, quality and ease of access;
- Equity of access and equality aspects of traineeships in terms of take-up by gender, ethnicity, disability, etc.;
- Financing of traineeships, including self-financing and EU funding, notably ESF funding. A related research topic here was the need to explore the impact of unpaid traineeships on a young person's ability to access placements and/or lead an independent life, especially in the absence of own or family financial resources;
- Benefits, drawbacks, effectiveness and impact of traineeships, especially in relation to facilitating young people's entry into the labour market;
- On-going policy or research developments.

1.2.3 Stakeholder Interviews and Case Studies

One key research activity of this study involved interviews with key stakeholders at both EU and national/regional levels. Depending on the type of traineeship, such stakeholders included national and/or regional public authorities (including Ministries at national level) responsible for education and training and/or employment policies; trade unions and employer representative bodies as well as representatives of NGOs; educational institutions, including training agencies and providers, colleges and universities, etc.; public employment services (PES); companies involved in traineeship programmes, either formally or informally; etc. Crucially, this part of the study also sought to elicit the views of the trainees themselves through national student unions, youth organisations, youth sectors of trade unions, National Youth Councils, trainee-related associations such as Intern Aware⁴, etc.

In total, over 40 stakeholder interviews at both EU and national levels were conducted. These interviews focused on the role of traineeships in facilitating school-to-work transitions as part of EU and/or national policies; the existence of traineeship-related legislation and/or case law; definitions about traineeships and trainees, including trainee status vis-à-vis that of an apprentice, volunteer, and/or employee; main target groups; current policies and programmes; sectors and professions where traineeships are prevalent; financing; quality assurance mechanisms; content and practice of traineeships; recruitment and equity of access; trainees' terms and conditions; public perceptions and debates about traineeships; key issues in designing and delivering traineeship schemes, including quality aspects; benefits, drawbacks and effectiveness of traineeships; and examples of good practice.

⁴ <http://www.internaware.org/>

A number of EU-level stakeholders representing different perspectives were interviewed, including representatives of the European Commission (DG EMPL, DG EAC); the European Parliament⁵; the Committee of Regions⁶ (CoR); the European Economic and Social Committee⁷ (EESC); ETUC⁸; BUSINESSEUROPE⁹; UEAPME¹⁰; the European Youth Forum (YFJ)¹¹; Eurochambres¹²; Cedefop¹³; European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions¹⁴; etc.

A number of stakeholder interviews at national level were conducted in selected MS which stood out for the way they approached the issue of traineeships. These were: Austria, the Czech Republic, Ireland, the Netherlands, Portugal and Romania. In each of these MS four to six stakeholder interviews were conducted.

Following the stakeholder interviews, ten case studies were carried out. These aimed at capturing and exploring the diversity of both types of traineeships and institutional frameworks. Case studies were conducted in the following MS: Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Spain, and the UK. They were selected on the basis of specific criteria to ensure a wide range of countries and type of traineeships.

⁵ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/>

⁶ <http://www.cor.europa.eu/>

⁷ <http://www.eesc.europa.eu/>

⁸ <http://www.etuc.org/>

⁹ <http://www.businessseurope.eu/>

¹⁰ <http://www.ueapme.com/>

¹¹ <http://www.youthforum.org/>

¹² <http://www.eurochambres.be/>

¹³ <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/>

¹⁴ <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/>

2. Policy Context

The Great Recession of the late 2000s has hit young people all over the EU disproportionately hard, though with clear variations between MS. That said, this severe downturn rather exacerbated existing trends as regards youth employment due to long-standing (and as yet unresolved) structural characteristics of European youth labour markets. One such characteristic is that, in a large number of MS, the school-to-work transition has become increasingly longer, more unstable, and uncertain. Moreover, young people's skills and qualifications can no longer guarantee their smooth and speedy entry into the labour market.

It is widely accepted that traineeships (alongside other schemes which combine work experience and study, notably apprenticeships) can play a critical role in helping young people make a smoother transition from school to work, i.e. access their first job.¹⁵ Indeed, the growing policy interest in traineeships draws on an expanding body of empirical evidence which suggests that such schemes can significantly improve youth employability, e.g. by enhancing young people's labour market attachment, contributing to their acquisition of work-related skills and experience deemed relevant to employer requirements, etc. For example, as a 2009 EU Peer Review on professional traineeships for young adults highlighted, '*measures combining work experience with formal, or indeed informal, training seem to be effective in ensuring a smooth transition into the labour market, with countries such as Portugal, France and the Netherlands reporting high success rates of around 70 per cent*'.¹⁶

In a similar vein, the *2011 Joint Employment Report* draws attention to traineeships (called 'pre-work placements') which are particularly recommended for young people because they provide a clear link with and a pathway to the labour market. Indeed, as the report states, lack of tailor-made pathways combining effective careers advice and guidance, opportunities for up-skilling, quality apprenticeships and pre-work placements have an adverse effect on smooth school-to-work transitions.¹⁷ The *2011 EMCO Contribution to the Hungarian Presidency Conference on Youth Participation in the Labour Market* also stresses the need to move away from the youth transition model 'study first, then work' and adopt more efficient ones which combine study and work, through a wider use of apprenticeships and other work experience schemes, including traineeships.¹⁸

Because of the proven benefits of schemes which combine work and study and allow young people to acquire a first work experience, these have become more prominent in EU's employment and youth policies in recent years. Indeed, as shown later in this section, the European Commission has been actively seeking to promote work-based learning through work placements, including high-quality traineeships (and the more traditional

¹⁵ Scarpetta, S., A. Sonnet and Manfredi, T., (2010). 'Rising Youth Unemployment During The Crisis: How to Prevent Negative Long-term Consequences on a Generation?', *OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers*, No. 106, OECD Publishing; Neumark, D., (2009). *Alternative Labour Market Policies to Increase Economic Self-sufficiency: Mandating Higher Wages, Subsidizing Employment, and Increasing Productivity*, NBER Working Paper Series No. 14807, Cambridge

¹⁶ http://www.mutual-learning-employment.net/index.php?mact=PeerReviews,cntnt01,detail,0&cntnt01options=20&cntnt01orderby=start_date%20DESC&cntnt01returnid=59&cntnt01item_id=74&cntnt01returnid=59

¹⁷ European Commission, (2011). *Draft Joint Employment Report 2011*, COM(2011) 11 final, Brussels, 12.1.2011, http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/articles/eu_economic_situation/pdf/2011/com2011_11_annex3_en.pdf

¹⁸ Employment Committee, (2011). *Supporting Transition from Education to Work*, EMCO *Contribution to the Hungarian Presidency Conference on Youth Participation in the Labour Market*, EMCO/09/220211/EN-final, April, www.eu2011.hu/.../EMCO_contribution_HU_conference_on_youth

apprenticeships), as an effective tool for integrating young people gradually into the labour market.¹⁹

The value of traineeships in facilitating school-to-work transitions notwithstanding, there has also been growing concern about their quality, learning content, practices, working conditions, the trainee's terms and conditions, etc. For example, in June 2010, the European Parliament published an own-initiative report *Promoting Youth Access to the Labour Market, Strengthening Trainee, Internship and Apprenticeship Status*, which specifically looked at quality-related issues of traineeships (and apprenticeships) across the EU, while recognising the useful role which such work placements can play in enhancing a young person's employability.²⁰ In a similar vein, in the *2010 European Social Partners' Framework Agreement on Inclusive Labour Markets* the promotion of 'more and better' traineeship contracts was identified as one of the key actions which social partners would actively pursue in an attempt to enhance youth employability.²¹

In addition, there is growing concern (and anecdotal evidence) of questionable practices by employers who may use trainees as a source of cheap or even free labour in the place of regular staff. For example, in 2009 the UK National Council for Work Experience has suggested that a growing number of graduates feel 'obliged' to work for free.²² The UK's TUC has begun a *Rights for Interns* campaign in response to these concerns.²³ A similar campaign has been launched by CGIL, the largest trade union in Italy, under the suggestive title *Giovani Non Più Disposti a Tutto*.²⁴

Trainee-related associations and platforms such as *Génération Précaire*²⁵ in France, *Generation Praktikum*²⁶ in Austria, *Interns Anonymous*²⁷ in the UK, *La Repubblica Degli Stagisti*²⁸ in Italy, etc. have expressed serious concerns that traineeships may be used as a source of cheap or free labour by employers. Other common complaints are that, in many cases, traineeships fail to provide the first step towards decent and stable work; instead, they can quite often trap young people in a vicious cycle of precarious employment and insecurity.

Similarly, the Youth sectors of the Spanish trade unions have criticised the abuse of traineeships, especially *becas no convenidas*, by employers. Specifically, because they have no legal foundation and are not subject to basis employment protection legislation, many businesses are using them in order to eschew the social security and health/medical insurance coverage normally due to young trainees.²⁹ Indeed, this has also been borne out by the OECD according to which employers are increasingly using these *becas* not only as a way of avoiding social security contributions, but also crucially as a way of filling regular job vacancies.³⁰ These concerns are of particular significance because of the sheer estimated numbers of young people who undertake traineeships across the EU. For example,

¹⁹ European Employment Observatory/EEO, (2010). *European Employment Observatory Review: Youth Employment Measures*

²⁰ European Parliament, (2010). *Promoting Youth Access to the Labour Market, Strengthening Trainee, Internship and Apprenticeship Status*, Rapporteur Mme Emilie Turunen MEP, EP 2009/2221(INI), 14.6.2010, <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=REPORT&reference=A7-2010-0197&language=EN>

²¹ ETUC/CES, Business Europe, UEAPME & CEEP, (2010). *Framework Agreement on Inclusive Labour Markets*, 25.3.2010, http://www.etuc.org/IMG/pdf_20100325155413125.pdf

²² <http://www.work-experience.org/>

²³ www.rightsforinterns.org.uk/

²⁴ <http://www.nonpiu.it/>

²⁵ <http://www.generation-precaire.org/>

²⁶ www.generationpraktikum.com

²⁷ <http://internsanonymous.co.uk/>

²⁸ <http://www.repubblicadeglistagisti.it/>

²⁹ European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions/Eurofound, (2011a). *Helping Young Workers during the Crisis: Contributions by Social Partners and Public Authorities*, April, <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/docs/eiro/tn1101019s/tn1101019s.pdf>

³⁰ OECD, (2007). *Jobs for Youth - Spain*, April, <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/36/12/38457362.pdf>

according to estimates in France and Germany alone there are at least 1.5 million trainees each year.³¹

In a similar vein, the YFJ, recognising that traineeships can play a key role in the transition from education to the labour market, also warns that their learning dimension should not be used as an excuse for unpaid work. At the same time, it points out that in many countries the learning dimension of traineeships has been decreasing, with many trainees being assigned tasks and activities which do not contribute to their professional development and/or labour market integration.³²

Moreover, it is not clear the extent to which such schemes help *all* young people get a firm foothold in the labour market and are a first stepping stone towards securing decent and stable work.³³ Indeed, as has been argued, for those young people who are characterised as 'poorly integrated new entrants', such schemes may trap them in an endless series of work placements and temporary contracts, interspersed with short but recurring periods of unemployment.³⁴ For example, in Italy most graduates undertake one (or even a series of) traineeships in order to gain practical, work-related experience while looking for a job. This is a quite wide-spread phenomenon and there is growing concern about questionable employer practices and the potential for trainee abuse and exploitation. Moreover, it has arguably led to a dual youth labour market, with a large proportion of young people being caught in an endless series of unpaid or low paid traineeships and precarious jobs.

It is worth mentioning here that the first EU-wide survey which the YFJ conducted in Spring 2011 in order to explore the traineeship-related experience, including terms and conditions of trainees, has provided valuable comparative insights into their current situation and concerns.³⁵ Although the survey results cannot be considered as representative of the EU's entire trainee population, they still paint an interesting picture as regards the profile, situation, experience, motivation, views and terms and conditions of trainees.³⁶ The survey results point to an expansion of traineeships, both those linked to (academic or vocational) education and in the open market, including traineeships after graduation. It seems that traineeships are increasingly seen by employers as a prerequisite for labour market entry. However, the poor terms and conditions associated with some traineeships, including in many cases no or insufficient trainee compensation, means that the financial dependency of young people on their families continues well into their adult life and delays the time when they can start living a fully independent life. Moreover, this need to rely on family support raises serious issues about fairness and equity of access, since young people from disadvantaged backgrounds may not be able to do so. Consequently, they risk excluding themselves from the opportunity to take up a traineeship which may enhance their employability and/or enable to access certain professions.

³¹ European Parliament Committee on Petitions, (2011). *Notice to Members, Petition 1452/2008 by Ms Anne-Charlotte Bailly (German), on behalf of Generation P, on Fair Internship and Proper Access of the Young People to the European Labour Market*

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/peti/cm/862/862677/862677en.pdf

³² European Youth Forum/YFJ, (2009). *Opinion Paper on Internships*, adopted by the Council of Members/Extraordinary General Assembly, Brussels, 8-9 May 2009,

http://www.youthforum.org/fr/system/files/yfj_public/strategic_priorities/en/0076-09_FINAL.pdf

³³ European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions/Eurofound, (2011b). *Foundation Findings: Youth and Work*,

<http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/pubdocs/2011/40/en/1/EF1140EN.pdf>

³⁴ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/OECD, (2009a). *Helping Youth to Get a Firm Foothold in the Labour Market (Theme 3)*, OECD Labour and Employment Ministerial Meeting on Tackling the Jobs Crisis - The Labour Market and Social Policy Response, Paris, 28-29 September, <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/54/50/43766254.pdf>; European Youth Forum, (2009). *Op.Cit.*; European Parliament, (2010). *Op.Cit.*; European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions/Eurofound, (2011a)., *Op.Cit.*

³⁵ European Youth Forum, (2011). *Interns Revealed - A Survey on Internship Quality in Europe*, September, http://issuu.com/yomag/docs/yfj_internsrevealed_web

³⁶ Mascherini, M., (2011). *Commentary of the Survey Interns Revealed Results*, Presentation at the joint round-table organised at the European Parliament with MEP Emilie Turunen on 20 September 2011

The European Commission has long recognised both the significant challenges faced by young people in relation to their school-to-work transition and the important role which traineeships can play in that process, as well as the need to safeguard their quality. Indeed, traineeship-related quality issues have been the subject of close examination and proposed action by the Commission for some time. For example, in 2007 the Commission produced a Communication proposing a European Quality Charter on Traineeships.³⁷ The promotion of quality traineeships within education and training and/or employment schemes as an effective way of increasing young people's chances in the labour market was also one of the actions foreseen under 'Employment and Entrepreneurship' in the *Renewed Social Agenda*, adopted in July 2008.³⁸

In November 2009, the EU Council of Youth Ministers adopted, on the basis of the Commission's Communication *An EU Strategy for Youth – Investing and Empowering* a Resolution on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field for the next decade.³⁹ This Resolution also stressed, *inter alia*, the need to promote quality traineeships and apprenticeships in order to facilitate the entry of young people to, and progress within, the labour market.⁴⁰

Similarly, one of the key actions foreseen by the *Youth on the Move Initiative*, which is one of the seven flagship initiatives of Europe 2020 launched in 2010 and is aimed at young people, has been the increase of high quality traineeships (and apprenticeships) in order to ensure their smooth and speedy labour market entry. To this end, the European Commission was asked to present a proposal for a European Quality Framework for Traineeships.⁴¹ Through such a framework it is hoped that certain quality standards will be promoted and applied in relation to traineeships.

The **Youth on the Move Initiative** also seeks to promote youth mobility, both for learning and work purposes by building on the success of a number of EU programmes, notably the Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci (LdV) programmes. For the purposes of this study it is important to note that since 1995, the LdV Programme has supported more than 600,000 training placements abroad for young people. In particular, the programme supports mobility for apprentices and students in initial vocational education and training as well as people on the labour market with a vocational or an academic degree, employed or not.

Since 2007, Erasmus has also offered students the opportunity to go abroad for placements in businesses or other organisations (i.e. *Erasmus Student Mobility for Placements*).⁴² The main objectives of Erasmus student placements include the following: (i) to help students become familiar and adapt to the requirements of the EU-wide labour market; (ii) to enable students to develop specific skills including language skills and improve inter-cultural understanding in the context of acquiring work experience; (iii) to promote cooperation between HEIs and enterprises; and (iv) to contribute to the development of a pool of well-qualified, open-minded and internationally experienced young people as future

³⁷ European Commission, (2007). *Promoting Young People's Full Participation in Education, Employment and Society*, COM(2007) 498 final, Brussels, 5.9.2007, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2007/com2007_0498en01.pdf

³⁸ European Commission, (2008). *Renewed Social Agenda: Opportunities, Access and Solidarity in 21st Century Europe*, COM(2008), 412 final, Brussels, 2.7.2008, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2008:0412:FIN:EN:PDF>

³⁹ European Commission, (2009a). *An EU Strategy for Youth – Investing and Empowering – A Renewed Open Method of Coordination to Address Youth Challenges and Opportunities*, COM(2009) 200 final, Brussels, 27.4.2009, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2009:0200:FIN:EN:PDF>

⁴⁰ The Council of the European Union, (2009). *Council Resolution of 27 November 2009 on a Renewed Framework for European Cooperation in the Youth Field (2010-2018)*, http://ec.europa.eu/youth/pdf/doc1648_en.pdf

⁴¹ European Commission, (2010). *Youth on the Move: An Initiative to unleash the Potential of Young People to achieve smart, sustainable and inclusive Growth in the European Union*, COM(2010) 477 final, Brussels, 15.9.2010, http://ec.europa.eu/education/yom/com_en.pdf

⁴² http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc894_en.htm

professionals.⁴³ Although both LdV and Erasmus company placements have become increasingly popular in recent years, some issues concerning existing legal and administrative obstacles to transnational placements remain. These are expected to be addressed by the forthcoming Commission's proposal for a traineeship-related framework.

The need for a European Quality Framework (or Charter) for Traineeships has also been recognised by a number of other EU institutions and EU-Level stakeholders, e.g. European Parliament⁴⁴, ETUC, YFJ⁴⁵, etc. The latter has long advocated that European institutions should develop and monitor a European Quality Framework for basic quality requirements for traineeships.⁴⁶

More recently, an April 2011 European Parliament Report, although it emphasises that traineeships are an appropriate vehicle in helping young people with their labour market entry and career choice, also calls on the Commission to put forward a legally-binding European quality framework for traineeships covering all forms of education and training. According to the Report, such a framework is urgently needed in order to prevent trainees from being exploited, and should be accompanied by an action plan and timetable including an outline of how this quality framework would be implemented.⁴⁷ It is worth noting here that the YFJ (with support from the European Parliament and ETUC) has embarked upon an EU-wide campaign to develop a Quality Charter for Traineeships (and Apprenticeships).

More recently, the **Youth Opportunities Initiative**, adopted on 20th December 2011, commits the Commission to present in 2012 a quality framework supporting the provision and take-up of high quality traineeships.⁴⁸ Moreover, in order to raise awareness of the availability of traineeships and promote the transparency of the terms and conditions associated with them across the EU, the Commission will present an online EU Panorama with country-specific information (collected as part of this study).

In a similar vein, and recognising the value of learning mobility, the Commission will also substantially strengthen its support for transnational traineeships (in the form of placements in enterprises) by mobilising funds for and targeting at least 130,000 placements in 2012 under the Erasmus and LdV programmes.⁴⁹ At the same time, the Commission will launch in early 2012 a €1.5m EU-wide awareness raising campaign among businesses in order to both alert them to the availability, value and benefits of these two major EU mobility programmes and encourage them to take on European trainees.

It is also worth noting that, in supporting young people's school-to-work transitions, the Initiative calls on social partners, where appropriate with the help of the relevant national authorities, to explore how they can best promote 'more and better traineeship (and apprenticeship) contracts' which, as mentioned above, is one of the key actions foreseen under the *2010 European Social Partners' Framework Agreement on Inclusive Labour Markets*.⁵⁰

⁴³ http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/placement_en.htm

⁴⁴ European Parliament, (2010). *Op.Cit.*

⁴⁵ European Youth Forum, (2010). *European Youth Forum's Contribution - Hearing on 'Promoting Youth Access to the Labour Market, Strengthening Trainee, Internship and Apprenticeship Status'*, 17.3.2010, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/empl/dv/bpeyf_/bpeyf_en.pdf

⁴⁶ European Youth Forum, (2009). *Op.Cit.*

⁴⁷ European Parliament's Committee on Culture and Education, (2011). *Report on Youth on the Move: - A Framework for Improving Europe's Education and Training Systems*, (2010/2307(INI)), Rapporteur: M Zver, A7-0169/2011, 20.4.2011,

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+REPORT+A7-2011-0169+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>

⁴⁸ European Commission, (2011). *Youth Opportunities Initiative*, COM(2011) 933, Brussels, 20.12.2011,

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0933:FIN:EN:PDF>

⁴⁹ The Erasmus student mobility for placements enables students at HEIs to spend a placement (traineeship) period between 3 months and 12 months in an enterprise or organisation in another participating country, http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc894_en.htm

⁵⁰ ETUC/CES, Business Europe, UEAPME & CEEP, (2010). *Op.Cit.*

Finally, the Commission will also support greater use of European funding sources, notably the European Social Fund (ESF) for youth employment measures, including traineeships. This is of particular importance since by the end of 2011 €30 billion remained uncommitted to concrete actions in MS. As a result, the Commission will, *inter alia*, support the better and speedier ESF implementation in promoting traineeships (and apprenticeships). It is worth pointing out that the ESF has long supported youth-related policies and actions, including youth employment, education and training, entrepreneurship and the learning and job mobility of young students and workers. For example, a third of the 10 million ESF beneficiaries supported each year are young people, while about 60 per cent of the entire ESF budget of €75 billion for 2007-2013 is being channeled towards measures for young people. As part of its support for youth employment measures, ESF has also enabled MS to promote traineeships (and workplace experience placements more generally) as a way of helping young people become familiar with the world of work, acquire skills and competences deemed relevant to employers and thus enhance their employability. The Box below summarises the most recent traineeship-related policy initiatives at EU level.

Recent EU Policy Initiatives

- One of the key actions foreseen by the **Youth on the Move Initiative**, which is one of the seven flagship initiatives of Europe 2020 launched in 2010 and is aimed at young people, has been the increase of high quality traineeships (and apprenticeships) in order to ensure their smooth and speedy labour market entry.
- The **Youth Opportunities Initiative**, adopted in December 2011, commits the Commission to present in 2012 a quality framework supporting the provision and take-up of high quality traineeships. Moreover, in order to raise awareness of the availability and transparency of traineeships across the EU, the Commission will present an online EU Panorama with country-specific information (collected as part of this study).

Finally, as shown in the next section, the importance of traineeships as an effective mechanism for facilitating school-to-work transitions is being increasingly recognised by MS. Consequently, traineeships in their various forms and, in many cases, with considerable ESF support, feature prominently in their national/regional youth and employment related policies.

3. Traineeships as Part of National Youth-related Policies

The dramatic rise in youth unemployment and employment precariousness, with their long-term scarring effects on the current young generation, and increased skill mismatches between labour supply and demand, have prompted MS to adopt a number of targeted policies, programmes and schemes to support the employability of young people.

In most MS there is a **growing awareness of the benefits of traineeships in terms of facilitating the school-to-work transition**, and relevant programmes and initiatives have recently been implemented. That said, there are some variations between MS as regards the policy priority assigned to traineeships (in all their forms).

This chapter examines the extent to which traineeship programmes and schemes are integrated into national youth and employment policies. The analysis draws on findings from national reports, case studies and literature review completed in the course of this EU-wide study. The discussion below covers the range of traineeships described in Chapter 1 even if, in some cases, there are clear overlaps between the different forms of traineeships.

3.1 Traineeships as part of Active Labour Market Policies for Unemployed Young People

In many MS, active labour market programmes (ALMPs) targeted at unemployed young people increasingly include schemes, initiatives and measures which actively promote traineeships. Significantly, in the aftermath of the Great Recession of the late 2000s, graduates have also emerged as a distinct target group of traineeship-related programmes in a growing number of MS. Typically, in Southern European countries and in the New MS these programmes are often implemented with considerable ESF-support.

A widely publicised programme is **Portugal's** long-standing *Programa Estágios Profissionais* (Professional Traineeship Programme for Young Adults)⁵¹ which has yielded high success rates (76 per cent) in relation to labour market transitions.⁵² The programme, first introduced in 1997, is aimed at young people who have completed secondary and/or tertiary education. Young people complete a traineeship lasting nine to 12 months with the explicit aim of helping them gain practical on-the-job experience to complement their professional qualifications. The trainees receive a grant, whose actual size varies according to their qualification level, as well as travel and subsistence allowances.

Greece has also promoted traineeships to facilitate the labour market entry of unemployed young people, including graduates, through a succession of ESF funded programmes, notably the *STAGE programmes*, which were first introduced in 1998. Because of their chequered history and questionable reputation, these were discontinued in November 2009 and replaced in October 2010 by a new programme (the *Work Experience Programme for New Labour Market Entrants, aged 16-24*).⁵³ This restricts traineeships only to the private sector and provides full social security protection and minimum pay for trainees.

In **Malta**, there are also a number of traineeship schemes co-funded by the ESF as part of its Employment and Training Corporation/ETC's *I CAN Employability Programme*. For

⁵¹ <http://www.iefp.pt/apoios/empresas/estagios/EstagiosProfissionais/Paginas/EstagiosProfissionais.aspx>

⁵² Ramos, F., (2011). 'Portugal: Crisis and Tertiary-Education Graduates - Facts and Challenges' Paper submitted to the Peer Review on the *Scheme for the Job Placement and Training of Tertiary-Education Graduates*, Peer Review Meeting, Larnaca, 20-21 October 2011, http://www.mutual-learning-employment.net/uploads/ModuleXtender/PeerReviews/92/Peer_Country_Discussion_Paper_Portugal.pdf

⁵³ http://www.oaed.gr/Pages/SN_1186.pg

example, the *Traineeship Scheme*, launched in 2010, combines on and off-the-job training, with participants being assessed at the end of the placement by a Trade Testing Board and, if successful, receive a Certificate of Achievement.⁵⁴ The duration of the traineeship, based on a 40-hour week, ranges between 10 consecutive weeks and 39 weeks. The content and occupational standards of the traineeship are drawn up after consultation with the employer by the ETC, which also pays trainees a training subsidy equivalent to 80 per cent of the weekly national statutory minimum wage. For the duration of the traineeship, on-the-job training service providers also receive from the ETC 20 per cent of the weekly national statutory minimum wage for each trainee.

Cyprus's *Plan for Accelerated Company-based Initial Vocational and Education Training*, launched in 2009 and revised in 2011, is targeted at new labour market entrants and/or unemployed young people.⁵⁵ One critical element of this plan is the combination of theoretical, school/college-based education and training with the acquisition of practical work experience through a traineeship in a company. Although the duration and focus of such placements vary, a number of general provisions apply across the board, notably trainee compensation, social security and insurance coverage, reimbursement of travel expenses (under certain conditions), etc. For example, trainees are entitled to a weekly allowance of €200 for the duration of the traineeship.⁵⁶

In **Bulgaria**, the *Creating Employment for Young People through Providing Opportunities for Work Experience Scheme* seeks to facilitate the transition from education to employment by through six-month paid traineeships offered to young people aged under 29 years who have completed secondary or tertiary education, but lack professional experience.⁵⁷ In a same vein, the main priority of its *2012 Action Plan for Employment* is the reduction of youth unemployment among those aged 29 and under through, *inter alia*, traineeships and training for practical, work-related skills. Furthermore, in recent years wage and social security subsidies are provided to employers taking on trainees (usually those with lower education levels). Trainees also receive an allowance for a maximum of 12 months.

In **Slovenia**, a new traineeship-related programme was introduced in 2009 with the explicit aim of enhancing the employability of young graduates. The programme, called *Graduate – Activate Yourself and get the Job*, has been supported by both the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs and the ESF.⁵⁸ Interestingly, according to the programme, the Student Organisation of Slovenia acts as a broker between students and employers. The participating employers undertake to offer a traineeship lasting at least six months; assign a mentor to the student trainee and cover the associated cost; pay compensation to the trainee; etc. In exchange, they receive a trainee wage subsidy in the form of a grant.

Similarly, in **Poland**, in view of the high graduate unemployment, traineeships can be offered to young unemployed people (under 25) and to unemployed graduates (under 27). For example, in 2002 the *First Job Programme*, financed by the Labour Fund and involving traineeships was launched. During these traineeships, which could last up to 12 months, the trainees did not receive a salary, but were entitled to compensation, amounting to 120 per cent of the unemployment benefit. Although the original *First Job Programme* is no longer operational, its underlying philosophy has survived and has informed the current publicly-funded scheme whereby a placement (*stage*) is offered to graduates by labour offices with the explicit aim of helping them enter the world of work. The term 'First Job' is still commonly used, even though, technically the original programme has been discontinued.

⁵⁴ <http://etc.gov.mt/Page/51/Traineeships-jobseekers.aspx>

⁵⁵ http://www.hrdauth.org.cy/easyconsole.cfm/page/project/p_id/105

⁵⁶ Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus/HRDA, (2011a). *Guide of Policies and Procedures in relation to the Plan for Accelerated Company-based Initial Vocational and Education Training Programmes*, March

⁵⁷ Republic of Bulgaria, (2011). *National Reform Programme 2011-2015*, 13.4.2011,

http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nrp/nrp_bulgaria_en.pdf

⁵⁸ Ignjatović, M. (2010). *EEO Review: Youth Employment Measures 2010 - Slovenia*, European Employment Observatory, October,

<http://www.eu-employment-observatory.net/resources/reviews/Slovenia-YMRvw2010.pdf>

Traineeships are also actively promoted in **Romania**. For example, the ESF-funded *Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources Development (SOP HRD)*, supports projects designed to enhance the employability of upper secondary and tertiary education students through the combination of work and study which equips them with knowledge, skills and attitudes deemed critical for their successful integration in the labour market.⁵⁹ Even in the **Czech Republic**, which does not have a strong tradition as regards traineeships, the Government has recently introduced incentives for companies to offer traineeships to young people aged 29 or under, in order to reduce graduate unemployment.

In **France, Belgium, Luxembourg, the UK and Nordic countries** specific programmes to support youth employment, often including traineeship schemes, have also been launched in recent years. For example, in **France**, the *Emergency Plan for Youth Employment*⁶⁰, launched in April 2009, promoted a number of schemes which combine work experience with formal training such as apprenticeships and traineeships, one form of which are the *Contrats de Professionnalisation*.⁶¹ These, first introduced in 2004, operate on principles similar, though not exactly the same, to those of apprenticeships. Specifically, although the latter form part of the formal school-based initial vocational education and training (IVET), the former are integrated within continuing vocational training (CVT) and target especially young people aged 15-26 and/or jobseekers aged over 26. Under the *Contrats de Professionnalisation*, which are explicitly *not* apprenticeship contracts but special 'employment' contracts, private sector companies are offered a one-off subsidy of €1,000 if they employ a person aged up to 26 for a specified period of time (six to 24 months) during which he/she is combining work with formal training in order to gain a recognised vocational qualification.⁶²

The Plan also recognised the widespread use of other forms of traineeships, notably those associated with educational programmes and/or undertaken in the open market, i.e. *stages* and sought to improve aspects of their operation. Crucially, it offered a €3,000 bonus to employers who would transform a *stage* into a permanent employment contract, i.e. *Contrat à Durée Indéterminée (CDI)*.⁶³ Moreover, it stipulated that trainees on placements lasting over two months (instead of three months as was until then the case) should receive compensation.

In **Luxembourg**, the 2006 youth-related reform of ALMPs⁶⁴, the educational reform initiated by the *2008 Loi sur la Réforme de la Formation Professionnelle*⁶⁵, and the more recent 2009 law introducing temporary measures specifically targeted at promoting the youth employment place an increased emphasis on work experience placements and traineeships as effective means of linking young people (aged below 30) to the labour market.⁶⁶ Three measures, one new and two existing ones stand out in relation to the purposes of this study: (i) *Contrat d'Initiation à l'Emploi - Expérience Pratique (CIE-EP)*⁶⁷ aimed at skilled young people, including graduates and including a practical work experience placement of

⁵⁹ Ministry of Labour, Family and Equal Opportunities, (2007). *Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources Development*, October,

http://www.fonduri-structurale.ro/Document_Files/resurseumane/00000030/rcxqy_POSDRU_engleza.pdf

⁶⁰ <http://www.gouvernement.fr/gouvernement/emploi-des-jeunes-nicolas-sarkozy-a-annonce-un-plan-de-13-milliard-d-euros>

⁶¹ http://www.emploi.gouv.fr/pdf/fiche_contrat_professionnalisation.pdf

⁶² The subsidy rose to €2,000 if the young person did not hold an academic or vocational qualification equivalent to the Baccalauréat school leaving certificate.

⁶³ OECD, (2009b). *Jobs for Youth – France*,

<http://browse.oecdbookshop.org/oecd/pdfs/product/8109121e.pdf>

⁶⁴ Loi du 22 décembre 2006 promouvant le maintien dans l'emploi

<http://www.legilux.public.lu/leg/a/archives/2006/0239/a239.pdf#page=2>

⁶⁵ Loi du 19 décembre 2008 portant réforme de la formation professionnelle,

<http://www.legilux.public.lu/leg/a/archives/2008/0220/a220.pdf>

⁶⁶ Loi du 11 novembre 2009 concernant certaines mesures temporaires visant à atténuer les effets de la crise économique sur l'emploi des jeunes,

<http://www.legilux.public.lu/leg/a/archives/2009/0222/a222.pdf>

⁶⁷ http://www.lifelong-learning.lu/Detail/Article/Orientation/contrat-d_initiation-a-l_emploi-experience-pratique/fr

up to 24 months; (ii) *Contrat d'Initiation à l'Emploi (CIE)*⁶⁸ aimed at young job seekers and including a 12-month initial contract; and (iii) *Contract d'Appui-Emploi (CAE)*⁶⁹ targeted at registered young job seekers (aged below 30), either skilled or unskilled and including training of at least 16 hours a month.

In the **UK**, the *Graduate Talent Pool* initiative, launched in July 2009, aims at improving the long-term employability of recent UK graduates by providing them free access to traineeship vacancies across a range of industry sectors.⁷⁰ It is expected that securing a traineeship will help graduates gain real-life work experience, develop vital transferable skills and enhance their employability. In April 2011, action on traineeships gained a prominent place in the Government's social mobility strategy *Opening Doors, Breaking Barriers*, which aims to extend access to traineeships for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds and/or those who cannot rely on parental financial support when undertaking a traineeship.⁷¹

In **Denmark**, the third *Youth Package*, introduced in July 2011, aims like its other two predecessors at supporting young people aged under 30 accessing either education and/or employment with a view to tackling youth unemployment. The *Youth Package* includes several traineeship-related measures, including incentives to encourage SMEs to hire highly skilled young people and, more generally, increase the supply of traineeships by employers, especially those which have not had a trainee before.⁷²

In **Sweden**, the *Youth Employment Guarantee* scheme for young unemployed aged 16–25 was introduced in 2008 in order to tackle the growing youth unemployment levels. The guarantee covers a large variety of individually tailored youth-related ALMP measures, including job-search activities combined with traineeships (of a three-month maximum duration); education and training; entrepreneurial support; and labour market integration.⁷³ Furthermore, a number of projects, currently in operation, are increasingly developing new models of alternance-based education which promote traineeships as an effective way of the reducing the skill mismatch between employer skills requirements and those possessed by young people, preventing their exclusion from the labour market and, overall, improving school-to-work transitions.

In addition, the Swedish *Young Potentials Programme*, which is based on a joint collaboration between some of Sweden's largest companies and its PES, is promoting traineeships targeted at graduates.⁷⁴ Specifically, the programme offers company-based traineeships lasting between three and six months to 1,000 academics aged 25-29. While undertaking the traineeship, the graduate trainee is also offered career advice, guidance and coaching.

3.2 Traineeships as Compulsory or Optional Part of Academic and/or Vocational Study Curricula (i.e. Traineeships during Education)

A growing body of empirical evidence suggests that stronger interactions between the education system and the labour market can have a significant impact on youth

⁶⁸ http://www.lifelong-learning.lu/Detail/Article/Orientation/contrat-d_initiation-a-l_emploi/fr

⁶⁹ http://www.lifelong-learning.lu/Detail/Article/Orientation/contrat-d_appui-emploi/fr

⁷⁰ <http://graduatetalentpool.direct.gov.uk/>

⁷¹ HM Government, (2011). *Opening Doors, Breaking Barriers: A Strategy for Social Mobility*, April, http://www.dpm.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/sites/default/files_dpm/resources/opening-doors-breaking-barriers.pdf

⁷² Ministry of Employment, (2011). *En styrketindsats over for unge* (Strengthened Efforts to Support the Young), July, http://fivu.dk/nyheder/pressemeddelelser/2011/ny-pakke-hjaelper-unge-i-uddannelse-og-job/en-styrket-indsats-overfor-unge-ledige.pdf?utm_medium=email&enabled=True&utm_source=newsletter&utm_campaign=press_release

⁷³ http://www.arbetsformedlingen.se/download/18.4b7cba481279b57bec180001142/uga_sok.pdf

⁷⁴ <http://secure.academicsearch.se/home.nsf/PagesAll/CSIN85UFF9?OpenDocument>

employability.⁷⁵ Schemes whereby young people alternate their time between studying in an educational institution and learning practical and work-related skills at a workplace, notably through apprenticeships and traineeships tend to improve their labour market attachment, professional development and, in the long-term, career prospects and earnings. However, it is crucial that work-related activity during studies is related to the field of study, i.e. that the traineeship has relevant and high quality learning content.⁷⁶

Indeed, there is a major policy push for traineeships to form (compulsory or optional) part of study curricula, which comes from either national education and training policies (and, in many cases, with ESF support); the educational establishments themselves (in their attempt to make their curricula more relevant to employer needs and enhance the employability of their students and graduates); and/or employer and other professional associations which have reportedly expressed concerns about young people's work preparedness and skills mismatch.

3.2.1 Traineeships as part of Upper Secondary and Higher Vocational Education and Training Curricula⁷⁷

In **IVET**, work experience in the form of a traineeship is usually integrated into vocational training pathways, as is typically the case in dual vocational systems.⁷⁸ Most EU countries include compulsory traineeships in **secondary and tertiary VET** curricula. Such compulsory traineeships have traditionally been a critical element of the higher vocational education syllabus. For example, the Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS) in a number of MS have already integrated compulsory traineeships into their study programmes (e.g. AT, BE, CY, CZ, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, IT, LT, LV, NL, PL, PT, SE, SI, SK, UK, etc.).

For example, in the **Netherlands**, traineeships are an essential element of general, vocational and higher education. This is particular the case in both the senior secondary vocational education (*middelbaar beroepsonderwijs* – MBO), the main part of vocational education and training in the Netherlands; and the higher vocational/professional education (*hoger beroepsonderwijs*, HBO). The latter is offered at hogescholen (Universities of Professional Education, otherwise known as UAS), where third-year students undertake a compulsory traineeship (*stage*) of approximately nine months duration in order to gain practical experience and complete their thesis or final project.

While traineeships are an integral part of initial vocational education, in particular for senior secondary vocational education (MBO), they are not a compulsory part of the study curricula in higher (academic) education offered at Research Universities (*wetenschappelijk onderwijs*, WO). In this case, traineeships are usually voluntarily taken up during studies. Around two thirds of all MBO students complete a training programme for which traineeships are a central and mandatory element in order to help them acquire work-related skills, competencies and experience in companies. On the contrary, it is not so common to undertake a traineeship while holding a VET or University degree, i.e. as a graduate in the open market.

In **Denmark**, alternance-based education combines classroom education and practical training (traineeship). Certain programmes utilise the normal 'sandwich' structure of the Danish vocational education, which means that students undertake traineeships in companies. In recent years, additional resources have been provided in order to increase traineeship agreements for VET students. That said, it remains the case that apprenticeships are the main IVET system in Denmark, which are typically alternance-based.

⁷⁵ Scarpetta et al., (2010). *Op.Cit.*; Neumark, D., (2009). *Op.Cit.*

⁷⁶ Geel, R. and Backes-Gellner, U., (2010). *Earning while Learning: Labor Market Returns to Student Employment during Tertiary Education*, Swiss Leading House Working Paper 49, University of Zurich

⁷⁷ Apprenticeships fall out outside the scope of this study.

⁷⁸ Geel, R. and Backes-Gellner, U., (2010). *Op.Cit.*

In **Sweden**, the upper secondary school reform includes a new structure for upper secondary vocational education with more emphasis on work-related subjects and skills. The 12 vocationally-oriented upper secondary education programmes include traineeships (*Arbetsplatsförlagd utbildning – APU*)⁷⁹, which last 15 weeks over a three-year period.⁸⁰ Furthermore, in higher vocational education courses (HVEC) about a third of the training is work-based known as 'Learning in Work' (*lärande i arbete*).

A rather different scheme is found in **Belgium**, which in 2008 introduced the *Start-up Bonus* and related traineeship contracts. The *Start-up Bonus* is a premium paid to young people who, during their period of compulsory education, start their first practical training and work experience placement with an employer as part of alternance-based education. In **Luxembourg**, an extensive education reform was introduced by the *2008 Loi sur la Réforme de la Formation Professionnelle*. Crucially, this reform focussed especially on vocational education and sought to expand work-based training and education in an attempt to create closer links between industry and education. To this end, a large number of training schemes have been amended to include, in many cases, compulsory traineeships.

In some **Eastern European countries**, after the collapse of state socialism the formerly strong connections between VET schools and industry weakened, with both apprenticeship and traineeship schemes almost disappearing. More recently, however, these links are being revitalised, especially in those sectors characterised by labour shortages. In the **Czech Republic**, for example, traineeships are compulsory for all VET students and their specifications are outlined in detail in the relevant qualification frameworks. In **Bulgaria**, *Production Internships* in secondary vocational education (from 9th to 12th/13th grade) are compulsory and take place during the last two years of studies. The traineeship is overseen by a teacher and a specialist from the Production Unit, while its assessment forms part of the secondary education diploma and the vocational qualification certificate. The practical (and, if necessary, theoretical) training during the *Production Internship* is regulated by provisions in the relevant curriculum.

3.2.2 Traineeships as part of Higher (Academic) Study Curricula

In recent years, a number of MS (e.g. BE, BG, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, HU, IE, IT, LV, NL, PL, RO, SE, SI, UK, etc.) have introduced major changes to strengthen the role of traineeships as an integral part of **secondary or tertiary (academic) study curricula**.

For example, in **Ireland** as part of the *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030*, there is a major policy push towards traineeships as part of university study curricula.⁸¹ Indeed, Irish universities are increasingly introducing traineeships as compulsory or optional parts of their curricula. In both **Greece** and **Cyprus** (with ESF-support) there is also a major policy push towards creating better and closer ties with employers through traineeships as part of higher academic and vocational education programmes. In **Bulgaria**, *Curricular Internships (Stages)*, constitute an element of the academic curriculum for higher education students. The extent to which a traineeship forms a compulsory part of the study depends on specific subject requirements. With the same aim of creating closer and better links between higher education and the labour market, in the **Czech Republic** the ESF-supported *Operational Programme Education for Competitiveness 2007-2013* is promoting

⁷⁹ Sveriges Riksdag, (2010). *Svensk författningssamling, Gymnasieförordning (SFS 2010:2039)*, http://www.riksdagen.se/sv/Dokument-Lagar/Lagar/Svenskförfattningssamling/Gymnasieförordning-20102039_sfs-2010-2039/

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ Department of Education and Skills, (2011). *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030*, Report of the strategy Group, January, http://www.heai.ie/files/files/DES_Higher_Ed_Main_Report.pdf

traineeships as part of study curricula.⁸² This is deemed critical because it appears that at present about 30 per cent of university courses include a traineeship as an integral part of their curriculum.

In **Denmark**, compulsory traineeships as part of study curricula exist for a number of professions, notably medicine and nursing, teaching, social work, etc. Regulations also require that a Business Academy degree incorporates a traineeship for a minimum of three months, whereas a professional Bachelor's degree includes a traineeship of a minimum six-month duration.⁸³ A similar strong focus on traineeships integrated in study curricula can be found in **Finland**.

In **Hungary**, university students in education, economic, technical and pedagogic Bachelor's programmes, which entail a strong practical orientation, also have to undertake a compulsory six-month traineeship which forms part of the study curriculum. In **France**, most study programmes in HEIs now include traineeships as compulsory part of the curriculum. Indeed, as a result of the *Loi n° 2007-1199 du 10 août 2007 relative aux libertés et responsabilités des universités*, HEIs are tasked with improving the labour market integration of students and graduates through traineeships (*stages*) organised and supervised by university-based offices (*Bureau d'aide à l'insertion professionnelle des étudiants*).⁸⁴ In **Belgium**, on the other hand, traineeships which form part of study curricula are mostly optional.⁸⁵

The **Romanian START Internship Programme**, first launched in 2008 and based on a public-private partnership involving, *inter alia*, the Government, universities, student and employer associations, Chambers of Commerce, multinationals, etc., is also seeking to bridge the gap between the worlds of education and work through traineeships specifically targeted at graduates.⁸⁶ This should be seen within the context of an increased policy focus on fostering greater collaboration between education and business and/or improving student/graduate employability through traineeships, e.g. as underlined in *Law No. 258/2007 on Practical Training (including Student Internships)*.⁸⁷

In **Italy** and **Spain** specific programmes support 'extra-curricular' traineeships which are open to both new graduates and students about to graduate. For example, in **Italy** in 2006 the Ministry of Labour launched the FIO (*Formazione e Innovazione per l'Occupazione*) programme with the explicit aim of easing the transition of young people into the labour market.⁸⁸ Although the main target group are graduates who have obtained their degree within the past 12 months, participation is also open to currently enrolled students with the aim of improving the co-operation between higher education and industry. These traineeships are essentially a period of voluntary on-the-job training, which aim at helping graduates acquire relevant practical and technical skills in order to improve the match between skills supply and demand.

Similarly, in **Spain**, there are three specific forms of traineeships targeted at young graduates, or at students nearing completion of their university studies. These are: (i) Traineeships with unilateral agreements from private firms (*Becas unilaterales de empresas privadas – Becas no convenidas*). These are traineeships offered by private companies to

⁸² Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, (2007). *Operational Programme Education for Competitiveness 2007-2013*, September,

<http://www.strukturalni-fondy.cz/Upload/Programy-2007-2013/OP-Education-for-competitiveness-pdf>

⁸³ The Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation: *Ministerial Order on Criteria for the Relevance and Quality of University Study Programmes and on Procedures for Approval of University Study Programmes*

⁸⁴ <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000000824315>

⁸⁵ The exception to this is teaching/education for which a traineeship is compulsory.

⁸⁶ <http://www.startinternship.ro/>

⁸⁷ European Commission, (2009b). *New Partnership for the Modernisation of Universities: The EU Forum for University Business Dialogue*, Staff Working Document, SEC(2009) 425, Brussels,

http://ec.europa.eu/education/higher-education/doc/business/work_en.pdf

⁸⁸ <http://www.lavoro.gov.it/Lavoro/Europalavoro/Progetti/Fixo.htm>

recent graduates without an educational co-operation agreement with the university; (ii) Traineeships in Public Administration (*Becas de Administraciones Públicas*), financed by the Public Administration (at central, regional and local levels). These provide practical training to university students; and (iii) Traineeships in educational co-operation agreements (*Becas de Convenios de Cooperación educativa*). These, which can be compulsory or optional part of academic study curricula, require a formal agreement between an educational institution, usually University, and a host organisation.

3.3 Traineeships in the Open Market after Graduation/ Completion

In recent years there has been an expansion of traineeships which young people have to undertake after graduation and/or completion of mandatory professional training. These traineeships which provide graduates with on-the-job experience before they find, whenever possible, a more stable form of employment, seem to be the least regulated. Not surprisingly, these traineeships have attracted most criticism since they tend to be quite unregulated and, in some cases, associated with reports of trainee exploitation; the replacement of regular staff by trainees who are used as cheap or even free labour; poor terms and conditions, including long working hours, heavy workload, lack of compensation and/or social security coverage; low or non-existent learning content; etc.

Our study has found that that governments across Europe are increasingly promoting traineeships in the open market because they are seen as a potentially effective tool to combat rising youth unemployment. At the same time, in most cases, they are also trying to put in place certain safeguards and minimum standards in relation to trainees, especially in the face of mounting criticism and negative publicity. These traineeships can be broken down between those which are available in the open market on an ad hoc basis, and those which form part of a growing number of government-sponsored programmes. The latter promote traineeships in (primarily) private and public sector organisations with the explicit aim of facilitating the labour market transitions of young people.

Some countries stand out for the importance of traineeships in the open market as a way of easing the transition into the labour market, with high proportion of young people undertaking these type of traineeships (e.g. AT, DE, EE, ES, FR, IT, LV, PL, PT, UK, etc.). Despite the increased take-up of such traineeships, there are serious concerns about their (in) effectiveness as youth labour market integration measures, especially as regards those undertaken by young people on an ad hoc basis. In particular, there are growing concerns that, instead of these traineeships helping young people get a firm foothold in the labour market, they can trap them in a series of such placements and/or precarious jobs. This was also confirmed by findings from the *YFJ's 2011 Interns Revealed Survey* where a 37 per cent of respondents had completed three or more traineeships.⁸⁹ Conversely, it appears that in few countries traineeships in the open market undertaken on an ad hoc basis are not as common (e.g. DK, FI, HU, MT, RO, SK, etc.).

A clear example of this type of traineeships can be found in **Italy** and **Spain**. As mentioned earlier, in **Spain**, the traineeship accompanied by a grant (*beca*) has become a significant form of youth participation in the labour market, particularly in the last twenty years. These traineeships are mainly targeted at university students or graduates. They are offered by universities, public administration bodies and private firms and involve a subsidy (*beca*) rather than an employment contract. Depending on the type of traineeship offered, the legislation is different, but a common feature is a lack of clear legislative framework. The less regulated *becas* are the unilateral offers from private companies to graduates or students without an agreement with the academic institution (*Becas unilaterales de empresas privadas – Becas no convenidas*). In general, to address the long-standing high levels of Spanish youth unemployment, a number of measures which promote traineeships

⁸⁹ European Youth Forum, (2011). *Op. Cit.*

have been introduced over the recent years. However, these traineeships are often organised without an employment contract and are paid through scholarships, e.g. the *Finnova Programme* in the region of Madrid.⁹⁰ In the Basque region the *Ikasi eta Lan* ('Learn and Work') also promotes traineeships by providing wage subsidies for companies which take on trainees on open-ended employment contracts.⁹¹

Both in Spain and in Italy most graduates feel increasingly obliged to undertake one (or even a series of traineeships) to gain practical experience. In **Italy**, traineeships in the open market are a widespread practice amongst the young unemployed who are trying to enter the labour market with the hope of finding either a temporary or long-term job. Apart from the 'voluntary/informal' traineeships available in the open market, there are a number of traineeship programmes and initiatives at national or local level. For example, as mentioned earlier, in 2006 the Ministry of Labour launched the *FIxO Programme* targeting young graduates who had received their degree within the past 12 months.

In **Cyprus**, in response to a significant rise in graduate unemployment, the government re-launched in January 2011 a programme aimed at promoting the acquisition of six or 12 month practical work experience by graduates in companies.⁹² This well-publicised programme which has recently been the subject of a Peer Review (as part of the EU's Mutual Learning Programme)⁹³, is the *Scheme for the Job Placement and Training of Tertiary-Education Graduates*.⁹⁴ One of the key aims of the scheme is, *inter alia*, to help graduates acquire practical work experience in an organised and structured manner within an actual work setting and under the guidance of an assigned trainer. The overall aim is to help graduates adapt their knowledge, skills and competences to real employer requirements and thus facilitate their transition to employment.⁹⁵

Similar programmes have already been mentioned in previous sections, like the **UK's Graduate Talent Pool and Graduate Internships Scheme**; **Poland's Traineeship Programme (The 'First Job')**; **Sweden's Young Potentials Programme**; the **Portuguese Programa Estágios Profissionais**; the **Greek Work Experience Programme for New Labour Market Entrants** (the successor to the old STAGE programme); the **Slovenian 'Graduate – Activate yourself and get the job'**; etc. In **Austria**, the *Aktion +6000* aims at enabling the 'internship generation' to obtain regular employment through wage subsidies if trainees are offered employment at the end of the traineeship. In **Bulgaria**, a new traineeship programme for university graduates has also been recently implemented.

3.4 Transnational Traineeships

Most MS are also actively promoting policies/national schemes which support geographical mobility through transnational traineeships.

Portugal is particularly active in encouraging work and learning mobility through both EU and other international traineeship programmes, including *INOV Contacto*; *INOV Mundo*; *INOV Vasco da Gama*; and *INOV Art*, all of which are targeted at the young unemployed or

⁹⁰ http://www.madrid.org/cs/Satellite?cid=1161935391708&language=es&pagename=Empleo%2FPage%2FEMPL_pintarContenidoFinal

⁹¹ http://www.ayudas.net/Programa_Ikasi_eta_Lan_combinacion-11830BT1ERP1701PO.htm

⁹² Christofides, L. N., (2010). *EEO Review: Youth Employment Measures 2010 - Cyprus*, October; Planning Bureau of the Republic of Cyprus, (2011). *National Reform Programme of Cyprus - Europe 2020 Strategy for: Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth*, April 2011

⁹³ http://www.mutual-learning-employment.net/index.php?mact=PeerReviews.cntnt01.detail_0&cntnt01options=28&cntnt01orderby=start_date%20DESC&cntnt01returnid=59&cntnt01item_id=92&cntnt01returnid=59

⁹⁴ Human Resource Development Authority/HRDA, (2011b). *Scheme for the Job Placement and Training of Tertiary-Education Graduates*, Paper By The Human Resource Development Authority, Peer Review Meeting, Larnaca, 20-21 October 2011, http://www.mutual-learning-employment.net/uploads/ModuleXtender/PeerReviews/92/Official_Paper_-_Cyprus.pdf

⁹⁵ Human Resource Development Authority/HRDA, (2009). *Guide of Policies and Procedures in relation to the Scheme for the Job Placement and Training of Tertiary-Education Graduates*, September

those seeking a first or new job. For example, the *INOV Contacto*, set up in 1997 and considered best practice by the OECD and the European Commission in 2007 offers young graduates international traineeships in sectors and markets of strategic importance to the Portuguese economy.⁹⁶ These traineeships last between six and nine months and take place in over 40 countries, with a special focus on Spain, the UK, Germany, Brazil, the US, and China. The programme is managed by AICEP Portugal Global and promoted by the Ministry of Economy and Innovation of Portugal, while it is also supported by Portugal's *Operational Programme Human Capital (QREN/POPH)*. It is funded through a combination of national and EU Structural Funds, notably the ESF. Between 2005 and 2011 the programme supported 2,200 transnational traineeships. Significantly, it has yielded impressive employment outcomes, with about 60 to 80 per cent of transnational trainees being offered a job by host organisations.

The **Dutch** government also supports traineeships abroad through international exchange programmes like the *Regional Attention and Action for Knowledge Circulation (RAAK)*. Crucially, since the *1996 Vocational Education and Training Act*, the internationalisation and mobility of VET students has become a criterion for the quality of education in Dutch vocational schools (ROC, Regionaal Opleidingscentrum). Certificates and competences of students who have completed these traineeships abroad can be recognised and accredited by vocational schools as part of the national qualifications. Dutch universities are also actively involved in EU mobility programmes such as Erasmus.

In **Denmark**, since 1992, the *PIU Programme* has given IVET students the opportunity to have periods of work placement abroad recognised as an integral part of their course.⁹⁷ PIU is short for work placement abroad (*Praktik I Udlandet*) which can last between 12-24 months. It can take place in any part of the world, provided the country is safe according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark. Every year about 1,000 students take part in this programme. In higher education the Danish Ministry of Education has launched a strategy for outbound mobility in the academic profession and professional Bachelor's education programmes aiming at ensuring that at least 20 per cent of higher education graduates spend a study period or undertake a traineeship abroad. Similarly, in **Finland** international mobility is seen as a critical element of the educational curriculum and, as such, is one of the main priorities of the *Government Programme* and the *Education and Research 2007-2012 Plan*.⁹⁸

Sweden also participates in a large number of international cooperation projects in the areas of responsibility covered by the Ministry of Education and Research. Programmes which provide students with the opportunity to undertake a traineeship abroad include IAESTE⁹⁹ and the Swedish International Development Co-operation/Sida's travel grant scheme (for traineeships).¹⁰⁰

In **Cyprus**, transnational mobility is promoted through European programmes, such as Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci. Significantly, in the academic year 2011-2012 the promotion of transnational student mobility placements in companies is one of the main Cypriot policy priorities.

As far **Eastern European countries** are concerned, in the last decade there has been an increase in the proportion of students studying abroad. There is, however, an asymmetric relationship between the out- and in-flow of students, as these countries are not yet popular host countries for other European students. For example, in **Estonia**, the Erasmus

⁹⁶ <http://www.portugalglobal.pt/pt/inovcontacto/>

⁹⁷ <http://www.piu-sekretariatet.dk/>

⁹⁸ Ministry of Education, (2008). *Education and Research 2007-2012, Development Plan*, <http://www.minedu.fi/export/sites/default/OPM/Julkaisut/2008/liitteet/opm11.pdf?lang=fi>

⁹⁹ The International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience/IAESTE, <http://www.iaeste.org/>

¹⁰⁰ <http://www.sida.se/English/Partners/Universities-and-research/Applying-for-research-support-do-you-qualify/Sida-sponsored-scholarships-for-students-and-teachers/>

programme is very popular and its popularity among Estonian students has greatly increased since 2007, not least because geographical mobility through transnational traineeships is highly valued by employers. This is especially true when one is seeking employment in international companies, and certain sectors, e.g. health care, tourism, business services and ICTs.

The Table overleaf summarises the above discussion and presents country-specific information.

Table 3.1: Traineeships as part of Member States' Youth-related Policy Measures

Topic	AT	BE	BG	CY	CZ	DE	DK	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HU	IE	IT	LT	LU	LV	MT	NL	PL	PT	RO	SE	SI	SK	UK
Whether there are available statistical data on young people in the labour market	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Whether there are challenges that young people face today	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Existence of policies/schemes/programmes that specifically promote traineeships	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Existence of policies that actively promote transnational learning/mobility	?	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	x	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x
Is there an overlap between traineeships and other mechanisms of labour market integration (e.g. Apprenticeships)	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	x	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	?	x	?	?	✓
Existence of a minimum wage for young people	x	✓	?	x	✓	x	x	?	✓	✓	x	?	?	✓	x	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓

Key: (✓) Yes (X) No (?) Unavailable/Unclear

4. Legislative Framework of Traineeships

Europe is characterised by a great variety of education and training systems, welfare and employment regimes, and school-to-work transition mechanisms, all of which have a direct impact on youth labour markets. Consequently, it is not surprising that this study found an equally great diversity in the legislative frameworks which apply to the various forms of traineeships examined. This legislative/regulatory diversity exists not only between MS, but also between the different types of traineeships themselves. This, in turn, reflects the fact that the concept of traineeship itself is very diverse.

This section highlights this plurality and variety of legislation and regulations governing traineeships. It discusses (i) existing legislative and regulatory frameworks for traineeships; (ii) definitions of the concepts of 'traineeship' and 'trainee', either legal or commonly used and understood in the absence of a legal definition; (iii) the main target groups affected by any traineeship-related legislation; (iv) the sectors and professions most commonly covered by regulatory frameworks; (v) the trainee's different legal position vis-à-vis apprentices and regular employees; and (vi) legal provisions for the contractual aspects of traineeships.

Overall, the existing traineeship-related legislation can be found in laws and regulations associated with either education and training policies or employment policies, including ALMPs. It usually seeks to define and regulate traineeships, the trainee status and associated terms and conditions either directly (e.g. by Laws which explicitly target traineeships), or indirectly (e.g. by Education and Training Laws which make references to traineeships as part of more general provisions, or by school/college/university regulations). There are also instances where no traineeship-related regulations exist, notably certain traineeships in the open market.

Similarly, there is a great variation across the EU in the extent to which traineeships and/or trainees are clearly defined. In relation to the definition of traineeships, in most MS there is either a legal definition (e.g. AT, BE, BG, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, HU, IT, LV, MT, NL, PL, RO, SE, SI, SK, etc.), or at least, a common national understanding of the concept of a traineeship (e.g. AT, CZ, DE, EL, ES, FI, HU, IE, LU, MT, NL, PL, RO, UK, etc.). In countries where a common definition of traineeship exists, there is a strong link between education and work experience. Across the Member States the common defining characteristics of legal frameworks relating to traineeships are: (i) the general *educational purpose*; (ii) the *practical element of learning*; and (iii) the *temporary character* of the traineeship.

Trainee-related definitions also vary significantly across the EU. Typically, the trainee is a pupil, student or trainee who is temporary working to acquire on-the-job experience which is relevant to his/her studies. Significantly, in most MS the legal position of a trainee is *not* equal to that of a regular employee or apprentice.

In the sections below we present detailed information about the way and extent to which traineeships are regulated.

4.1 Legislation in relation to Traineeships linked to Education and Training Policies

The countries which legally regulate traineeships either do so explicitly (e.g. EE, ES, HU, IT, FI, FR, RO, SI, etc.), or through their national legislation on secondary, including vocational, and tertiary education (e.g. AT, BE, BG, CZ, DE, DK, EL, NL, SE, SK, etc.). Not surprisingly, traineeship-related regulations are most commonly found in legislation concerning VET provision and mandatory professional training. Similarly, traineeships which form part of academic study curricula are typically regulated by the educational institution itself.

4.1.1 Direct Legislation as regards Traineeships

A number of MS seek to regulate traineeships directly. For example, in **Estonia** VET traineeships in upper secondary education are defined in the Vocational Education Institutions Act. The Act prescribes two distinct forms of VET-related study: (i) regular school-based training; and (ii) work-based (apprenticeship) training. Traineeships in higher education are defined as part of the study curriculum of individual educational institutions. These can independently decide on the content of their specific programmes, including the integration of traineeships into their study curricula.

In **Finland**, traineeships which are part of either Bachelor's or Master's degrees are explicitly mentioned in the *Government Decree on University Degrees 794/2004*.¹⁰¹ The decree states that studies leading to a lower university degree may include 'work practice for professional development'. Studies leading to a higher university degree may include an 'internship improving expertise'. In addition, the 2003 *Government Decree on Polytechnic Degrees 15.5.2003/352* stipulates that all lower polytechnic degrees should include practical work experience aimed at contributing to a young person's professional development.¹⁰² The extent to which traineeships form part of particular study curricula is determined by the Ministry of Education and Culture. The traineeship arrangements vary greatly across polytechnic degree programmes. For example, traineeships can be remunerated or not, while trainees can be considered to be officially in employment or not. Finally, the *Vocational Education and Training Act 630/1998* stipulates that all vocational degrees should include an element of on-the-job-learning, including traineeships.¹⁰³

France stands out as a country which has, since 2006, adopted an explicit 'regulated' approach to traineeships through a raft of laws. Since the *Equal Opportunities Act No 2006-396*¹⁰⁴ of 31 March 2006 which was amended by *Law No 2009-1437*¹⁰⁵ of 24 November 2009 and completed by *Decree No 2010-956*¹⁰⁶ of 25 August 2010¹⁰⁷, all types of mandatory and voluntary/optional traineeships are subject to specific legislation. Crucially, the 2009 and 2010 legislation states that *all* traineeships, including those in the open market must be an integral part of a learning activity and/or study curricula associated with educational programmes. This, in turn, means that the sending/educational institution together with the trainee must define the traineeship's objectives, while the host organisation (company, must ensure that the traineeship meets these objectives, support the trainee in situ and provide him/her with an *Attestation de Stage* upon completion of the placement.

In its attempt to regulate all types of traineeships, France introduced the compulsory requirement of a prior negotiated and signed tripartite agreement (*Convention de Stage*) by the sending education and training provider, including universities, the host organisation and the trainee. This compulsory *Convention de Stage* is an important requirement since it should clearly specify all aspects of the traineeship such as its duration; focus, scope and learning content; the tasks and activities expected to be carried out by the trainee in accordance with the objectives of the traineeship; the trainee's maximum working hours per week; the trainee's terms and conditions, including his/her remuneration, and social security and insurance coverage; the range of in-kind benefits offered to the trainee, especially meals, accommodation and reimbursement of costs incurred as part of the traineeship; the mentoring and supervision arrangements of the traineeship; etc.

Crucially, because both of widespread reports of potential trainee exploitation and a growth in the number of university graduates who are caught in successive low-paid, short-term

¹⁰¹ <http://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/kaannokset/2004/en20040794.pdf>

¹⁰² <http://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/2003/20030352>

¹⁰³ <http://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/alkup/1998/19980630>

¹⁰⁴ <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000000268539>

¹⁰⁵ <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000021312490>

¹⁰⁶ <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000022740722&dateTexte=&categorieLien=id>

¹⁰⁷ <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000022740722&dateTexte=&categorieLien=id>

traineeships, the French Government introduced in July 2011 a new Law (*Loi n° 2011-893 du 28 juillet 2011 pour le Développement de l'Alternance et de la Sécurisation des Parcours Professionnels*, better known as *Loi Cherpion*) aimed at strengthening existing regulations and safeguarding trainees from possible exploitation.¹⁰⁸ This law strengthens the legal framework of traineeships and reinforces the trainee's rights, terms and conditions. For example, it reiterates the importance of the *Convention de Stage*; limits the duration of traineeships; insists on a break between two trainees in the same role; stipulates that trainees undertaking a traineeship lasting for more than two months, should receive minimum compensation in the form of a bonus (called *gratification*); promotes the recognition of the traineeship as part of the probation period if the trainee is recruited within three months upon its completion; etc.

Similarly, **Italy** is characterised by a plethora of traineeship-related regulations, some of which seek to regulate certain types of traineeships in an explicitly legal manner. Since the early 2000s, Italy's *Education and Training Reform Law 53/03* and subsequent implementation measures (e.g. *Legislative Decree 77/05*) has established a system of alternance-based education, including traineeships, in secondary education. Arguably, the active promotion of a combination of study and work experience had started earlier when, in 1994, the so-called 'Third Area of Professionalisation' introduced traineeships into Istituti Professionali di Stato (IPS), i.e. public VET schools. Ever since, the use of traineeships has become an integral part of both vocational and theoretical study courses in many upper secondary schools. This is especially true for technical and vocational schools, but it also applies to lyceums. Significantly, in recent years traineeships have also become widespread in higher education curricula in Italy. Overall, all the traineeship models included in the study curricula in both secondary and tertiary education, known as *curricular traineeships*, are governed directly by the specific regulations of the schools, colleges and universities which are also responsible for their organisation, oversight and monitoring.

Summer traineeships integrated into vocational training courses were introduced by *Law 30/2003* and associated *Legislative Decree 276/2003 (Legge Biagi)*. These can last no more than three months and are paid no more than €600. Traineeships integrated into the study curricula of those aged 15-18 attending both high schools and vocational training schools were introduced by *Law 53/2003 (Legge Moratti)*.

To the above one should add that *vocational and orientational (non-curricular) traineeships* are defined and regulated at the national level by the following laws: (i) *Law No. 196 of 24 June 1997 Norme in Materia di Promozione dell'Occupazione* (Measures regarding the promotion of employment), especially Article 18 (the so-called *Pacchetto Treu*); (ii) *Interministerial Decree No. 142 of 25 March 1998 Regolamento recante norme di Attuazione dei Principi e dei Criteri di cui all'Articolo 18 della Legge 24 giugno 1997, n. 196, sui tirocini formativi e di orientamento*, which specifies the regulations for implementing the principles and criteria of *Pacchetto Treu* as regards vocational and orientational traineeships; (iii) Italian Ministry of Labour and Social Security's *Circular No. 92 of 15 July 1998 Tirocini Formativi e di Orientamento*, which focuses on vocational and orientational traineeships; and (iv) Italian Ministry of Labour and Social Security's *Circular No. 52 of 9 July 1999 Stage in Azienda* which refers to traineeships in companies.

More recently, aspects of traineeships, including levels of protection for activating them were also included in Article 11 (*Livelli di tutela essenziali per l'Attivazione dei Tirocini*) which was part of the *Legislative Decree No. 138 of 13 August 2011 (Ulteriori misure urgenti per la stabilizzazione finanziaria e per lo sviluppo)*, converted with modifications into *Law No. 48 of 14 September 2011*.

In **Slovenia**, the main legal source regulating the area of traineeship is the *2007 Employment Relationship Act (ERA)*.¹⁰⁹ In particular, its Articles 120 to 125 are dedicated to

¹⁰⁸ <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000024408887>

¹⁰⁹ http://www.mddsz.gov.si/en/legislation/veljavni_predpisi/employment_relationships_act/

traineeships and regulate their duration, general terms and conditions, the formal criteria for monitoring and evaluating trainees and the forms of voluntary traineeships. For example, the duration of a traineeship may not be longer than one year (except in public administration, medicine and law) and can be extended by six months, if the trainee works part-time. In **Slovakia**, the *Law on Higher Education (Act No. 131/2002)* directly regulates educational traineeships.¹¹⁰ In particular, it stipulates that traineeships can be a part of an accredited academic study programme. Concerning VET, the *Act on Education and Training (Act No. 29/1984)* defines vocational training/practice as an integral part of education and training in secondary, including upper secondary, vocational schools (as well as in apprenticeships).

In **Spain**, the related legal framework is the *2006 Ley Orgánica de la Educación (LOE)*, which after five years of gradual implementation was fully embedded in the 2009/10 academic year.¹¹¹ This law regulates pre-university and university levels of vocational training and covers compulsory VET traineeships. Furthermore, there are specific employment contracts which link education with work experience: (i) *the training contract (Contrato para la Formación)*; and (ii) *the traineeship contract (Contrato en Prácticas)*. *Training contracts* are targeted at students whose study curricula require that part of their time at the workplace must be devoted to training activities (like apprenticeships), while *traineeship contracts* are aimed at recent graduates. These contracts are both regulated by law and strictly associated with an employment contract (itself formally defined and regulated by law), while the host organization has to cover the trainee's pension contributions. The responsibilities and obligations of both trainee and company are formally set out in the contract, as published by Spain's PES. A recent Labour Market Reform includes some additional measures to further promote the use of training contracts by extending the age limit for such contracts from 21 to 25.

In recent years, a raft of laws and regulations concerning different traineeship schemes has also been introduced in **Portugal**. Most of them date from 2009 and 2010. They regulate most aspects of traineeships, such as eligibility, target group, duration, remuneration, and application procedures.

There are several legislative acts which directly regulate traineeships in **Hungary**. In the case of VET, the main source of legislation is the new *2011 Act on Vocational Education and Training*. Significantly, its aim is to strengthen the practical orientation of the Hungarian VET system by, *inter alia*, promoting and regulating traineeships. To this end, it stipulates that practical training should be an integral part of VET. In the case of higher education, traineeships are regulated by the *Act on Higher Education (Act no. CXXXIX/2005)*.¹¹² Crucially, since the modification of the higher education legislation in 2006, almost all Bachelor of Arts programmes should include a traineeship. The law defines only the minimum length and credit value of traineeships, but not their content which varies according to study subject.

In **Romania**, the legal framework which currently governs traineeships is *Law No. 258/2007 on Student Internships*. This covers the practical training in both upper secondary (high school/vocational school) and tertiary education. Significantly, this Law was introduced with the explicit aim of both creating closer links between education institutions and employers and specifying clearly rights and responsibilities of all parties involved, including trainees, the sending organisation (e.g. the educational establishment), and the host organisation (e.g. private sector employers, central or local public sector bodies, etc.). The responsibility for enforcing and overseeing compliance with this law resides with the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports (Ministerul Educației, Cercetării, Tineretului și Sportului, MECTS). The latest legal traineeship-related development in

¹¹⁰ http://www.astu.tuke.sk/dokumenty/L_131.pdf

¹¹¹ <http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2006/05/04/pdfs/A17158-17207.pdf>

¹¹² http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Hungary/Hungary_Act_CXXXIX_2005_on_HE.pdf

Romania is the *National Education Law 1/2011* which stipulates that traineeships must be introduced in the curricula of both vocational (or trade) schools and upper secondary technical schools (technical high schools), as well as in HEIs.

In **Malta**, the national legislation puts forward a definition for the term 'Traineeship' and makes provisions for the regulation of traineeship-related working hours, holidays and sick leave. According to this legislation, 'traineeship is a dual system of occupational training targeted at new labour market entrants, unemployed or employees involved in restructuring exercises'. Moreover, *Chapter 343 of the Employment and Training Service Act* assigns trainees a specific recognised legal status.¹¹³

In the **Netherlands**, there is a legislative framework only for VET-related traineeships, as defined by the *Adult Education and Vocational Training Act* (Wet Educatie en Beroepsonderwijs/WEB), which came into force in 1997. A main part of this act covers the standardisation of traineeships ('praktijkcomponent'; 'opleiden' in de praktijk'; beroepspraktijkvorming, BPV) within the school-based learning pathway (BOL) and in upper secondary vocational education (MBO). Indeed, as regards the latter there is explicit legislation in the Netherlands on different traineeship-related aspects, including roles and responsibilities of all parties involved, quality assurance mechanisms, traineeship agreements, etc. For example, the role and responsibilities of the host organization as regards the MBO trainees are outlined in a traineeship contract (Praktijkovereenkomst) signed by the student, the company (Leerbedrijf) and the Vocational School (Regionaal Opleidingen Center, ROC). The vocational school is responsible for identifying, enlisting and regularly liaising with companies which offer traineeships. Overall, in the Netherlands there is a strong and long-standing legal focus on the quality assurance of work placements/traineeships.

4.1.2 Indirect Legislation as regards Traineeships

In most MS traineeship-related regulations are either included within other education and training legislation, or are part of school/college or university regulations. For example, within this context, HEIs usually determine independently and autonomously whether traineeships will form part of the study curriculum; how they will be organised, overseen, monitored and evaluated; their duration, content, terms and conditions, etc.

In **Austria**, where there is no legal definition of traineeships, these are regulated in a rather indirect way, whereby existing jurisdiction plays an important role in assessing their legal status. In that regard, traineeships can be organised and implemented in two ways: (i) within the framework of a temporary employment contract which can be either a regular contract, or the more flexible free-lance service contract (*freier Dienstvertrag*); or through the so-called training relationship contract (*Ausbildungsverhältnis*, often also called *Volontariat*). This applies to traineeships undertaken at all stages of education, namely compulsory traineeships of VET students, compulsory and voluntary traineeships of university students, and graduate traineeships. Which of these two arrangements is in place in any given traineeship is not determined by its contractual status, but rather by its actual implementation.

Likewise, in **Germany**, there is a legislative framework which indirectly deals with traineeships, mainly through the *Berufsbildungsgesetz* (BBiG, Vocational Training Act, revised in 2005) whose primary purpose is to regulate vocational training.¹¹⁴ Sub-section 17 of BBiG states that trainees (in vocational training) have to be remunerated 'appropriately'. Sub-section 26 of BBiG is applicable to trainees in general, relating not only to VET, but also to higher education, while sub-sections 10 to 23 and 25 apply to all persons who are 'employed to gain knowledge, practice and professional experience'. It is worth stressing

¹¹³ <http://www.mjha.gov.mt/DownloadDocument.aspx?app=lom&itemid=8814>

¹¹⁴ http://www.bmbf.de/pub/BBiG_englisch_050805.pdf

that legislative action was required in Germany due to the high numbers of university and college graduates in traineeships who were receiving little or no remuneration. However, no further trainee-specific legislation has been subsequently passed partly due to concerns that more regulation may lead to a lower supply of traineeships. Ultimately, this type of regulation presupposes that trainees would enforce their claims judicially which does not, however, happen very often in practice.

There is no specific law or other separate legislative act in place in relation to traineeships in **Bulgaria**. However, there are agreements or contracts between the host organisation and the secondary or HE institution which specify the employer's responsibilities as regards the trainee. In HEIs, the most common practice at present is the introduction of framework agreements with employers as regards the offer of summer traineeships for students. Interestingly, in cases with a credit system in place, these traineeships are recognised as academic credits and are included in the student's diploma as an additional qualification. Due to university autonomy these traineeships are for the time being informally regulated by each higher education establishment individually.

In **Denmark**, in the field of higher education, the *2004 Ministerial Order on Bachelor's and Master's Programmes (Candidatus)* stipulates the number of ECTS points associated with traineeships, including the subjects which are required to have a practical training element (e.g. food science, journalism, nursing, etc).¹¹⁵ The Order allows universities to approve unpaid practical training periods under special circumstances. *The Ministerial Order on Criteria for the Relevance and Quality of University Study Programmes and on Procedures for Approval of University Study Programmes* describes the ordinary higher degrees in Denmark, including the extent to which these include a traineeship.¹¹⁶ For example, it specifies that a Business Academy degree should include, at a minimum, a three-month traineeship, whereas a Professional Bachelor's degree a six-month traineeship.

In **Greece**, the latest HEI Reform Law (4009/2011), introduced in summer 2011, reiterated the importance of traineeships as part of study curricula.¹¹⁷ However, respecting the autonomy and independence of each HEI, the Law stipulates that the incorporation of traineeships into study curricula and their specific terms and conditions etc. depend on particular study programmes and are organised in line with each University's 'Internal Statute of Operations'. That said, in Article 60 it supports the creation of offices tasked with the organisation and co-ordination of traineeships (such offices are already in operation in a large number of HEIs and Technical Education Institutions/TEIs). As regards the TEI traineeships, lasting six months and undertaken in the last semester of one's studies, these are legally defined as an integral and compulsory part of TEI-related study curricula by Law 1404/83 which created the TEI institution.¹¹⁸ According to this Law, traineeships ('Praktiki Askisi') linked to TEI study curricula are an integral, compulsory and important part of one's studies and are a prerequisite for the award of the degree. Crucially, Law 1404/83 also stipulates that, for the first time, TEI trainees will receive compensation and will be insured against occupational risks and work accidents.

In **Latvia**, although legislation specifically defines the responsible parties for the organisation of traineeships, it does not regulate their actual content. The *Regulations regarding the State Standard for First Level Professional Higher Education (Regulations No.141 of Cabinet of Ministers, 20.3.2001)* outline the minimum duration of a traineeship and the minimum number of credits associated with a compulsory traineeship.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁵ <http://www.ubst.dk/en/laws-and-decrees/The%20ministerial%20order%20of%20the%20study%20programmes.pdf>

¹¹⁶ http://www.en.iu.dk/files/ubst_english/law-and-decess/da-en%20retsinformation_NY%20-2.pdf

¹¹⁷ http://www.et.gr/index.php?option=com_wrapper&view=wrapper&Itemid=104&lang=en

¹¹⁸ <http://www.eetemher.gr/bio/TEI/N.1404.pdf>

¹¹⁹ <http://www.likumi.lv/doc.php?mode=DOC&id=6397>

In the **Czech Republic** the *Education Act (No. 561/2004 Coll.)* specifies, since 2005, the rules for organising traineeships in secondary and higher vocational education.¹²⁰ The specific legal framework differs for each type of traineeships. In the face of rising graduate unemployment the Czech Republic has recently introduced incentives for companies to offer traineeships to young people aged 29 or under.

In **Belgium**, most traineeship-related regulations are included in education regulations. Although education policies are not a federal competence, a co-ordination method has been set up which, in turn, affects the regulation of traineeships and/or work placements.

There is no specific legislation concerning traineeships in **Sweden**. That said, traineeships undertaken as part of college and university studies are regulated as part of the *Upper Secondary School Ordinance (2010:2039)*, the *Higher Education Act (1992:1434)*¹²¹ and the *Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100)*.¹²² Individual colleges and universities have their own regulations with regard to traineeships which form part of their study curricula. Interestingly, according to the *Swedish Work Environment Act* trainees at the workplace are equated with employees, even if they are not regular staff.

Similarly, there is no specific national legal framework regulating traineeships in the **UK**. The extent of regulation varies across the different types of traineeships. Traineeships outside formal education are only regulated in as much as they constitute 'work' (as opposed to volunteering) under employment law. Traineeships as part of a further or higher education course are predominantly regulated by the educational institution, whereas rules regarding mandatory professional training tend to be the preserve of specific professional bodies.

4.2 Legislation as regards Traineeships which form part of ALMPs and/or Employment-related Policies

In a number of MS there are labour market policies specifically aimed at supporting traineeship schemes in the form of government-funded programmes (e.g. AT, BE, CY, EE, IE, FR, IE, IT, LT, LU, MT, NL, PL, RO, SK, UK, etc.). These are either aimed at un- or low-skilled young people and (unemployed) graduates with a view to supporting their entry into the labour market. In many countries such measures are based on and regulated by specific legislation and legislative interventions.

For example, A number of traineeship-related programmes run by **Cyprus's** Human Resource Development Authority (HRDA) come under the so-called 'HRDA Law' which consolidated all laws relating to human resource development between 1999 and 2007. For example, the *Scheme for the Job Placement and Training of Tertiary-Education Graduates* which involves company-based traineeships should be seen within the context of Cyprus's *1999 Human Resource Development Law No 125(I)* (Article 21) as it was revised by 2007 Law No 21(I).¹²³ Similarly, the legal base for the '*Plan for Accelerated Company-based Initial Vocational and Education Training Programmes*' is the *1999 Law No 125(I)* (Articles 5f and 5p).¹²⁴

In **Greece**, the new *Work Experience Programme for New Labour Market Entrants*, the successor to the old *STAGE programme* and aimed at unemployed young people aged 16-24, was introduced by *Law 3845/2010* Article 2 paragraph 8 and was officially launched by the Hellenic Manpower Employment Organization (OAED) on 29th October 2010.¹²⁵ The new

¹²⁰ <http://aplikace.msmt.cz/HTM/HCzakon561popravach.htm>

¹²¹ <http://www.hsv.se/lawsandregulations/theswedishhighereducationact.4.5161b99123700c42b07ffe3956.html>

¹²² <http://www.hsv.se/lawsandregulations/thehighereducationordinance.4.5161b99123700c42b07ffe3981.html>

¹²³ <http://www.hrdauth.org.cy/images/media/assetfile/NomosAr21I%202007.pdf>

¹²⁴ <http://www.hrdauth.org.cy/images/media/assetfile/Nomos125.pdf>

¹²⁵ www.oaed.gr/Repository/FI_2026.file

programme seeks to address the plethora of criticisms which were levelled at the previous generations of STAGE programmes. To this end, it outlines in great detail all aspects of traineeships, including the requirement to be undertaken only in the private sector, duration, minimum trainee's terms and conditions, including trainee compensation and social security coverage, quality assurance mechanisms, etc.

Trainees do not have a specifically recognised legal status in **Ireland** although the law states explicitly that they cannot be regarded as employees of their host organisation. The National Training Fund (NTF), established under the *2000 National Training Fund Act*, provides financial support for a range of traineeship schemes aimed at enhancing young people's employability. Crucially, the *2011 Social Welfare and Pension Act* has provided for a number of measures to facilitate the introduction of the new *National Internship Scheme – JobBridge*.¹²⁶ Participants in this scheme will receive an allowance of €50 per week on top of existing social welfare entitlements.

In **Lithuania**, the *2006 Law on Support for Employment* outlines the legal provisions applicable to the vocational training of the unemployed undertaken with the explicit purpose of obtaining a qualification and/or developing professional, work-related skills.¹²⁷ The training, which in many instances includes a traineeship, is carried out in accordance with the *1997 Law on Vocational Education* (as amended in 2000).¹²⁸

In **Luxembourg**, the *2008 Loi sur la Réforme de la Formation Professionnelle*¹²⁹ initiated a major educational reform with the explicit aim of bridging the gap between education and the labour market, not least by promoting and improving the organisation of traineeships. To this end, the law makes compulsory both the assignment of a tutor for the trainee, and the evaluation of the traineeship, i.e. trainees now have to produce an assessment report about their traineeship experience. This law has also introduced quality control and monitoring procedures in order to ensure that employers respect the educational purpose of the traineeship. Specifically, trainees are encouraged to report 'exploitative' traineeships to their employer's union representatives and to the training provider involved in organising the traineeship.

In **Poland**, traineeship-related regulations are fragmented to a rather high degree. That means that there is no single regulatory framework governing all types and aspects of traineeships. For example, according to the *Education System Act of 7 September 1991* (consolidated text: *Dziennik Ustaw 256/2004 No 256, item 2572*) traineeships are compulsory for all types of VET and usually have a duration of four weeks. Traineeship schemes (*stages*) targeted at (unemployed) graduates are regulated by the *Law on Graduate Placements ('praktyki absolwenckie')* of July 17th, 2009 (*Dz.U. z 2009 nr 127 poz. 1052*).¹³⁰ The aim of these traineeships is defined in Article 1 point 2 of the law which also sets a number of eligibility criteria, e.g. participating graduates should be less than 30 years old when starting the traineeship. The law regulates various aspects of graduate traineeships including conditions duration, location, trainee remuneration, etc.

A traineeship-related definition can be found in the *Law on Promotion of Employment and the Labour Market Institutions of April 20th, 2004* (*Dz.U. of 2004, no. 99, pos. 1001*), where the following elements are highlighted: (i) a traineeship (*stage*) is aimed at the unemployed and is, consequently, an instrument specifically designed for those entering the labour market or wishing to return to the labour market; (ii) it should contribute to the trainee's (stagiaire's) learning and professional development – it is not about the trainee carrying out work-related activities of regular staff; rather, learning refers to the acquisition of practical knowledge, competences and skills deemed essential for tasks specific to a particular job;

¹²⁶ <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/2011/en/act/pub/0009/index.html>

¹²⁷ http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_e?p_id=294874&p_query=&p_tr2=

¹²⁸ http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_e?p_id=123796

¹²⁹ http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Luxembourg/Luxembourg_recueil_lois_formation_professionnelle.pdf

¹³⁰ <http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/SERIAL/82817/90966/F1992405784/POL82817.pdf>

(iii) the process of learning takes place in a work environment; (iv) its maximum duration is 12 months; and (v) learning occurs within a training, as opposed to an employment-related relationship. The last element in particular is meant to offer protection of *stagiaires* from potential employer exploitation. The labour market institutions are in charge of organising, administering and overseeing these traineeships.¹³¹

4.2.1 Case Law in relation to Traineeships

Case law or quasi-legal instruments regarding traineeships, apprenticeships and vocational training can also be found in some countries (e.g. BG, DE, DK, EL, MT, UK, etc.). Indeed, in the face of the rapid expansion of traineeships across the EU, individuals, trade unions and youth organisations have started testing the law in courts. Significantly, the number of cases where trainees have successfully secured damages for unpaid work, had their period of traineeship recognised as employment, etc., is increasing.

For example, in **Greece** a growing amount of case or soft law has started to accumulate as regards certain types of traineeships, most notably traineeships undertaken under the old *STAGE programme*. Specifically, the successive renewals of traineeship contracts meant that the length of one's traineeship (stage) in the public and municipal sectors could last for years (instead of a limited period of up to 18 months as initially foreseen). In a number of court cases brought in by trainees and their associations, Greek courts, have decreed that, if one is employed as a trainee for a significant period of time, this cannot be considered a traineeship with a learning focus but proper employment (e.g. Court Decision No 6920/2010).

Similarly, in the **UK** in recent years case law in the form of court rulings relating to traineeships has started to accumulate. For example, in November 2009 an Employment Tribunal found that a trainee who worked for a London film production company and who had only had expenses reimbursed, was entitled to recover payment of wages after her traineeship ended. This was due to the fact that she was given work normally undertaken by regular staff. More recently, in 2011, an Employment Tribunal ruled that a trainee, whose position had been advertised as unpaid, was entitled to pay and holidays because, although no formal contract existed, the extent of her tasks (including managing and hiring other trainees) implied a contractual employment relationship.

4.3 Sectors and Professions covered by Regulatory Frameworks

Specific professions require the completion of compulsory traineeships as part of mandatory professional training. These are covered by the regulations developed for these professions by relevant bodies and professional associations. In almost all MS, the most regulated professions with long periods of traineeships are: (i) medicine, nursing, pharmacy, dentistry, psychology, psychotherapy, veterinary medicine (e.g. AT, BE, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, EL, FI, FR, HU, IT, LU, MT, NL, RO, SE, SI, SK, UK, etc.); and (ii) law (lawyers, barristers, judges) (e.g. AT, BE, CY, CZ, DE, EL, ES, HU, IT, LU, NL, PL, RO, SI, SK, UK, etc.). Compulsory traineeships are also associated with some technical occupations such as architects and engineers (e.g. AT, BE, CY, CZ, DE, EL, ES, FI, FR, IT, LV, NL, PL, RO, UK, etc.). In these cases, the practical experience gained through traineeships is seen as a requirement for the license to practice. Moreover, such professions, including training requirements, are subject to strict regulations by either government and/or relevant national professional bodies and associations.

Italy stands out for its highly regulated framework as regards the so called 'liberal professions' (e.g. doctors, lawyers, architects, engineers, accountants, etc.), all of which require a compulsory traineeship (the *praticantato*) and a final compulsory assessment

¹³¹ <http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/ELECTRONIC/68870/91743/F628094273/POL68870.pdf>

(*esame di stato*) to obtain a licence to practice. The specific rules which regulate this type of traineeships (*praticantato*) differ from one profession to another. They generally specify the duration of the traineeship, minimum requirements for candidates (e.g. a university degree), and documentation certifying that the traineeship took place (e.g. signatures, references of candidate in meetings' minutes and reports, etc.). Due to the specific obligations of the different parties involved and the lack of contractual form, a type of employment contract is sometimes used. However, the way these traineeships are actually implemented differs widely from the existing regulations, and has led to accusations of trainee exploitation. Unlike the VET traineeships, there is no formal legal obligation to define the trainee's rights or contractual duties. There is no specific legal protection in terms of trainee-related insurance coverage or compensation.¹³²

In most countries, teaching professions also require the completion of a compulsory traineeship (e.g. BE, CY, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FR, HU, IE, IT, LU, LV, NL, PL, RO, SE, SI, UK, etc). For example, in **Cyprus**, there is a legal framework concerning the mandatory professional training associated with teacher training. According to Articles 28C and 32(4) of the *Public Education Office Acts*, in order to be appointed as a secondary or technical education teacher, one should have successfully completed the *Pedagogical Training Programme of Prospective Secondary and Technical Education Teachers* which, *inter alia*, includes a school-based traineeship.

Other professions have less strict rules on licence to practice, but there are optional additional qualifications which require a period of practical work experience. For example, chartered accountants are required to take a further qualification which includes a traineeship. This is, for example, the case in **Cyprus**, where in order to obtain the chartered accountant qualification, one should (i) successfully pass the professional exams set by The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW) and/or The Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA); and (ii) undertake a three-year traineeship under a supervisor registered with the Institute of Certified Public Accountants of Cyprus (ICPAC).¹³³

In general, in all MS, regulation of traineeships associated with mandatory professional training is largely the responsibility of professional and/or regulatory bodies which typically set criteria and standards for professional qualifications. However, the extent of regulation of traineeships by professional bodies can vary. For example, in the **UK** the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) regulates both the content of training and working conditions for trainee solicitors.¹³⁴ This, in turn, means that only law firms approved by the SRA can take on trainee lawyers. On the other hand, the Architects Registration Board, the UK's statutory regulator of architects, does not lay down general mandatory rules on the content or working conditions of placements undertaken by trainee architects; however, schools of architecture and professional associations such as the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) can set down minimum quality requirements in relation to the undertaking of traineeships in architect practices.¹³⁵

4.4 Difference between Apprenticeships and Traineeships

In the majority of MS a generally recognised or a national definition of apprentice exists, which is different from that of a trainee. In some countries, there are specific regulations

¹³² It would, however, appear that steps are being taken to address such issues with Article 3, paragraph 5c) of *Legislative Decree No. 138 of 13 August 2011*. This establishes the principles which must be transposed during reform of the professional associations (to be enacted within one year from the date the Decree takes effect) for traineeships which grant access to professions accredited by professional associations. In particular, it states that '*Regulations affecting traineeships for access to the profession must adhere to criteria that ensure the actual performance of the training activity and its constant revision to meet the needs of guaranteeing the best practice of the profession. The trainee shall be paid fair compensation as an indemnity, proportional to her/his actual contribution.*'

¹³³ <http://www.icpac.org.cy/>

¹³⁴ <http://www.sra.org.uk/>

¹³⁵ <http://www.pedr.co.uk/textpage.asp?menu=1a&sortorder=80&area=main>

which set out the conditions for traineeships and apprenticeships, usually in the form of a *Vocational Education Law* (e.g. DE, EE, IT, LT, SI, etc.). In others, these conditions are included in other laws, which are not specific to traineeships or apprenticeships, such as employment legislation.¹³⁶ In some MS a body of case law applicable to apprenticeships and/or vocational training has also accumulated over time (e.g. BG, DE, DK, EL, MT, UK, etc.). However, this is not the case for most other countries (e.g. ES, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, PL, PT, RO, SK, etc.).¹³⁷

The study's findings suggest the following distinction between apprenticeships and traineeships:

- An apprenticeship is based on an employment contract. An apprentice has a contractual status which is similar to that of an employee. The contractual basis of the apprenticeship regulates entitlements to both compensation and social security and insurance coverage. Crucially, it also defines the working conditions between the apprentice and the employer with a specific view to the learning content of the placement.
- Apprenticeships are always a component of a formal education programme and lead to an accredited qualification or certificate which, in turn, qualifies a person to work in a specific occupation.
- A traineeship is not so clearly defined or tightly regulated. A major feature of traineeships is that, in contrast to apprenticeships, these are either partly or not at all regulated. In some countries, the trainee status and/or rights and conditions are defined to a great detail, while in most these are only regulated at a rather general level (as part of other regulations related to education and training and/or employment). Certain types of traineeships, notably those offered in the open market tend to be either unregulated or the least regulated in most countries. In the overwhelming majority of MS, again in contrast to apprenticeships, the traineeship contract (under all types of traineeships) is explicitly *not* an employment contract.
- Given this variety in legislation within and across countries, there is also a multitude of forms, content and purposes of traineeships. In that regard, traineeships in the open market constitute the opposite pole to apprenticeships. What both arrangements share is some kind of work-based *learning function*, whose content and structure are however much more loosely defined in the case of traineeships.
- Often in dual or alternance-based VET systems, traineeships are, like apprenticeships, regulated in terms of length and content (and sometimes remuneration).
- Again, like apprenticeships, the degree and scope of regulation for traineeships which form part of mandatory professional training is quite high.

A key common element shared by both traineeships and apprenticeships is their focus on learning and on-the-job training through the acquisition by a young person of practical work-related experience. In addition, one of the key aims of both schemes is to facilitate young people's entry into the labour market. A common model in MS which combines features of apprenticeships and traineeships is alternance-based education and training, where school-based instruction is accompanied by work-based traineeships which promote practical learning in genuine work settings.

The following Table summarises distinct features of both traineeships and apprenticeships. In reality, the study found overlaps between the two, although apprenticeships are typically highly regulated as opposed to traineeships where there is strong variation and usually less regulation.

¹³⁶ GHK, (2011). *Study on a possible Framework to Facilitate Transnational Mobility for Placements at Enterprises*, Report for DG EAC, April

¹³⁷ European Commission, (2008). *System Experts' Network Internships Questionnaire Summary*, Internal Document

Table 4.1: Apprenticeships vs. Traineeships

	Apprenticeship	Traineeship
Scope	Full qualifying professional or vocational education & training profile	Complementing educational programme or individual CV
Goal	Professional profile/qualification	Documented practical experience
Educational level	Usually EQF level 3-5	Traineeships can be found as part of programmes on all EQF levels -common forms in (pre-) vocational education, in higher education and after graduation (sometimes compulsory)
Content	Acquisition of the full set of knowledge, skills & competences (KSC) of an occupation	Vocational &/or work/career orientation, acquisition of parts of competences, knowledge and skills of an occupation or a profession
On-the-job learning	Equally important to coursework	Usually complementing coursework or optional extra
Time frame	Determined, middle-to-long-term	Varying, short-term to middle-term
Length	Usually up to four years	Usually less than one year
Employment status	Employee status	Usually student or other trainee status; sometimes volunteer status or not clearly defined status
	Contracted/employed apprentice	Student/trainee often based on an agreement with employer or school
Compensation	Remunerated – amount collectively negotiated or set by law	Varying remuneration, often unpaid
	Apprenticeship allowance which takes into account net costs and benefits for the individual and the employer	Unregulated financial compensation
Governance	Strongly regulated, often on a tripartite basis	Unregulated or partly regulated
Actors	Often social partners, training providers	Individuals, companies, state, educational institutions

The Working Group on Mobility for Apprentices has recognized that definitions and scope of apprenticeships or VET systems based on alternance-based education and training vary from country to country and has formulated a slightly different set of core criteria at

European level: (i) apprenticeships concern IVET; an apprenticeship is an alternance-based training scheme in which training takes place at both a workplace (company) and at school; and (iii) the enterprise plays an active role in the content and structure of the training programme as well as deciding whether a person can leave for mobility purposes.¹³⁸

This chimes with the Cedefop definition of apprenticeships as 'systematic, long-term training alternating periods at the workplace and in an education institution or training centre. The apprentice is contractually linked to the employer and receives remuneration (wage or allowance). The employer assumes responsibility for providing the trainee with training leading to a specific occupation'.¹³⁹

In line with the above discussion, in most MS the legal position of trainees is *not* equal to that of a regular employee, or apprentice. Examples where trainees are typically contractually protected include (i) the signing of a temporary employment contract for paid traineeships (e.g. BE, CZ, etc.) and the (usually) tripartite traineeship agreement signed for traineeships linked to education and training, notably VET (e.g. DE, EE, EL, FR, IT, LT, LU, LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, SE, etc.). Interestingly, in the UK if a trainee is classified as worker as opposed to volunteer, then he/she is covered by national minimum wage legislation.

¹³⁸ Working Group on Mobility for Apprentices, (2010). *How to adapt the present and future Lifelong Learning Programme to support the Mobility of Apprentices and Persons in Alternate Vocational Training*, Report for the European Commission, February,
http://ec.europa.eu/education/vocational-education/doc/apprenticesreport_en.pdf

¹³⁹ <http://www.eqavet.eu/ga/gns/glossary/a/apprenticeship.aspx>

Table 4.2: Legislative/Regulatory Frameworks in relation to Traineeships

	AT	BE	BG	CY	CZ	DE	DK	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HU	IE	IT	LT	LU	LV	MT	NL	PL	PT	RO	SE	SI	SK	UK	
Whether there is a legal definition of traineeships/trainees	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	x	x	x	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x
Whether there is a specific regulation on traineeships	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	x	x	x	x	x	x	✓	x	x	✓	✓	x	
Whether there is a specific target group of regulations	x	✓	x	x	✓	✓	x	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	x	
Whether regulation cover specific areas/professions	✓	?	x	✓	✓	✓	?	?	✓	✓	✓	?	x	x	?	?	?	?	?	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	
Whether there is a concept generally accepted or common understanding of a national definition of traineeships/trainees	✓	x	✓	x	✓	✓	x	x	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	x	x	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	
Whether there are legal provisions about length/duration of traineeships	x	✓	✓	x	x	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	?	✓	x	✓	x	?	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	

	AT	BE	BG	CY	CZ	DE	DK	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HU	IE	IT	LT	LU	LV	MT	NL	PL	PT	RO	SE	SI	SK	UK
Whether there are legal provisions of remuneration for traineeships	x	?	x	x	x	?	x	?	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	x	x	✓	x	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x
Whether there are formal obligations for parties involved (e.g. trainees, employers, educational institutes)	?	✓	✓	?	x	✓	x	?	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Whether there are legal/administrative barriers for traineeships undertaken by foreign EU students	?	✓	?	?	?	✓	x	?	✓	✓	?	✓	?	✓	x	?	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	?	✓	x	x	?	?

Key: (✓) Yes (X) No (?) Unavailable/Unclear

5. Traineeships: Diversity on the Ground

This section summarises the information about the availability of and access to traineeships in the various MS. In the first part, we present the evidence on availability by the five types of traineeships under study and we then broaden the discussion to consider the recruitment process and equity of access to the different types of traineeships, including the socio-economic background of trainees.

Although due to lack of aggregate and comparable numerical data it is difficult to measure the exact magnitude of the phenomenon, there is a definite upward trend in almost all MS of most forms of traineeships, including those in the open market. That said, since traineeships are so strongly interwoven with the labour market, existing literature suggests that the number of traineeships has decreased across a range of sectors as a result of the economic crisis. Indeed, in 2009, the OECD recommended policy action to prevent an apparent reduction in the availability of traineeships due to the economic crisis.¹⁴⁰

Our study identified a more varied impact of the crisis on the availability of traineeships both between and within MS. For example, there has been a drop in traineeships in **Estonia** as opposed to no significant decrease in **Finland**. The difficulty in obtaining traineeships (and apprenticeships) was also identified in a number of other countries (e.g. DK, EL, ES, FR, IE, LU, PT, RO, SE, etc.). In the **UK**, although the crisis has resulted in a decrease in legal and accountancy traineeships, it has also led to an increase in traineeships outside formal education, i.e. in the open market. Indeed, there is some evidence to suggest that employers in the UK increased their recruitment of trainees (in the open market) during the recession.¹⁴¹

5.1 Traineeships as part of Active Labour Market Policies for Unemployed Young People

Traineeship programmes as part of ALMPs have been introduced or expanded in most MS (e.g. AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, DK, EE, EL, ES, FR, FI, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, UK, etc.) due to the proven effectiveness of schemes which link training and education with the world of work in increasing youth-related labour market entry rates. In the main, traineeships which form part of ALMPs seek to address the following:

- **Rising numbers of unemployed young people in the aftermath of the Great Recession.** Examples of government-sponsored traineeship programmes aimed at tackling youth unemployment were found in many MS (e.g. BE, CY, DK, EE, EL, ES, IE, FI, FR, HU, LT, LU, LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, SE, UK, etc.). For example, the *Actieplan Jeugdwerkloosheid 2009-2011* (Action Plan on Youth Unemployment 2009-2011) and the *Wet investeren in jongeren* (Investment in Youth Act, WIJ) implemented in the **Netherlands** in order to combat youth unemployment actively promote traineeships.¹⁴² Similarly, the *Employment 2010 Initiative* (IE2010) and the *National Reform Programme 2020* in **Portugal** include traineeship-related measures aimed at facilitating the transition of the young unemployed to the labour market.¹⁴³ The **Austrian** government,

¹⁴⁰ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/OECD, (2009a). *Op.Cit.*

¹⁴¹ Enterprise Europe Network London/EEN-London, (2010). *Employing Interns in the UK*, December, <http://www.londonchamber.co.uk/docimages/8199.pdf>;

Low Pay Commission, (2011). *National Minimum Wage*, Low Pay Commission Report 2011, April, http://www.lowpay.gov.uk/lowpay/report/pdf/Revised_Report_PDF_with_April_date.PDF

¹⁴² <http://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/jongeren-en-werk/werkzoekende-jongeren-en-jeugdwerkloosheid/actieplan-jeugdwerkloosheid>

¹⁴³ European Commission, (2011). *Portugal 2020 - National Reform Programme*, http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nrp/nrp_portugal_en.pdf

as a result of the crisis, has extended a scheme which 'guarantees' young people aged between 19 and 24 either a subsidised job or a traineeship. One critical element of the **Cypriot Plan for Accelerated Company-based Initial Vocational and Education Training programmes** which is targeted at new labour market entrants and/or young unemployed is the combination of theoretical, school/college-based education and training with the acquisition of practical work experience through a company-based traineeship.¹⁴⁴ In a similar vein, in **Latvia** an initiative was introduced in 2010 which provides practical training to unemployed 18–24 year-olds who have finished secondary or higher education, but have been unable to secure employment.

- **Low skilled or unqualified young people due to early school leaving** (e.g. ES, FR, IE, LU, MT, SE, etc). ALMP programmes targeted at this group often attempt to provide young people with a basic qualification and facilitate their entry into the labour market. Initiatives aimed at tackling early school leaving through traineeships include the *National Vocational Training Programmes* in **Spain** aimed at improving the social and labour market inclusion of students who did not complete lower secondary education; **Ireland's Youthreach programme** for unemployed early school leavers aged 15 to 20 and designed to help them return to learning and acquire accredited qualifications; *Second Chance Schools* and other similar 'second chance' programmes (e.g. AT, BE, DK, EL, ES, FR, HU, LU, SE, UK, etc.).
- **Young people at risk of social exclusion.** In a number of MS ALMPs include traineeship-related measures specifically targeted at disadvantaged young people (e.g. BE, CY, EE, ES, FR, IE, LU, NL, MT, SE, UK, etc.). For example, in the **UK**, the *Work Experience Programme*, the UK's Coalition government's flagship 'back to work' programme, which involves an eight-week work experience placements, targets unemployed young people with significant social disadvantages. In **France**, the *2009 Emergency Plan for Youth Employment* also included traineeship programmes for young people aged between 18 and 22 at risk of social exclusion (e.g. school leavers coming from disadvantaged areas).
- In a growing number of MS (e.g. BG, CY, EL, ES, FR, IE, IT, PL, PT, SE, SI, SK, UK, etc.) traineeships have also been extended to include highly skilled young people, including graduates who have been hit particularly hard by the crisis. For example, the **Swedish Young Potentials Programme** is targeted at graduates as are the **Romanian START Internship Programme** and the **Portuguese Programa Estágios Profissionais**.

Traineeships as part of ALMPs for Young People including Graduates

- **Portugal:** the ESF-supported *Programa Estágios Profissionais* has targeted young people who have completed their secondary and tertiary education and allow them to acquire practical work experience through traineeships
- **Romania:** the ESF-supported *Sectoral Operational Programme for Human Resource Development (SOP HRD)* is seeking to enhance the employability of upper secondary and tertiary education students through traineeships
- **UK:** the aim of the *Graduate Talent Pool* initiative, launched in 2009 is to improve, through free access to traineeship vacancies, the employability of recent UK graduates
- **Denmark:** the third *Youth Package* initiative, introduced in July 2011 includes several traineeship-related measures, including incentives to encourage SMEs to hire highly skilled young people and increase the supply of traineeships by employers
- **Luxembourg:** The 2006 youth-related reform of ALMPs, the educational reform initiated in 2008 and the 2009 law on *Mesures Temporaires pour l'Emploi des Jeunes* place an increased emphasis on work placements and traineeships

¹⁴⁴ Human Resource Development Authority/HRDA, (2011a). *Op.Cit.*

- **The Netherlands:** The *Actieplan Jeugwerkloosheid* was implemented with a budget of €250 million (for the period 2009 to 2011). The Action Plan consists of five main projects, of which three aim to keep young people in school, whereas the other two are part of ALMPs and seek to help them enter the labour market. So far, these programmes have provided 68,000 young people with a job, learning/working placement, or a traineeship.

5.2 Traineeships as Compulsory or Optional Part of Academic and/or Vocational Study Curricula (i.e. Traineeships during Education)

Across the EU it has become increasingly common for traineeships to be formally integrated into curriculum requirements for both upper secondary and higher (vocational and academic) education qualifications (e.g. AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, EL, FI, FR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, MT, NL, RO, SE, SK, PL, UK, etc.). This is due to the fact that a considerable body of evidence has consistently shown that educational systems which integrate theoretical knowledge with work-related practical training – be it apprenticeships, traineeships or other forms of alternance-based education – are more effective than others in assisting the school-to-work transition. In general, traineeships within an educational programme are considered to be a critical and integral element of the study curriculum since they allow students to: (i) apply their theoretical knowledge in real work settings; (ii) become familiar with the world of work, including working conditions and norms and routines; (iii) develop work experience relevant to employer needs, and thus enhance their employability; (iv) show their abilities, knowledge and competences to a potential employer as well as develop a proper sense of professionalism; (v) start building their professional networks; (vi) enter a particular profession; etc.

At the same time traineeships help educational institutions forge closer links with employers, thus creating a two-way interaction and exchange of knowledge between education and industry. This can, in turn, contribute to the incorporation of new and emerging labour market demands and trends into study curricula, so that these are more relevant and responsive to the skills and knowledge requirements of employers. The latter also have the opportunity to, *inter alia*, screen and select the most talented candidates, expand their talent pool and benefit from the trainees' new ideas, fresh thinking and creativity.

The type, focus and duration of these educational traineeships are typically independently decided by either the state (especially as regards upper secondary and higher vocational education) and/or educational institutions (e.g. BE, EE, EL, FI, IT, RO, UK, etc.). That said, the level of this autonomy varies by type of institution and specialism. Typically, courses are run by HEIs (e.g. AT, BE, BG, CY, EL, ES, FI, FR, HU, LT, MT, NL, PL, RO, SE, UK, etc.); VET schools or colleges (e.g. AT, CY, DE, EL, FR, HU, IE, IT, LV, MT, NL, PL, RO, UK, etc.); private training providers (e.g. EL, HU, IE, IT, SE, UK, etc.); municipalities (e.g. NL, SE, etc.); etc.

Moreover, the extent to which a traineeship is a compulsory element of the curriculum also depends on the type of education (vocational or academic). **Traineeships** (also called work or industrial placements), lasting at least six months, **have always been a compulsory part of higher vocational education**. For example, the UAS which have strong professional focus and put a special emphasis on practical application of knowledge have always included compulsory traineeships as part of their study curricula (e.g. AT, BE, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, IE, IT, LT, LV, NL, PL, PT, SE, SI, SK, UK, etc.). To this end, in the **Netherlands**, traineeships lasting at least six months are integrated in the curriculum

in higher professional education (HBO) and universities work closely with employers through a standard 'traineeship agreement'.¹⁴⁵

However, in the last few years **traineeships are increasingly becoming an integral part of all/most academic study curricula**. Linked to this is the fact that there seems to be a major policy push for traineeships to form (compulsory or optional) part of study curricula, not least because these are seen as an effective tool in facilitating youth labour market transitions. For example, as mentioned earlier, in **Ireland**, as part of the *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030*, there is a major policy push towards traineeships (called work placements) being integrated into university study curricula. In particular, universities and institutes are expected to deepen employer engagement in the areas of programme design and planning with a specific focus on enhancing the work placement experience for students.¹⁴⁶ Similarly, the **Estonian Higher Education Strategy 2006-2015** makes explicit reference to the need to link the study curriculum with labour market needs through, *inter alia*, student/graduate traineeships.¹⁴⁷ Indeed, in Estonia traineeships as part of professional higher education are compulsory and regulated, while 15 per cent of the study curriculum should consist of practical training in companies.

With considerable ESF support, the relevant *Operational Programmes 2007-2013* of both **Greece** and **Cyprus** also actively promote the setting up of 'Offices for Traineeships' in both higher vocational and academic educational institutions. These offices are tasked with forging closer ties with employers and, crucially, with promoting student and graduate traineeships in companies.^{148,149}

In the **UK**, traineeships do not form a compulsory part of higher education study curricula. However, a number of universities offer sandwich courses which are undergraduate degree vocational courses that include a sandwich or industrial placement, usually in the penultimate year of study. Although such placements cannot be seen as traineeships in their strictest sense, they have similar aims. In recent years in the UK, the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) promoted and funded traineeships as part of either undergraduate study programmes (*Undergraduate Internships in the Professions*) and/or post-graduate schemes, specifically targeted at unemployed graduates (*Graduate Internships*).¹⁵⁰ For example, between January 2010 and March 2011 when the graduate scheme ended, 7,900 graduate traineeships were completed.¹⁵¹ That said, a recent international survey among HEIs found that universities in the US make much more use of student traineeships than their counterparts in the UK or Australia.¹⁵²

Finland has also a long-standing tradition of incorporating various types of traineeships in both academic and vocational study curricula. Specifically, university courses, especially in certain sectors, e.g. education/teaching, social work and healthcare, etc., involve traineeships as a compulsory part of their curriculum. Moreover, Finnish Universities increasingly integrate traineeships in their study curricula. For example, in the University of

¹⁴⁵ European Commission, (2008). *SYSDEM Experts' Network Questionnaire: Member States' Legislation On Internships: The Netherlands*, 2.4.2008

<http://zoeken.minocw.nl/Zoekdienst/minocw.nl/ocw?term=maatschappelijke+stage>, Stand: April 2008

¹⁴⁶ Sheridan, I. and Linehan, M., (2011). *Work Placement in Third-Level Programmes*, CIT Press, Bishopstown, Cork, Ireland

¹⁴⁷ <http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Estonia/Estonia-Higher-Education-Strategy-2006-2015.pdf>

¹⁴⁸ Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs, (2007). *OP Education and Lifelong Learning 2007-2013*, October, <http://www.alfavita.gr/eqiklio/epdiabioymathisi.pdf>

¹⁴⁹ Planning Bureau of the Republic of Cyprus, (2007). *Operational Programme Employment, Human Capital and Social Cohesion 2007-2013*, http://www.structuralfunds.org.cy/uploadfiles/perilipsi_EP_apasxolisi.pdf

¹⁵⁰ CRAC and Oakleigh Consulting, (2011). *Increasing Opportunities for High Quality Higher Education Work Experience*, Report for HEFCE, July, <http://nases.org.uk/files/he%20work%20exp%20hefce%20report11.pdf>

¹⁵¹ <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/whatwedo/kes/ee/graduateemployability/internships/>

¹⁵² Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, (2011). *Supporting Graduate Employability: HEI Practice in Other Countries*, June, <http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/9869/1/11-913-supporting-graduate-employability-other-countries>

Helsinki there is provision for a traineeship in all of its undergraduate degree courses which, in some cases, is a compulsory element of the curriculum. Interestingly, each department in the University has a number of 'traineeship grants', which enable students to complete traineeship programmes, typically in the public sector. Similarly, the Finnish scheme of on-the-job learning in vocational training (introduced as part of a wide-ranging VET reform) is a good example of linking education with work experience.

In **France**, the most effective traineeships which facilitate sustainable access of young people to the labour market are considered to be those which combine study with work experience (alternance-based schemes of education and training), e.g. *Contrats de Professionnalisation*, apprenticeships, etc. Moreover, traineeships, lasting two to six months, are common in the curricula of French HEIs and are usually undertaken during the third or fourth year of studies. These are typically organised, monitored and overseen by university-based offices specifically tasked with improving the labour market integration of students and graduates (*Bureaux d'aide à l'insertion professionnelle des étudiants*). The overall French approach aims at promoting regulated traineeships through linking all types of such placements to an explicit learning dimension (in the form of being associated with an educational institution and/or programme) and setting minimum standards for the trainee's terms and conditions, including compensation (mainly through the *Convention de Stage*).

In **Germany**, traineeships are also increasingly integrated into higher education curricula. Interestingly, the overwhelming majority (85 per cent) of German university graduates who are not obliged to undertake traineeship as part of their study curriculum, complete one or more traineeships voluntarily. About 52 per cent have held at least one trainee position, 23 per cent at least two, while eight per cent have completed at least three traineeships.¹⁵³ A similar situation exists in **Poland** where, although traineeships are compulsory and form an integral part of (vocational) study curricula and MA/MSc studies, students across *all* disciplines are increasingly seeking traineeships on a voluntary basis. In the same vein, in **Denmark** traineeships as part of higher education study curricula undertaken voluntarily by students have become increasingly popular in recent years. These usually last four to six months and are linked to the content of the student's field of study.

In **Bulgaria**, traineeships, including summer traineeships, form compulsory part of study curricula and are recognised towards academic credits, where such a credit system exists. Significantly, traineeships undertaken as part of one's studies are considered to be as important as more conventional elements of the course, i.e. it is not 'an optional extra'. As mentioned above, the same applies to all traineeships associated with the study curricula of UAS. That said, it seems that traineeships linked to educational programmes and study curricula are not as widespread in the **Czech Republic**, where less than 20 per cent of students participate in such schemes. This is, however, changing with the current Czech *Operational Programme Education for Competitiveness 2007-2013* actively promoting traineeships as part of study curricula.

Educational traineeships are usually undertaken towards the end of educational programmes and have a typical duration of between two and six months. This, however, can vary by the educational level of the traineeship and the type of educational institution. In **Greece**, for example, in TEIs a student must complete a six-month traineeship after the last semester of their studies, while in **Italy**, traineeships lasting 12 months have become widespread.

The above discussion shows the great variation which exists between Member States as regards the availability and organisation of traineeships. Significantly, the proportion of graduates undertaking traineeships or work placements as part of higher education studies vary widely across the Member States, with high take-up among graduates in the Netherlands (87 per cent), France (84 per cent), Finland (80 per cent) and Germany (79 per

¹⁵³ Grün, D., and Hecht, H., (2010). *Generation Praktikum? Prekäre Beschäftigungsformen von Hochschulabsolventinnen und -absolventen*, Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund, Berlin

cent); rather modest in Spain (57 per cent) and Austria (45 per cent); and rather low in the UK (32 per cent) and Italy (22 per cent).¹⁵⁴

Traineeships as Vocational and/or Academic Study Curricula

- **Ireland:** as part of the *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030*, there is a major policy push towards traineeships (called 'work placements') as part of university study curricula. Over 411 university courses include a traineeship among 23 Irish HEIs. Every year, about 10,577 students undertake a traineeship in non-clinical programmes.¹⁵⁵
- **Estonia:** the *Higher Education Strategy 2006-2015* makes explicit reference to the need to link the study curriculum with labour market requirements through student/graduate traineeships.
- **Cyprus:** the *OP Human Capital & Social Cohesion 2007-2013* promotes the setting up of 'Enterprise Liaison Offices' tasked with organising short-term student traineeships in companies.
- **Finland:** the *Government Decree on University Degrees (794/2004)* actively promotes traineeships as part of university degrees in order to help student gain practical experience.
- **The Netherlands:** compulsory traineeships (lasting of at least six months and worth 30 ECTS credits) are integrated in the curriculum in higher professional education (HBO), while universities work closely with employers through a standard 'traineeship agreement'.

5.3 Traineeships as Part of Mandatory Professional Training

Across MS there are certain professions where there is a legal requirement to undertake a compulsory traineeship as part of mandatory professional training either in the final years of undergraduate studies or just after graduation. Such traineeships are considered to be a critical element of the final qualification and, in most cases, are a pre-requisite for licence to practice. They are both well-defined and regulated in terms of learning content, duration, quality assurance, etc., and are usually overseen by relevant professional associations and bodies in each MS.

The most common professions which involve compulsory traineeships include medicine/nursing (e.g. AT, BE, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, EL, FI, FR, HU, IT, LU, MT, RO, SE, SI, SK, UK, etc.); law (e.g. AT, BE, CY, CZ, DE, EL, ES, HU, IT, LU, NL, PL, RO, SE, SI, SK, UK, etc.) (medicine and law, in particular, having been integrated into curricula for a long time); education/teaching (e.g. BE, BG, CY, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, MT, NL, PL, RO, SE, SI, UK, etc.); and architecture/engineering (e.g. AT, BE, CZ, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LV, MT, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, UK, etc.). Other professions where practical training is mandatory include media/journalism (e.g. AT, BE, DE, DK, EL, ES, FI, FR, IT, LT, LV, MT, NL, SE, UK, etc.); psychology and social work (e.g. AT, BE, DK, EE, EL, FI, HU, IE, IT, LV, MT, SE, SI, SK, SE, UK, etc.); tourism and hospitality (e.g. AT, BE, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, EL, FR, HU, IE, IT, LU, LV, MT, PL, PT, RO, SI, SK, UK, etc.); banking/accountancy (e.g. BE, CY, DE, FR, HU, IE, IT, LU, RO, SK, UK, etc.); pharmacy

¹⁵⁴ Brennan, J. Patel, K., and Tang, W., (2009). *Diversity in the Student Learning Experience and Time devoted to Study: A Comparative Analysis of the UK and European Evidence*, Report to HEFCE by the Centre for Higher Education Research and Information, The Open University, April

¹⁵⁵ Buckley, J., and El Amoud, L., (2010). 'Undergraduate Work Placement Programmes in Ireland: Issues and Solutions', Paper presented at 13th Irish Academy of Management Conference, Cork Institute of Technology, 1-3 September.

(e.g. EE, FI, HU, IT, RO, SE, SK, etc.); etc. Interestingly, in **Slovenia** and **Slovakia** there are compulsory traineeships in public administration.

The length of traineeships as part of professional training varies depending on the specific profession (e.g. AT, DE, EL, MT, RO, SI, etc.), with the duration of the traineeship for some professions is strictly regulated by law (e.g. AT, BE, CY, DE, EL, HU, LU, IT, RO, SI, etc.). For example, law trainees need to undertake one to two years' of practical training, while trainee teachers are usually required to gain practical school-based experience for up to one year. Overall, the actual type, range and method of delivery of these traineeships differ between MS. In some countries these are specified in collective agreements between trade union and employers. For example, in **Germany** such an agreement stipulates the length and content requirements of traineeships undertaken by trainee journalists.

Despite the high degree of regulation of mandatory professional traineeships, there are growing concerns about the potential for abuse and exploitation of young people undertaking such placements (e.g. BE, EE, EL, ES, IT, LV, RO, SI, UK, etc.). For example, in both **Greece** and **Italy** there has been long-standing criticism of exploitation of law trainees. Similarly, in the **UK** and **Belgium** there are concerns about the way trainees in certain types of mandatory professional training (particularly in medicine) are treated with regards to workload and working hours.

Crucially, a common criticism levelled at these traineeships is that access is often obtained through informal and personal networks which, in turn, raises important issues of equity of access and one's capacity to build or capitalise on social capital. The relative difficulty of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to develop such social capital through appropriate social contacts and professional networks can create a major barrier to entry in certain professions for them.¹⁵⁶

Interestingly, as a result of the Great Recession, the difficulty of sourcing good quality professional traineeships in a reality of decreasing numbers of placements was also identified as a significant issue in a number of MS (e.g. DK, EE, IE, LV, RO, UK, etc.). For example, a drop in legal traineeships was observed in some countries, e.g. the number of new training contracts for solicitors fell by 18 per cent between 2009 and 2010.¹⁵⁷ Similarly, lower numbers of traineeships linked to accounting, banking and finance were also reported.

The above discussion is summarised in the Box below.

Main Features of Traineeships which form Part of Mandatory Professional Training

- They are associated with certain professions, e.g. medicine/nursing; law; education/teaching; architecture/engineering; etc.
- They are a critical element of the final qualification and a pre-requisite for licence to practice
- They are well-defined and tightly regulated with clearly specified learning content and quality assurance procedures as well
- Where content is defined, this is often done at national-sectoral level by relevant regulatory and/or professional bodies which are usually responsible for overseeing them

¹⁵⁶ The Panel on Fair Access to the Professions, (2009). *Unleashing Aspiration: the Panel on Fair Access to the Professions*, July, <http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/corporate/migrateddd/publications/p/panel-fair-access-to-professions-final-report-21july09.pdf>

¹⁵⁷ The Law Society, (2011). *Trends in the Solicitors' Profession - 2010 Annual Statistical Report*

- Exploitation issues may arise from incorrect implementation of regulations (e.g. no or insufficient compensation, heavy workload, long working hours, lack of relevant content, lack of transparency in recruitment, etc.) (e.g. BE, EL, IT, SI, UK, etc.)

5.4 Traineeships in the Open Market after Graduation/Completion of Studies

In recent years there has been an expansion of traineeships which young people undertake in the open market, typically after graduation and/or the completion of mandatory professional training. Such traineeships can be classified in three distinct groups: (i) *structured traineeships which form part of Graduate Trainee Schemes*, usually run by large organisations and/or multinationals; (ii) *traineeship schemes promoted by Governments* as part of youth-related employment programmes, including those targeting graduates; and (iii) *traineeships offered in the open market on an ad hoc basis by organisations*. As shown below, the latter have attracted most criticism in many MS as they tend to be unregulated and, in some cases, associated with reports of trainee exploitation. In addition, they have been criticised and are a source of serious concern for a number of EU-level stakeholders (e.g. European Parliament, CoR, ETUC, YFJ, etc.).

Both the national reports and the case studies completed as part of this EU-wide project found that traineeships in the open market, if characterised by certain quality attributes and standards, can promote an effective match between skills supply and demand. At the same time, they help young people acquire skills and experience which can only be developed in real work settings and, as such, enhance their employability. Significantly, employers increasingly put a premium on young people, including graduates, having acquired work experience through traineeships.

Indeed, this aspect of open market traineeships was underlined in the German, Estonian, Spanish, French, Italian and UK case studies. For example, the German case study revealed a level of scepticism from employers about the real value of university Bachelor's programmes without accompanying work experience in the form of a traineeship. However, according to the Spanish case study, the increased use of traineeships in the open market can, in some instances, become 'an instrument used by firms to find qualified human resources at a low cost'. In general, the criticism levelled at these traineeships relates to their association with low or no pay, lack of educational content, mundane work assigned to the trainee, poor working conditions (including long hours and lack of social security contributions); the substitution of trainees for regular workers; etc. (see also Sections 6.4 and 6.6.4).

Crucially, instead of traineeships being the first (and short) step towards stable employment, in many instances, they fail to help trainees secure quality employment, either with host or another organisation. Indeed, in some countries there are growing concerns that some traineeships are replacing entry level jobs and/or trapping young people in an endless series of such placements, depriving them of the possibility to secure decent work and become fully independent (e.g. AT, BE, DE, EL, ES, FR, IT, PT, UK, etc.).

For example, in **Austria** there is serious concern about the number of traineeships young people are obliged to undertake before securing a 'proper' job. This has, in turn, resulted in the Austrian Government launching in 2010 the *Aktion +6,000* programme aimed at enabling the so-called 'internship generation' to obtain regular employment instead of frequent rounds of traineeships. Companies may receive 50 per cent of the wages for half a year when employing a young person who has completed their training.

Similarly, in both **Italy** and **Spain** most graduates feel increasingly obliged to undertake one (or even a series of) traineeships in order to gain practical, work-related experience while looking for a job. This is quite a wide-spread phenomenon. For example, in **Spain** the *becas (grant/internship)* have become an important and widely used instrument in

promoting the labour market entry of highly skilled young people. To this end, Spanish graduates are increasingly offered by companies unilateral traineeship contracts (*Becas unilaterales de empresas privadas – Becas no convenidas*) which are unregulated, offer minimum social protection to trainees and may lead to their potential exploitation.

In **Germany**, traineeships after graduation aim to prepare university graduates for expert and executive positions, while another type called 'Volontariat' is particularly common in certain sectors such as media and advertising. Within a period of one to two years, depending on experience, the trainee is expected to obtain the skills required for professional practice in these sectors. It has been estimated that some 24 per cent of university graduates work as trainees after graduation, while about 19 per cent of VET graduates undertake a traineeship. In **Austria**, according to the Austrian Labour Force Survey, some 13 per cent of university graduates indicated that they had completed at least one traineeship after graduation. Interestingly, graduates of UAS (who have already completed one traineeship as part of their studies) are less likely to undertake one after graduation (6 per cent) compared with 15 per cent of 'general' university graduates. In general, it is estimated that about 4,000 graduate traineeships per year are undertaken after graduation.

In the **UK**, graduates, whose unemployment rate doubled in the last two years, increasingly seek company traineeships in order to gain a foothold in the labour market. UK companies also increasingly expect that young recruits will have undertaken at least one traineeship.

This seems to be confirmed, to some extent by the recent EU-wide survey conducted by the YFJ in spring 2011. Despite the fact that the survey results cannot be regarded as representative of the EU's entire trainee population, they provide useful insights into the situation of trainees in today's EU, including the incidence of recurring traineeships. According to this survey, although the concept of traineeship is designed to, *inter alia*, offer a first stepping stone into the labour market by creating a bridge between the worlds of education and employment, the survey results paint a mixed picture. Crucially, trainees are, very often, on their second or third traineeship. Indeed, 63 per cent of survey respondents had undertaken one or two traineeships, while the remaining 37 per cent had completed three or more traineeships. The majority of survey respondents from Germany (65 per cent), Austria (62 per cent) and France (51 per cent) had undertaken multiple traineeships.¹⁵⁸

In the face of widespread criticism of this type of traineeships, a number of countries are actively seeking to either explicitly regulate or promote good practice through quality frameworks. For example, **France** provides an example of a country which has taken a more regulated approach to this type of traineeship in an attempt to address potential trainee exploitation. Since 2006 and on the basis of successive laws it has tightened traineeship-related regulations with the explicit aim of maintaining the learning dimension of such placements; providing minimum trainee terms and conditions, including compensation and social security coverage (outlined in the compulsory *Convention de Stage*); and safeguarding trainees from potential exploitation amid concerns that employers were using trainees as cheap labour. More recently, in an attempt to address the issue of successive traineeships, the *2011 Loi Cherpion* stipulates that, *inter alia*, companies should wait for a period corresponding to 1/3 of the length of the previous traineeship before taking on a new trainee in the same role. Moreover, it seeks to ensure that trainees are not used as substitutes for permanent employees, although as has been argued, it can be rather difficult to enforce this aspect of the law (See Section 4.1.1 for a more detailed discussion about France's traineeship-related regulation).¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁸ Mascherini, M., (2011). *Op.Cit.*

¹⁵⁹ Mongourdin-Denoix, S., (2011). *Strengthened Regulation of Internships – France*, EIRO/Eurofound, 13.12.2011, <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/2011/11/articles/fr1111011i.htm>

Similarly, in **Greece** in order to prevent employers from replacing regular staff with trainees, the *2010 Work Experience Programme for New Labour Market Entrants* stipulates that companies which have reduced their staff in the last six months are not eligible to take part. In addition, an employer cannot renew the traineeship contract with the same trainee. This programme which is the successor to the *STAGE programme*, aims to provide, between 2010-2012, traineeships in the private sector to 5,000 young people aged 16-24.¹⁶⁰

The Box below summarises the above discussion.

Member States' Efforts to Enhance Trainee Protection in the Open Market

- **France:** in an attempt to address the issue of successive traineeships, the *2011 Loi Cherpion* stipulates that, *inter alia*, companies should wait for a period corresponding to 1/3 of the length of the previous traineeship before taking on a new trainee in the same role. This law strengthens the legal framework of traineeships and reinforces the trainee's rights, terms and conditions, including trainee compensation.
- **Austria:** in an effort to help the so-called 'internship generation' secure regular employment instead of frequent rounds of traineeships, the *2010 Aktion +6000 Programme* provides wage subsidies to employers if, upon completion of the traineeship, they keep on the trainees.
- **UK:** a number of voluntary charters (CIPD's *Internship Charter*) and codes of best practice (*Code of Best Practice for Quality Internships*) are promoted in an effort to improve the quality of traineeships in the open market.
- **Greece:** in order to prevent employers from replacing regular staff with trainees, the *2010 Work Experience Programme for New Labour Market Entrants* stipulates that companies which have reduced their staff in the last six months are not eligible to take part. In addition, an employer cannot renew the traineeship contract with the same trainee.

5.5 Transnational Traineeships

Learning mobility is a key objective of the Europe 2020 strategy for growth and jobs and the focus of the Commission's *Youth on the Move* initiative which builds on the success of Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci (LdV). Across all MS there is evidence of growing popularity of transnational learning and work-related mobility. Indeed, EU mobility programmes have increased the number of transnational work placements across most MS, with the largest programmes being the LdV programme (e.g. AT, BE, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, IE, IT, LT, LV, MT, NL, PT, RO, SE, SL, UK, etc.) and Erasmus (e.g. AT, BE, CY, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, IE, IT, LT, LV, MT, NL, PT, RO, SE, SL, UK, etc.).

For example, in 2011, more than 60,000 transnational traineeships undertaken by apprentices, IVET students and people on the labour market were supported by LdV. In 2009/10, 35,000 students in higher education (one in six of the total) undertook transnational placements, which represents a 17.3 per cent increase on the previous year.¹⁶¹ The most popular destination countries for Erasmus students are Spain, Italy, the UK, Belgium, France and the Netherlands.¹⁶² In the last three years there has been a

¹⁶⁰ This is the new target revised in December 2011. Originally, the programme's target was 10,000.

¹⁶¹ <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/11/675&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&quiLanguage=en>

Interestingly, in 2008/2009, a total of 30,400 students undertook placements abroad, which was an increase of more than 50 per cent on the previous year.

¹⁶² Spain was the European country receiving most incoming students (in absolute numbers) for placements from other EU countries in 2008/2009 (4,997 students) and in 2009/2010 (6,061 in 2010). Incoming students come mainly from France (1,029 and 1,341, respectively), Germany (914 and 929) and the UK (687 and 824).

considerable growth in incoming students, mainly from Italy, Poland, Germany and Finland. In addition to students, jobseekers are also undertaking placements in some MS (e.g. AT, BE, DE, EL, ES, IT, LU, PT, etc.). The main reason behind this increased popularity of company placements is the expressed desire by students to improve their job prospects through practical work.

A number of countries are actively promoting traineeships abroad, either through EU or other international youth mobility programmes such as AIESEC¹⁶³, IAESTE and ELSA¹⁶⁴ (e.g. DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, IE, IT, MT, NL, PT, SE, UK, etc.) as well as national initiatives (e.g. DK, ES, FI, MT, PT, NL, PT, UK, etc.). For example, as mentioned earlier, one of the main priorities of the **Finnish** Government is the active promotion of international mobility which is seen as a critical element of the educational curriculum and youth employability. To this end, different actors promote such mobility, including the Centre for International Mobility (CIMO), an independent agency established in 1991.¹⁶⁵ The number of higher education students undertaking transnational traineeships has increased constantly since 2000 with a remarkable boost in the last couple of years. **Sweden** is also particularly active in promoting international youth mobility and cooperates in a number of programmes with the EU, the UN, the Council of Europe, the Nordic Council of Ministers, the Barents Euro-Arctic Council and the Council of the Baltic Sea States.

Similarly, both **Spain** and **Portugal** are also very actively promoting traineeships abroad. For example, the Spanish ARGO GLOBAL programme, which in 2009 was extended from the European to the global level, provides financial support to recent graduates who wish to undertake a traineeship abroad.¹⁶⁶ **Portugal** is also particularly active in promoting international traineeships through a number of international traineeship programmes, e.g. INOV Contacto, INOV Mundo, INOV Vasco da Gama, INOV Art, etc. (see also Section 3.4).

Although in most cases transnational traineeships are promoted through the provision of financial support, travel grants and scholarships, usually provided by either the EU and/or MS, in few instances they are actively supported by employers. However, learning mobility is quite often financed through private funds or savings. As a recent Eurobarometer showed, about two-thirds (65 per cent) of respondents said they had used own financial resources for learning mobility.¹⁶⁷

In relation to LdV trainees and apprentices host organisations are most commonly VET schools and colleges (e.g. secondary technical schools, secondary VET schools, etc.) (e.g. AT, BE, FR, IT, LT, LV, NL, PL, RO, SE, UK, etc.) and SMEs (e.g. BE, ES, IT, LT, LV, NL, RO, UK, etc.). Indeed, according to a 2011 study the largest proportion of organisations taking on LdV trainees and apprentices in 2010 were VET centres and organisations (23 per cent); SMEs (20 per cent); and vocational or technical secondary schools (11 per cent). People in the labour market who go abroad under the LdV Programme are mostly hosted by SMEs (34 per cent); HEIs (8 per cent); VET centres and organisations (6 per cent); non-profit associations (7 per cent); and large companies (4 per cent).¹⁶⁸

The main sectors taking on LdV trainees and apprentices include (i) the education sector (48 per cent); (ii) hospitality industry (12 per cent); (iii) wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles (7 per cent); (iv) manufacturing (6 per cent); (v) healthcare and social work (5 per cent); and (vi) agriculture, forestry and fishing (5 per cent).¹⁶⁹

¹⁶³ Association Internationale des Etudiants en Sciences Economiques et Commerciales/AIESEC, <http://www.aiesec.org/>

¹⁶⁴ European Law Students' Association/ELSA, <http://www.elsa.org/>

¹⁶⁵ <http://www.cimo.fi/frontpage>

¹⁶⁶ <http://www.becasargo.es/>

¹⁶⁷ Eurobarometer, (2011). *Youth on the Move: Analytical Report*, No 319b, May, http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_319b_en.pdf

¹⁶⁸ GHK, (2011). *Op.Cit.*

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

Crucially, our study found that employers value the skills and experience one acquires through transnational traineeships. However, in view of the great diversity of national legislative frameworks, regulations, administrative procedures and practices associated with traineeships among MS, they would welcome more information, help and guidance at EU level. The upshot would be greater transparency for both young people considering a traineeship abroad and employers wishing to take on trainees.

Increased Focus on Transnational Traineeships

- **Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci Programmes:** growing take up of transnational placements across the EU.
- **Finland:** international mobility, seen as an essential element of the educational curriculum, is one of the priorities of the *Education and Research 2007-2012 Plan*.
- **Spain:** traineeships abroad are actively promoted through both EU and national programmes, e.g. FARO, Argo, etc.
- **Portugal:** transnational traineeships are supported by both EU and national programmes, e.g. INOV Contacto, INOV Mundo, INOV Vasco da Gama, INOV Art, etc.

5.6 Recruitment Process and Equity of Access

Our study identified a wide range of traineeship-related recruitment channels. These include (i) educational establishments (e.g. AT, BE, BG, CY, DK, EL, ES, FI, FR, HU, IT, LT, LV, MT, NL, PL, RO, SI, UK, etc.); PES, especially for traineeships related to ALMPs (e.g. AT, BE, CY, DK, EL, ES, IE, FI, FR, IT, LT, MT, PL, PT, RO, SI, UK, etc.); employers and/or professional associations (e.g. AT, BE, BG, DE, EL, FR, IT, PL, RO, UK, etc.), personal/social networks (e.g. AT, EL, ES, FI, IE, IT, PT, UK, etc.); websites (e.g. AT, BE, CY, DE, DK, EL, FR, IE, IT, NL, SE, UK, etc.); intermediary organisations (e.g. BG, CY, DE, EL, ES, HU, NL, RO, SE, UK, etc.); etc. Some of these recruitment methods are discussed in some detail below.

Not surprisingly, one main recruitment method for trainees is through **educational institutions**, national associations or organisations which offer support to students, or the unemployed, notably **PES**, in sourcing and securing an appropriate and relevant traineeship (e.g. AT, BE, BG, CY, DE, DK, EL, ES, FI, FR, IT, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SI, SE, UK, etc.). As expected, traineeships linked to study curricula are more likely to be characterised by well-organised and relatively transparent recruitment processes. Indeed, in a number of cases the educational institutions themselves have set up 'Offices for Traineeships', often with ESF support. These are specifically tasked with liaising with companies with the explicit aim of organising, co-ordinating and overseeing student (and sometimes) graduate traineeships (e.g. CY, EL, ES, FI, FR, HU, IE, NL, IT, RO, UK, etc.). In **Italy**, for example, all universities have placement offices through which the university coordinates the entire traineeship process through the promotion, matching and pre-selection of candidates; the administrative procedures; the mentoring of the trainee by representatives of both the educational institution and host organisation; and the monitoring, oversight and assessment of the traineeship. Similar arrangements were found in many other countries such as **Cyprus, Finland, France, the Netherlands, Romania**, etc. In many cases, the role and tasks of such offices are undertaken by the educational institution's Career Services which are increasingly assigned the responsibility for organising, co-ordinating and managing traineeships as part of the 'student experience'.¹⁷⁰

As mentioned, recruitment for traineeships which form part of ALMPs is realised most commonly through PES and, in some cases, approved intermediary organisations. For

¹⁷⁰ European Commission, (2009b). *Op.Cit.*

example, the recruitment for the *Work Experience Programme for New Labour Market Entrants* takes place with the active involvement of OAED, the **Greek** PES. Similarly, in **Cyprus** the PES is responsible for matching unemployed graduates to employers who offer traineeships as part of the *Scheme for the Job Placement and Training of Tertiary - Education Graduates* as is ETC, the **Maltese** PES, for recruitment to the *Traineeship Scheme*. Likewise, the **Swedish** PES is actively involved in the recruitment of graduate trainees as part of the *Young Potentials Programme*, as is the Instituto do Emprego e Formação Profissional (IEFP), the **Portuguese** PES, which is managing the *Programa Estágios Profissionais*.

A second recruitment method for trainees is through **personal and social networks** (e.g. AT, EL, ES, FI, IE, IT, PT, UK, etc.). This method fits in with the tendency of some organisations to recruit trainees on an ad hoc basis. In some instances, these are used quite extensively by SMEs, not least because these are less likely to have elaborate and extensive recruitment procedures. For example, in **Austria** a survey showed that over half (57 per cent) of pupils of VET schools and colleges had obtained their mandatory traineeship through contacts of relatives, friends or acquaintances. In the **UK**, this method of recruitment is both widely used and regarded as a reason for concern. One of the main criticism is the inherent lack of equity of access, since organisations offering traineeships to the children of family and friends are potentially putting young people lacking appropriate contacts at a disadvantage.¹⁷¹ In response to such concerns, as part of its social mobility strategy the UK government is exhorting organisations to sign up to the *Business Compact* where they voluntarily commit to a range of activities designed to widen access to professional occupations to groups who may have previously been excluded. One of the suggested actions is to offer traineeships in a rigorous and transparent way rather than making them available to those with access to informal personal networks.¹⁷²

Another trainee-related recruitment method is linked to **internal or corporate formal procedures** similar to usual staff recruitment processes, where employers choose the most suitable applicant for the scheme from an open application procedure (e.g. DE, ES, FI, PL, RO UK, etc). For example, in **Poland** there are transparent recruitment processes in public administration, private and third sectors aimed at selecting potential trainees based on formal internal procedures. Related to this method of recruitment is, in some cases, the existence of a formal testing procedure for traineeships (e.g. ES, RO, etc.). For example, in **Romania**, after completion of medium- (Bachelor's) or long-cycle (Master's) higher education, access to the labour market, including traineeships for certain professions (e.g. physicians, lawyers, public notaries, tax auditors, teachers, etc.), is subject to examination. Large organisations and/or multinationals as well as, in certain cases, public administration and international organisations tend to have such properly structured, organised and transparent procedures.

Traineeships are also **advertised in the open market**, especially those offered by large corporations, multinationals and international organisations. Increasingly, young people, faced with growing difficulties in securing employment and decreasing numbers of formal traineeships, are seeking such placements proactively by making speculative traineeship applications to organisations. Online platforms and websites are becoming increasingly used in the trainee-related vacancy advertisement and recruitment process.

5.6.1 Socio Economic Background of Trainees

Our study also sought evidence on the impact of the trainee's socio-economic background upon one's ability to undertake traineeships (paid or unpaid). For example, in **Estonia** those undertaking transnational traineeships tend to be self-selective because they usually have to cover at least part of their stay abroad (by relying on either own means or parental

¹⁷¹ HM Government, (2011). *Op.cit.*

¹⁷² <http://www.dpm.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/social-mobility-business-compact>

support). This, in turn, means that young people from disadvantaged backgrounds may not be able to afford such traineeships. Across MS, the issue of traineeship-related pay has acquired crucial importance, as it raises questions of fairness, equity of access and social mobility.

For example, evidence from the **UK** also emphasizes the potential of (unpaid) traineeships to exclude those from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Indeed, the UK case study revealed that for the most part traineeships appear to be taken up by young people with degree level education (typically recent graduates) or higher education students during their summer vacation. At the same time, traineeship opportunities appear to be inaccessible for young people who do not hold (or are not studying towards) a degree. For example, the evaluation of the *Graduate Talent Pool* found graduates with higher degrees were more likely to have obtained placements.

It is also usually young people from relatively affluent backgrounds who can afford to undertake unpaid traineeships, with parental income used to financially support them. Indeed, both the current *UK Social Mobility Strategy* and submissions to the UK Low Pay Commission stressed the impact of unpaid traineeships on social mobility by inhibiting labour market access for particular segments of young people. According to both the TUC and *Intern Aware*¹⁷³ (a campaign focusing on promoting fair access to the traineeship system) unpaid traineeships discriminate against young people from poorer backgrounds who cannot afford to work for free, and who are thus excluded from gaining access to certain professions and sectors, e.g. law, media/journalism, creative industries, marketing/PR, politics, etc.

There is also some evidence of a gender imbalance in the take-up of traineeships, with more young women undertaking traineeships than young men (e.g. AT, DE, FR, IT, etc). It is not clear from the data available whether this gender imbalance can, to some extent, be explained by sectoral or occupational factors. In other words, it is not clear whether young women tend to be concentrated in certain sectors/occupations which are associated with a high incidence of traineeships. Alternatively, this may also highlight the greater difficulties which young women face in entering the labour market.

Member States' Efforts to Improve Equity of Access

- **UK:** HEFCE's *Undergraduate Internship Scheme*, aimed at encouraging social mobility, provided funding to finance short traineeships and targeted groups who may not typically have access to traineeships. Similarly, the current *Social Mobility Strategy*, launched in April 2011, seeks to promote transparency in the traineeship-related recruitment and improve access to traineeships by disadvantaged young people.
- **Poland:** The former government implemented changes to the system of legal professional training, opening up the legal profession to people of diverse backgrounds in an attempt to address gender and social entry barriers to this profession.

5.7 Prevalence of Traineeships by Sector

The type, range and profile of sectors where traineeships are more prevalent differ, to some extent, according to the specific type of traineeships. For example, mandatory professional training through traineeships (either as part of the final years of studies, or immediately after graduation) is prevalent among the liberal and/or regulated professions, notably medicine, law, education/teaching, architecture/engineering, social work, etc. (see also Sections 4.3 and 5.3).

¹⁷³ <http://www.internaware.org/>

In addition, there are a number of sectors where traineeships are increasingly common. As Table 5.1 shows, traineeships are commonly found not only in the private sector but also in both the public sector/administration and the non-profit/third sector/NGOs.

Table 5.1: Examples of Sectors where Traineeships are prevalent

Sectors	Member States
Creative industries (e.g. Culture, Art & Publishing)	AT, BE, DE, DK, EL, ES, FI, FR, IE, IT, LT, LV, MT, NL, PT, SE, UK
Media/Journalism & PR	AT, BE, DE, DK, EL, ES, FI, FR, IT, LT, LV, MT, NL, SE, UK
Tourism & Hospitality industry	AT, BE, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, EL, FR, HU, IE, IT, LU, LV, MT, PL, PT, RO, SI, SK, UK
Business Administration & Management Consulting	AT, BE, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, HU, IE, IT, MT, NL, PT, SE, SI, SK, UK
Banking, Finance & Accountancy	BE, CY, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, HU, IE, IT, LU, MT, NL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, UK
Manufacturing	AT, BG, BE, CZ, DE, ES, FI, FR, IT, LV, MT, NL, PL, RO, SE, SI, SK, UK
Third Sector/NGOs	AT, BE, CZ, DE, EL, ES, IE, IT, FI, FR, IT, LT, LV, MT, PL, RO, SI, SK, UK
Public Sector	BE, BG, CZ, DE, EL, ES, FI, FR, IT, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, SI, SK, UK

The fact that traineeships are becoming increasingly common in private, public, third and international sectors was also borne out by the 2011 YFJ's survey which found that traineeships were undertaken in private sector companies (27 per cent); NGOs (25 per cent); public and municipal sector organisations (22 per cent); and inter-governmental organisations (21 per cent).¹⁷⁴

Interestingly, there is also evidence that, in some cases, government initiatives seek to promote traineeships in particular sectors deemed to have strategic importance to their economy. For example, this is the case for the ICT sector in **Malta** and tourism and hospitality and ICTs in **Cyprus**.

5.7.1 Traineeships as Compulsory or Optional Part of Academic and/or Vocational Study Curricula (i.e. Traineeships during Education)

The evidence about the sectors in which traineeships form a compulsory or voluntary part of educational programmes varies across MS. For example, in **Latvia** higher education workplace training is a compulsory part of the curriculum in, typically, construction, manufacturing and engineering. Not surprisingly, in this case 92 per cent of students claimed that a practical traineeship in these sectors is a compulsory part of their studies. On the other hand, in **Austria**, voluntary traineeships in degree-level programmes are common in business studies, architecture and technical studies. In **Spain**, university students could undertake traineeships in the public sector through *Becas de Administraciones Pùblicas* which provided practical training in public administration. In general, traineeships

¹⁷⁴ European Youth Forum, (2011). *Op. Cit.*

associated with educational programmes, either vocational and/or academic, are becoming increasingly common across a variety of sectors (see also Sections 5.2 and 5.3).

Significantly, in line with existing literature, our study found that some fields of study offer lower levels of risk than others in terms of avoiding endless cycles of traineeships. For example, the **German** case study showed that engineering students are often recruited by companies even before graduation, whereas linguists and social scientists may experience greater periods of unemployment and extended traineeship cycles after completion of studies, or difficulties in obtaining work in line with their qualifications. Similar findings emerged in other countries (e.g. AT, EL, IT, NL, UK, etc.)

5.7.2 Traineeships as part of Mandatory Professional Training

Mandatory professional training through traineeships, either as part of the final year of study, or immediately after graduation, is prevalent among certain professions, e.g. medicine, law, education/teaching, architecture/engineering, etc. Here participation in traineeships is often a legal prerequisite for obtaining a licence to practice (e.g. AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, DE, EL, ES, HU, IE, IT, NL, PL, SI, RO, UK, etc.). Traineeships associated with mandatory professional training, particularly in medicine, law and education/teaching, are tightly regulated and monitored. However, despite the high degree of regulation, there are concerns about how, in some cases, such traineeships are being accessed and trainees treated. Indeed, among sectors criticised for trainee exploitation are the legal sector (e.g. BE, EL, IT, UK, etc.) and the medical sector (e.g. AT, BE, EL, UK, etc.). More information about this type of traineeship can be found in Section 5.3.

5.7.3 Traineeships in the Open Market

As mentioned earlier, traineeships in the open market are becoming widespread across all sectors, i.e. the private, public, third and international sectors. Crucially, most of the (anecdotal) evidence about questionable employer practices refers to traineeships taken up by young people on a voluntary basis in the open market. On the basis of a small-scale survey of ex-trainees conducted in the **UK** by Interns Anonymous, which received 235 responses, most trainees surveyed were in politics and public affairs (20 per cent); charities/NGOs (20 per cent); and arts and heritage (14 per cent).¹⁷⁵ The phenomenon of traineeships is quite widespread in the UK and quite prevalent in certain sectors (*'glamour sectors'*), e.g. creative industries, media, journalism, public relations, fashion/design, third sector, including NGOs, public affairs and politics, etc.

Indeed, the creative industries (e.g. culture, art, design, publishing, etc.) and media/journalism are cited most often as having a large number of mostly unpaid traineeships (e.g. AT, BE, DE, DK, EL, ES, FI, FR, IE, IT, LT, LV, MT, NL, PT, SE, UK, etc.). Similarly, the business administration/services sector employs a large number of trainees (e.g. AT, DE, EE, FI, FR, IE, MT, NL, PT, SE, SI, SK, UK, etc.), while in a number of countries, the same applies for the banking/accountancy sector (e.g. BE, CY, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, HU, IE, IT, LU, MT, NL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, UK, etc.). For example, in both **Germany** and **Luxembourg**, open market traineeships are offered in the private banking sector. Indeed, in **Luxembourg**, the banking and finance sector, which accounts for over 20 per cent of the entire workforce is the sector which attracts most trainees.

Interestingly, the **Hungarian** case study also provided evidence of sectoral differences concerning the financial investment of traineeships. Specifically, employers in financial services and the mining, electricity, gas and water supply industries spent 'above the average' on traineeships, whereas investment from the social and health care, education, hospitality and the construction industries was far lower.

¹⁷⁵ <http://internsanonymous.co.uk/>

Traineeships in the public sector have also become prevalent in recent years, although in the face of current public funding constraints, this trend may decrease (e.g. BE, BG, CZ, DE, EL, ES, FI, FR, IT, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, SI, SK, UK, etc.). For example, in **Greece** the old *STAGE programme*, whose initial aim was to provide traineeship opportunities primarily in the private sector, resulted in a far larger number of traineeships being offered in the public sector.¹⁷⁶ This expansion of public sector placements led to criticisms that public bodies used STAGE trainees as cheap labour and, eventually, this programme was discontinued in November 2009.

In general, questionable employer practices, poor trainee terms and conditions and even trainee exploitation are associated with traineeships not only in the private (e.g. AT, DE, DK, EE, ES, FR, IE, IT, LT, LV, RO, UK, etc.) but also in the public (e.g. BE, BG, EE, EL, ES, FI, IT, SI, etc.) and third sectors (e.g. AT, BE, DE, EE, ES, IT, LT, LV, SK, UK, etc.). A more detailed discussion on questionable employer practices can be found in Section **6.6**.

5.8 Take-up of Traineeships by Company Size

Information about the availability of traineeship opportunities by company size is more limited than that by sector. However, where evidence is available, it suggests that larger, including multinational, organisations are more likely to offer traineeships (e.g. BG, CZ, FR, IE, IT, HU, LT, PL, RO, SE, SI, SK, UK, etc.).¹⁷⁷ For example, in **Bulgaria**, large (and medium-sized) firms resort to specialist small firms for the selection of suitable trainees. In **Poland**, large organizations run their own traineeship programmes. Similarly, in the **UK** traineeships have historically been offered by multinational and/or private sector companies, some relatively large public sector or independent/semi-autonomous bodies, e.g. BBC, and third sector organisations.

In contrast, with the notable exception of IVET placements, SMEs are in most MS less likely to offer traineeships for a number of reasons: (i) there is a perception that employing a trainee is both time and labour intensive for their regular staff (e.g. EE, EL, IT, MT, PT, UK, etc.); (ii) where micro and family businesses dominate the economy, these are more likely to recruit or train a family member as opposed to hiring a trainee from the outside (e.g. CY, EL, IT, MT, PT, etc.); (iii) they are less likely to have formal links with educational establishments, including those whose study curricula include traineeships.¹⁷⁸ Indeed, according to the UEAPME, this is an issue which should be carefully considered, especially since it is mainly SMEs which need qualified staff; (iv) graduate awareness of employment opportunities in SMEs is rather poor which, in turn, means that they are less likely to seek a traineeship in such companies.¹⁷⁹ For example, in **Hungary**, according to the president of the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, at least 20,000 companies should participate in offering VET traineeships. To this end, the results of a recent survey indicated that 42 per cent of companies were keen to co-operate with VET institutions. However, this ratio was only 33 per cent among enterprises employing less than 50 people, as opposed to 48 per cent in firms with 51-200 employees.

The above discussion notwithstanding, there is also some evidence that, in some MS, SMEs appear to be more likely to offer traineeships. For example, in **Slovakia** SMEs (together with NGOs and public sector organisations) tend to offer traineeships as part of their graduate recruitment. Similarly, in **Denmark** companies which take on trainees from

¹⁷⁶ Karantinos, D., (2010). *EEO Review: Youth Employment Measures 2010 - Greece*, October, <http://www.eu-employment-observatory.net/resources/reviews/Greece-YMRvw2010.pdf>

¹⁷⁷ Walmsley, A., Thomas, R., and Jameson, S., (2011). 'Internships in SMEs and Career Intentions', *Journal of Education and Work*

¹⁷⁸ Ellis, N. and Moon, S., (1998). 'Business and HE Links: The Search for Meaningful Relationships in the Placement Marketplace - Part 1', *Education & Training*, Vol. 40, No. 5

¹⁷⁹ Bullock, K., Gould, V. Hejmadi, M., and Lock, G., (2009). 'Work Placement Experience: Should I stay or should I go?', *Higher Education Research & Development*, 28, pp.481-494

academies of professional higher education are most likely to be SMEs (while 37 per cent of traineeship providers have more than 50 employees and 16 per cent have more than 250 employees).¹⁸⁰ In both **Latvia** and **Lithuania** SMEs are among the main types of organisations which offer transnational traineeships.¹⁸¹

Where SMEs do offer traineeships, these are more likely to be used as an initial screening and recruitment mechanism, although this also the case with larger organisations. Evidence from **Germany** shows that up to 4.4 per cent of all new recruits have completed a traineeship with that particular company. In small companies with 10-49 employees 3 per cent of all new recruits have undertaken a traineeship there as opposed to 2 per cent in establishments with more than 50 employees.¹⁸²

According to more recent anecdotal evidence from **Bulgaria, Poland** and the **UK**, a growing number of SMEs have used trainees as a source of cheap (unpaid or underpaid) or free labour during the recession, with SMEs in the UK turning to specialist graduate traineeship placement firms such as *Inspiring Interns* for help with such recruitment.¹⁸³

Traineeship-related Policy to target SMEs

There is evidence that policy makers across the EU are increasingly recognising the significant role which SMEs can play for both economic and employment growth, through the more extensive offer of traineeships. For example, in **Ireland** in May 2011 the Minister for Social Protection explicitly called on SMEs to engage with that Department and FÁS to provide valuable and meaningful work experience to young people within the context of Ireland's *National Internship Scheme*.¹⁸⁴ In **Cyprus**, the *Scheme for the Job Placement and Training of Tertiary-Education Graduates* offers company subsidies which present a stronger financial incentive to SMEs, in recognition of the inherent difficulties that such companies face in getting involved with the early labour market entry of young people.¹⁸⁵ The **Portuguese** *Programa Estágios* Profissionais also has in place a similar arrangement of sliding subsidy scales which are higher if the traineeship takes place in SMEs.

Moreover, in **Portugal**, the *Inov-Jovem* placements run by the Ministry of Economy and Ministry of Labour aim, since 2005, to facilitate the integration of graduate job seekers in SMEs through skill development and work-based experience. Recognising the reluctance of SMEs to take on trainees, in 2009 in the **UK** *Enternships.com* was launched with the aim of linking students with SMEs and start-ups for the purposes of promoting traineeships.¹⁸⁶

5.9 Financing of Traineeships

Across MS the most common methods of financing the various types of traineeships include European funds, notably the ESF (e.g. AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, EE, EL, ES, IE, FI, FR, IT, LT, LV, MT, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, etc.); national/regional funds (e.g. AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, DE, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, IE, HU, LT, LU, LV, MT, NL, MT, PL, PT, RO, SE, UK, etc.); educational establishments' funds, e.g. university grants and scholarships for traineeships (e.g. BG, CY, DK, EE, EL, ES, IE, FI, FR, NL, IT, RO, SE, SI, UK, etc.); personal financing, including family/parental support (e.g. AT, BE, DE, EE, EL, ES, IE, FR, IT, LU, PL, PT, RO, SI, UK,

¹⁸⁰ DEA, (2011). *Erhvervsakademiuddannelserne i etaftagerperspektiv*, 26.9.2011, http://www.damvad.com/media/28181/dea_-_erhvervsakademiuddannelserne_i_et_aftagerperspektiv_-_26_sept_2011.pdf

¹⁸¹ GHK, (2011). *Op.Cit.*

¹⁸² Hohendanner, C. and Rebien, M. (2011). *Aktuelle Ergebnisse aus dem IAB-Betriebspanel und der IAB-Erhebung des Gesamtwirtschaftlichen Stellenangebots*, IAB-Stellungnahme 6/2011

¹⁸³ http://www.responsesource.com/releases/rel_display.php?relid=49874

¹⁸⁴ <http://www.welfare.ie/EN/Press/PressReleases/2011/Pages/pa250511.aspx>

¹⁸⁵ Human Resource Development Authority/HRDA, (2010). *Scheme for the Job Placement and Training of Tertiary-Education Graduates*, 14 December 2010

¹⁸⁶ <http://www.enternships.com/>

etc.); and company resources (e.g. AT, BE, DE, DK, CZ, FI, FR, HU, IE, NL, PL, SE, UK, etc.).

5.9.1 Self-Financing

The growth of traineeships which offer no or insufficient compensation to trainees has led to the rather widespread practice of personally financing participation in such placements (e.g. AT, BE, DE, EE, EL, ES, IE, FR, IT, LU, LV, PL, PT, RO, SI, UK, etc.). The extent to which young people must cover relevant costs varies between both countries and types of traineeships. For example, in **Ireland** a survey showed over three-fifths (69 per cent) of young people privately financed their traineeship abroad, while in **Romania**, students who pay tuition fees must also cover the costs of their practical training. Interestingly, stakeholders in Romania view this self-financing as a lever which generates in the young people genuine interest in and motivation to successfully complete the traineeship. In **Poland**, self-financing is required as traineeships for undergraduate students are not financed by any particular schemes or funds, while in the **UK**, financing for all forms of traineeships is typically divided between companies, trainees themselves and their parents.

The first EU-wide trainee survey, conducted by YFJ in 2011, also highlighted the fact that, because trainees, in many cases, receive no or insufficient compensation, they usually have to rely on other sources of financial support, including assistance from parents, own savings, external grants and/or loans.¹⁸⁷ Indeed, the survey showed that over two thirds (64.7 per cent) of insufficiently paid or unpaid trainees rely on parental financial support, while just over one third (35.3 per cent) live off own savings. One fifth (20.3 per cent) of surveyed trainees rely on a grant/scholarship. Significantly, 12.8 per cent of trainees have to get another job in addition to their traineeship in order to cover their living expenses. The fact that such a large proportion of trainees rely on parental financial support or own savings also raises the issue of equity of access to traineeships (and the way they can smooth the path to employment), since young people from less privileged and/or disadvantaged backgrounds may not be able to draw on such resources.¹⁸⁸ As a result, they may not be able to afford to undertake an unpaid or insufficiently paid traineeship which, however, may be a requirement for access to certain professions and sectors.

5.9.2 Company Resources

Our study found evidence of companies providing some compensation to their trainees; however, this is typically discretionary (e.g. AT, BE, DE, DK, CZ, FI, FR, HU, IE, IT, NL, PL, SE, UK, etc.). Host organisations can also provide a trainee allowance for living expenses or in-kind benefits (e.g. transport, accommodation, meals, etc.). In some countries such as **Austria, Finland, France**, and the **UK**, it is more common for traineeships to be financed through an organisation's own resources, while in others companies contribute to the financing of traineeships. For example, in **Finland** one third of the costs associated with the compulsory traineeships undertaken by UAS students is covered by employers. In **Ireland** about a third of young people's traineeships abroad was financed partly by the employer. In **Hungary**, companies are obliged to pay training contributions to the state budget on the basis of their annual wage costs. The Labour Market Fund finances various training activities and, in 2007, a notable 20.4 per cent, was used towards the cost of traineeships.

Crucially, in the overwhelming majority of MS organisations which offer traineeships receive financial support from either national /regional and/or EU funds (e.g. AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, DE, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, IE, HU, LT, LU, LV, MT, NL, MT, PL, PT, RO, SE, UK, etc.) (see Sections 5.9.3 and 5.9.4). Significantly, part of this funding is, in many cases, channeled towards the subsidization of trainee compensation and social security as well as health insurance coverage.

¹⁸⁷ European Youth Forum, (2011). *Op. Cit.*

¹⁸⁸ Mascherini, M., (2011). *Op. Cit.*

5.9.3 Government Funding

There is plenty of evidence across all MS of public funding channelled to the financing and support of traineeships (e.g. AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, DE, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, IE, HU, LT, LU, LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, UK, etc.). These funds are aimed at (i) increasing the supply of all types of traineeships; (ii) promoting traineeships as part of ALMPs targeted at unemployed young people, including graduates; (iii) actively supporting the integration of traineeships in both vocational and academic study curricula, including higher education courses; (iv) balancing skill mismatches between demand and supply in the labour market; (v) encouraging, through traineeships, greater participation or return to training of young people at risk of exclusion, e.g. early school leavers, unskilled or low-qualified young people; (vi) supporting transnational traineeships; etc.

The level of national funding targeted at traineeships in recent years varies between both MS and types of traineeships. However, as mentioned earlier, there is evidence of greater state investment in traineeships as a result of the Great Recession. For example, in **Romania** during 2010-2011, the *Sectoral Operational Programme for Human Resource Development (SOP HRD)* (partly financed through the ESF) provides financial support for company-based traineeships undertaken by secondary and tertiary education students. Similarly, given a drop in the number of available traineeships as a result of the economic crisis in **Denmark**, additional funding was allocated towards stabilising and increasing the supply of such placements. Conversely, since the recession some traineeship-related funding has been reduced. For example, in **Belgium**, in 2010, a government allowance for universities which included a budget allocation for traineeship funding was discontinued and now departments must reserve funds for traineeships from existing budgets.

Funding is also channelled towards traineeships linked to study curricula through scholarships/grants which enable students to undertake traineeships and/or government subsidies paid to educational institutions for the provision of practical training to secondary and tertiary education students (e.g. BG, CY, EL, ES, FI, IT, PL, RO, SE, etc.). For example, in 2009 the Ministry of Education in **Greece** invited all Greek HEIs and TEIs to submit proposals about the extension of their traineeship programmes, for which it made available €50 million.

Where public funding is provided to assist the unemployed in participating in vocational training activities, this typically includes trainee-related assistance in the form of unemployment benefits, help with costs associated with transport, meals and accommodation, etc. For example, in-kind benefits are paid to trainees in programmes such as *Work Experience Programme* in the **UK**, the *Inov-Jovem* and *INOV Contacto* programmes in **Portugal**, etc.

There is also evidence of public funding available to companies within MS as incentives for offering traineeships (e.g. AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, DK, EL, ES, HU, IE, IT, LU, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SI, UK, etc.). For example, in response to growing youth unemployment the **Bulgarian** government has, since 2009, launched a range of programmes with a particular focus on traineeships. To this end, it has provided wage and social security contributions to companies employing trainees, while also paying allowances directly to trainees.

As detailed in Section 3.1 in order to deal with the impact of the economic crisis, governments across the EU are increasingly using national funds to support the young unemployed in the labour market (e.g. AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, DK, EE, EL, ES, IE, FI, FR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, UK, etc.). For example, in **Luxembourg**, the *Contrat d'Initiation à l'Emploi - Expérience Pratique (CIE-EP)* is aimed at skilled young people, including graduates. Such a contract can last up to 24 months, and a minimal trainee remuneration of between 120 and 150 per cent of the national minimum wage is paid by the employer. The National Fund for Employment may reimburse up to 40 per cent of the trainee compensation. A lump sum is paid to the enterprise – amounting to 30 per cent of all costs associated with the traineeship – if, upon completion of the placement, the

trainee is recruited on an open-ended contract with no further probation period.¹⁸⁹ Former trainees also have priority to be recruited, should the company hire after the end of their CIE-EP.

In **Poland**, the Labour Fund finances the implementation of both active and passive labour market policies. Each of the constituent labour funds receives an annual allocation for activities like the payment of unemployment benefits, the provision of training, including traineeships (called *stages*), job clubs, etc. The Regional Labour Office allocates these funds to sub-sets of activities, while the Board of the Region (zarząd województwa) decides the fund allocation subject to final ministerial approval. Additionally, traineeships available in some areas selected by the Regional Labour Office are financed by the ESF via the *Human Capital Operational Programme (WUP)*.¹⁹⁰

In the **Czech Republic**, among the ALMP measures in operation, the *Work Experience for School Leavers Programme* is specifically designed to facilitate the labour market transition of unemployed young people by, *inter alia*, providing financial support so that they can acquire and improve their work-related skills through work-based experience, including traineeships.

In the **Netherlands**, the *Actieplan Jeugwerkloosheid 2009-2011* developed in collaboration with the Dutch Trade Union Federation (FNV), actively promotes traineeships as an effective way of keeping young people in close contact with the labour market. Dutch employer organisations are also committed to increasing the supply of traineeships which are financed by sectoral labour market and educational funds.

5.9.4 European Funding

Where public funding is available in MS to support various forms of traineeships, this commonly involves considerable support from European funds, notably the ESF (e.g. AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, EE, EL, ES, IE, FI, FR, IT, LT, LV, MT, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, UK, etc.). Indeed, as part of its support for youth employment measures, the ESF has enabled MS to promote traineeships (and workplace experience placements more generally) as a way of facilitating school-to-work transitions. For example, the ESF supports vocational training programmes, including VET traineeships (e.g. BE, CY, DE, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, HU, IE, IT, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SI, SK, UK, etc.); training schemes particularly targeted at disadvantaged/unemployed/at risk young people (e.g. AT, BE, CY, CZ, DE, EL, ES, FI, FR, IE, IT, LT, LV, NL, PT, SE, SI, SK, UK, etc.); programmes explicitly aimed at enabling transitions from education to employment through, *inter alia*, traineeships (e.g. AT, BE, CY, DE, EL, ES, IE, HU, IT, LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, UK, etc.); programmes which promote traineeships as part of higher (vocational and academic) education study curricula (e.g. BG, CY, EL, ES, FI, HU, IE, IT, PL, RO, SI, UK, etc.).

For example, in 2009 **Slovenia** used ESF money to launch a new programme called *Graduate – Activate yourself and get the job* which was especially designed to support young graduates enter the labour market through, *inter alia*, six-month traineeships. Similarly, in some regions of **Spain** ESF funds have been used to develop traineeship programmes for VET and university graduates in research departments of universities and other institutes as a way of facilitating their labour market entry.

In **Greece**, universities started introducing traineeships into their study curricula in a more organised way since mid 1990s, thanks to, *inter alia*, the co-funding provided by the ESF. As a result, HEI traineeships are becoming increasingly more widespread mainly thanks to

¹⁸⁹ In 2010, the National Funds for Employment reimbursed €0.54 million for CIE-EP, €3.9 million for the *Contract d'appui a l'emploi* (CAE), while the *Complement d'indemnité pour les stagiaires*, which provides financial aid to trainees, amounted to €0.05 million.

¹⁹⁰ Ministry of Regional Development, (2008). *Human Capital Operational Programme*, 18.1.2008, http://www.efs.gov.pl/English/Documents/HCOP_EN_18January2008_final.pdf

ESF-support which, *inter alia*, contributes towards trainee compensation, social security and health insurance coverage. Indeed, the current *Operational Programme Education and Lifelong Learning 2007-2013* stipulates that, because of the importance of creating closer links between education and the labour market, where traineeships play a crucial role, the second most important Community contribution (23.6 per cent) will be channelled to relevant actions. For example, this Operational Programme which is co-funded by 80 per cent by the ESF, is providing a subsidy of up to €1,200 per student for the duration of traineeship (if undertaken in Greece) and up to €1,800 per student for a traineeship in another MS.¹⁹¹

Apart from traineeships linked to education and training, European sources, notably ESF, have also been used to co-finance other forms of placements. In particular, since their introduction in 1998 all the *STAGE programmes* in Greece were co-funded by the ESF. The total funding available for the period 2010-2012 for the new *Programme for New Labour Market Entrants*, the successor to the old *STAGE programme*, is €53,940,400.¹⁹²

Similar arrangements whereby ESF funding is contributing to the promotion of traineeships exist in a number of other countries, most notably in New MS and Southern Europe. For example, since its creation the **Portugal's Programa Estágios Profissionais** has been financed by both the ESF and the Portuguese Government. Since 2009, the latter contributes 30 per cent and ESF 70 per cent of its total costs. Similarly, the ESF is providing substantial financial support for traineeship schemes in a number of other countries (e.g. BG, CY, CZ, EE, IT, LT, LV, MT, PL, RO, SI, SK, etc.). For example, in **Romania**, the *Sectoral Operational Programme for Human Resource Development (SOP HRD)*, co-financed by the ESF, includes Axis 2.1 (*The Transition from School to active Life*) which promotes traineeships for students in upper secondary and tertiary education with the explicit aim of enhancing their employability by helping them develop practical, work-related skills.

In the **Czech Republic**, some of traineeships for unemployed young people (aged up to 25) and graduates within 2 years of completion of studies (aged up to 30) were financed through the national programme *Společensky účelná pracovní místa* ('Jobs for social purposes'). This was co-funded by the ESF and helped a large number of young people, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, to undertake traineeships in the public and the non-profit sectors. One of the key aims of the programme was to help young people gain practical work experience and apply their theoretical knowledge in genuine work settings as a step to securing permanent employment.¹⁹³

In **Cyprus**, the ESF provides 70 per cent of the total cost (€8 million) of the *Plan for Accelerated Company-based Initial Vocational and Education Training Programmes* aimed at improving the employability of the unemployed, including young people, through offering training and work experience opportunities in companies. Their duration can be 8-10 weeks.

In **Lithuania**, the ESF funds the *Human Resources Development Programme* which promotes VET, including traineeships, as part of ALMPs targeted at the unemployed.¹⁹⁴ Similarly, in **Latvia** the ESF finances a Support Package (*Kompleksi Atbalsta pasākumi 2009-2013*), run by the State Employment Agency.¹⁹⁵ This includes the *Jauniešu darba prakse* (Youth Work Practice) project which offers training opportunities, including

¹⁹¹ Ministry of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs, (2010). *Open Invitation for Proposal Submission as regards Priority Axes 4 and 5: Upgrading the Systems of Initial Vocational Training and Vocational Education and Linking Education with the Labour Market*, 2.9.2010

¹⁹² Greek Government, (2010). *Government Gazette of the Hellenic Republic (FEK)*, Vol 2, No 1655, 18.10.2010, http://www.et.gr/index.php?option=com_wrapper&view=wrapper&Itemid=104&lang=en

¹⁹³ ISFOL et al., (2008). *YOUTH: Young in Occupations and Unemployment: Thinking of their better Integration in the Labour Market – Case Study Reports*, 30.6.2008, <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=448&furtherNews=yes>

¹⁹⁴ <http://www.esparama.lt/2007-2013/en/operational-programmes>

¹⁹⁵ <http://www.nva.gov.lv/index.php?cid=2&mid=268&txt=1645>

traineeships, to unemployed young people aged from 18 to 24 with secondary or higher education qualifications.

In the **UK**, ESF funding for traineeship-related projects has mostly been used at the local and regional levels. For example, *Unlocking Cornish Potential*, a scheme which places graduates in Cornwall with local firms to work on a specific project for six to 12 months, is part-funded by the ESF.¹⁹⁶ Moreover, *Graduate Advantage* in the West Midlands is an initiative similar to the national *Graduate Talent Pool* scheme with additional services including a travel allowance for unpaid traineeships and a Payroll and HR service which covers the employer's National Insurance contributions for paid trainees.¹⁹⁷

ESF funds also support policies targeting disadvantaged groups in the labour market. For example, in **Belgium**, the *Convention d'immersion professionnelle* is a company-based traineeship contract which applies to traineeships in the open market (as opposed to those which form a compulsory part of university study curricula), although in the Flemish region it is used for traineeships linked with secondary education.¹⁹⁸ According to this ESF-funded programme, which provides subsidies to participating companies, trainees are entitled to compensation (between €461 and €720) and social security coverage, while companies receive a start-up bonus.

Furthermore, ESF-funded projects in **Sweden** are currently developing new models of traineeships and workplace training designed to prevent youth exclusion from the labour market and reduce skill mismatches. For example, copying a successful initiative implemented in the neighbouring Skåne County, the Municipality of Karlshamn in Sweden has recently launched an ESF funded project aimed at unemployed young people which combines training lasting six weeks with a company-based traineeship during which they can apply their new skills in real work settings. Similarly, the ESF-supported *Unga i Jobb* (Youth at Work) project aimed at improving the use of traineeships as an instrument of introducing young people into the labour market, and at strengthening the co-operation between local actors responsible for youth employment.

In **Ireland**, the most recent policy related to traineeships, is the new *National Internship Scheme*, known as *JobBridge*, which provides six or nine-month work experience placements to trainees.¹⁹⁹ This ESF-supported scheme is part of the *National Employment Action Plan* (NEAP) and is being used by the Department of Social Protection to help unemployed young people break the cycle where their lack of previous work experience constitutes a major barrier to labour market entry. Interestingly, *JobBridge* builds on *Gradlink*, a traineeship programme aimed at graduates and launched in January 2010 by the Irish Business and Employers Confederation (IBEC) in response to rising youth unemployment.²⁰⁰ Indeed, IBEC lobbied the Irish government to introduce a national traineeship programme like *JobBridge*.

Financing Transnational Traineeships

Considerable EU financial support aimed at promoting learning mobility through, *inter alia*, transnational traineeships is also available through the Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci (LdV) programmes. There is also plenty of evidence across MS of national funds aimed at increasing the supply of a wide range of traineeships (e.g. AT, BE, CY, EL, ES, FI, IE, LU, LV, MT, NL, MT, PT, RO, SE, UK, etc.).

Typically, transnational mobility through the LdV and Erasmus programmes is financed by the respective programmes and co-ordinated by a national agency (e.g. BE, CZ, EE, EL, ES,

¹⁹⁶ <http://www.cornwall.ac.uk/ucp/index.php?page= Home>

¹⁹⁷ <http://www.graduateadvantage.co.uk/>

¹⁹⁸ http://www.belgium.be/fr/emploi/contrats_de_travail/types_de_contrats/immersion_professionnelle/

¹⁹⁹ <http://www.jobbridge.ie/>

²⁰⁰ <http://www.ibec.ie/gradlink>

IE, IT, PL, etc.). The evidence is rather mixed as regards the availability of additional funding, including compensation, for trainees participating in international programmes. For example, in **Estonia**, students on transnational traineeships do not receive compensation as such, while they cover their living expenses through a regular study allowance and Erasmus/LdV grants. In contrast, in **Finland** the employer may, in some cases, provide additional compensation to the trainee, although most of Finnish outgoing students finance their mobility from grants offered by their educational institution. In the **Czech Republic**, transnational traineeships in the commercial sector are usually financed by employers. In the **Netherlands** the financial capacity of host organizations combined with the funding available for participants are considered to be among the main challenges for transnational traineeships.

Finally, students undertaking a traineeship abroad may also receive additional financial help, e.g. subsistence and/or accommodation allowance, travel expenses, etc., if the traineeship is part of a study curriculum, or other benefits in-kind such as transport and free or subsidised meals from the host organisation (e.g. HU, IE, IT, LV, etc.).

The Table overleaf summarises country-specific information about the availability of and access to traineeships.

Table 5.2: Availability of and Access to Traineeships

	AT	BE	BG	CY	CZ	DE	DK	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HU	IE	IT	LT	LU	LV	MT	NL	PL	PT	RO	SE	SI	SK	UK
Whether there are traineeships as compulsory (or optional) part of curricula/ programmes of studies	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Whether there are mandatory professional/practical training within some professions (e.g. lawyers, teachers, architects, doctors etc.)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Whether there are traineeships in upper-secondary education/pre-vocational training	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?
Whether there are traineeships as part of international youth programmes	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Whether there are trainees that outside of formal education seek work placements to gain on-the-job experience	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	?	✓	✓	✓	?	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓

	AT	BE	BG	CY	CZ	DE	DK	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HU	IE	IT	LT	LU	LV	MT	NL	PL	PT	RO	SE	SI	SK	UK
Whether there are sectors where traineeships are more common	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	?	✓	?	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	?	?	✓	?	✓	✓	?	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓
Whether the economic crisis had an impact on traineeships	?	✓	✓	✓	?	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	?	?	✓
Whether there is a transparent/formal recruitment process	X	?	?	✓	?	?	?	?	✓	✓	✓	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	?	X
Whether there is a formal financing system of traineeship	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	?	?	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Whether there are traineeships co-funded by ESF	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	?	?	✓	✓	?	?	?	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	?	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	?

Key: (✓) Yes (X) No (?) Unavailable/Unclear

6. Practice and Content of Traineeships

The extent to which traineeship content is defined varies considerably both between countries and different forms of traineeships within countries. In the majority of MS there is a written agreement for most, if not all, traineeships (e.g. BE, CY, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, IE, FR, IT, LT, LU, LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, etc.). In general, the existence of a written traineeship agreement depends on the length and nature of traineeship (regulated or unregulated; paid or unpaid; VET, academic or undertaken in the open market; etc.). For example, in **Germany**, the **Netherlands** and **Estonia** there is a written agreement for VET-related traineeships. On the other hand, in the **UK** it is not always the case that traineeships in the open market are accompanied by a written agreement, despite the latter being promoted as good practice by the various UK-based quality charters and codes of best practice currently in operation. Alternatively, in **France** all traineeships, including those in the open market, should be supported by a written agreement (*Convention de Stage*).

Significantly, the traineeship content is most likely to be formally defined when, in addition to the trainee and the host organisation, there is a 'third party' involved. This, typically, means an educational institution (academic or vocational), PES, or other national/regional and/or professional bodies responsible for running traineeship programmes. There are also instances of traineeship content being defined at a national-sectoral level, typically for traineeships related to professional training, e.g. legal training in **Cyprus**, **Greece**, and the **UK**.

National legislation which defines traineeship content across a range of sectors or disciplines appears to be fairly rare. It is worth noting that it seems that, where there is a requirement for trainees to be granted some protection, including social security coverage, then the existence of a written traineeship agreement is more likely. Significantly, when a traineeship agreement exists, it is also more likely to include a description of the traineeship's duration, focus, scope and content, including the trainee's tasks as well as terms and conditions (e.g. AT, BE, BG, CY, DE, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, LT, LU, NL, PL, PT, RO, UK, etc.). It also typically sets out the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved, the supervision and mentoring arrangements, the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, etc.

Overall, although the content of traineeships varies across MS, the latter can be classified into two groups. Typically, in one group of countries usually associated with the well-known dual education and training system, traineeships are first and foremost part of vocational training and, as such, come closer to the conventional notion of apprenticeships. In this case, traineeships tend to both be better regulated and have tightly defined learning content which combines theoretical and practical knowledge, while their successful completion can be seen as a first step towards stable employment. On the other hand, there are countries where traineeships in the open market are very widespread among graduates, or soon to be graduates. In this case, there is increasing anecdotal evidence that the learning content of at least some of these traineeships is questionable, if not non-existent. That said, it should be stressed that even in the first cluster of countries there has been a significant expansion of graduate traineeships in the open market (e.g. AT, DE, etc.).

6.1 Traineeships as part of Active Labour Market Policies for Unemployed Young People

There appears to be a general distinction between ALMP traineeships aimed at providing more highly skilled young people with professional work-related experience and those designed at helping lower skilled individuals gain basic work experience. Broadly speaking, it appears that the content of placements associated with work experience for lower skilled young people is less well defined. This is perhaps to be expected since the aim of these

traineeships tends to be simple work orientation rather than the acquisition of higher level skills.

For example, in the **UK** literature from the DWP explicitly states there are no requirements regarding the structure of *Work Experience* placements targeted at young people aged 16 to 24. Indeed, the government regards this as one of the scheme's virtue since it fears that putting too much administrative burden on employers in terms of compliance with a set of requirements might reduce participation.²⁰¹ Instead, requirements on participating companies largely relate to guarantees that (i) the young trainee will not be used instead of a paid recruit or replace staff made redundant; (ii) the employer will provide the trainee with a reference upon completion of the placement; and (iii) the trainee will be allowed to continue his/her job search while on the placement. In **Estonia**, the aim of work placements, lasting up to a maximum of four months and organised by *Töötukassa*, the Unemployment Insurance Fund²⁰², as part of the *Work Practice Scheme*, is to provide practical experience to the unemployed, including young people, and allow employers to train participants in line with their own company-specific needs.²⁰³ Young trainees continue to receive their unemployment benefits as well as a grant (in the form of a daily allowance), are entitled to help with transport expenses, and are assigned a supervisor. However, since the required tasks are fairly basic, there appears to be little scope for defining content.

On the other hand, in **Cyprus** the content of the traineeships aimed at unemployed graduates with less than 12 months work experience as part of the *Scheme for the Job Placement and Training of Tertiary-Education Graduates* is well-specified and closely monitored. For example, the employer needs to deploy the graduate trainee in tasks which will allow him/her acquire necessary and relevant practical work experience in line with the learning plan produced at the beginning of the placement. At the same time, the host organisation must assign a dedicated trainer to the trainee who must spend at least 40 per cent of his/her time addressing training issues pertinent to that particular graduate. In addition, the trainee must attend training seminars relevant to his/her learning needs and work assignment. In **Portugal**, the well-structured *Programa Estágios Profissionais* (aimed at young people who have completed upper secondary, post-secondary non-tertiary and tertiary education) requires employers to produce a 'Traineeship Plan' setting out the traineeship's objectives and work-related activities as well as the skills expected to be developed by the trainee.

Similarly, the *JobBridge* scheme in **Ireland** requires companies to produce a standard traineeship agreement (*Standard Internship Agreement*) which includes details of the kind of work experience which will be offered as part of the traineeship. The company must then complete monthly online compliance reports to ensure the traineeship is proceeding as planned. In these instances, the traineeship content is typically defined at the local level in agreement between the trainee, host organisation and co-ordinating body. Similar cases of well-defined traineeship-related structure and content can also be found in other countries (e.g. BE, CY, EL, FI, FR, NL, PL, PT, RO, UK, etc.).

The length of these ALMP traineeships tends to be fairly specifically defined, although there are considerable variations between MS. For example, in the **UK**, *Work Experience* placements last two to eight weeks; in **Cyprus** graduate traineeships last 6 or 12 months; in **Portugal** traineeships as part of the *Programa Estágios Profissionais* last nine months; in **Estonia** *Work Practice Scheme* placements last up to four months; and in **Finland** ALMP-related traineeships can last up to six months.

²⁰¹ Department for Work and Pensions/DWP, (2011). *Could you offer Voluntary Work Experience*, Guide for Employers, April, <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/work-experience-guide.pdf>

²⁰² <http://www.tootukassa.ee/?lang=en>

²⁰³ <http://www.sm.ee/eng/activity/working-and-managing/labour-market-services-and-benefits.html>

6.2 Traineeships as Compulsory or Optional Part of Academic and/or Vocational Study Curricula (i.e. Traineeships during Education)

Traineeships linked to education programmes (along with those associated with mandatory professional training programmes) tend to be among the best defined in terms of the learning content and are more likely to be supported by a written contract. In general, the learning content of traineeships, especially the ones linked to educational programmes and/or mandatory professional training is usually theoretically well-defined, closely aligned to the study curriculum and supported by a written traineeship contract.

Although the precise content of traineeship agreement varies since it is determined by the educational institution, in general it usually describes in detail all aspects of the traineeship. For example, it usually sets out (i) aims and objectives of the traineeship; (ii) scope and focus; (iii) learning content in terms of trainee-related tasks and activities; (iv) duration, including start and end dates; (v) the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved, i.e. the sending educational institution, the host organisation and the trainee; (vi) the status of the trainee, i.e. that he/she is not an employee but a pupil/student attached to the sending educational institution; (vii) the trainee's terms and conditions, including, if applicable, compensation, social security and health/medical insurance coverage; (viii) leave entitlement; (ix) working conditions, including working hours; (x) trainee-related supervision, support and mentoring arrangements in place (in both sending and host organisations); (xi) certification and accreditation arrangements including, as appropriate, the ECTS credit value of the placement; (xii) quality assurance, monitoring and evaluation procedures including, in many cases, the need for an assessment report at the end of the traineeship; (xiii) dispute resolution mechanisms; etc.

For example, in the **French** in the *Convention de Stage* mentioned above the content and focus of the traineeship is both spelled out in great detail and closely monitored by the educational institution. Indeed, the recent *2011 Loi Cherpion* reinforces the importance of this compulsory tripartite traineeship contract which must be signed between the trainee, the host organisation and the educational establishment for all types of traineeships. At the same time, the law requires that the traineeship's learning content should be of high quality and integrated into the trainee's degree or other training, while seeking to ensure that trainees are not assigned tasks performed by regular staff so as to safeguard that they are not used as cheap labour. In **Luxembourg**, educational traineeships must be based on an agreement specifying their content and practice which is also monitored by the educational institution and employer.

Similarly, in **Greece** all traineeships linked to educational programmes of higher (academic or vocational) education involve a written agreement which defines in great detail all aspects of the placement, including trainee-related tasks and terms and conditions. As is common across the EU, HEIs determine their own approach to the provision of traineeships, although some common standards are being developed as a result of their involvement in the *4th Community Support Framework*. For example most HEIs now have an ESF-supported Office for Traineeships ('Grafeio Praktikis Askisis') which is responsible for the co-ordination of traineeships across the institution.

Regulation of content in these traineeships often takes place at the local level. For example, in the **UK** the content and length of work placements as part of higher education courses is largely determined by individual universities and employers according to the specifics of a particular course. In **Lithuania**, the content of VET programmes is determined in agreements between employers and educational institutions in line with guidelines set at the national level. However, at present it is difficult to ensure widespread employer engagement in the development of education programmes. The content of VET traineeships in the **Netherlands** is defined at the local level but within the context of a Qualification Profile which is determined by social partners at a national-sectoral level. In polytechnic education in **Finland** trainees must produce a training plan at the outset of the traineeship

outlining how the placement will assist their professional development. This plan is monitored by representatives from both the host organisation and the educational establishment.

There are obvious variations in the extent to which the traineeship content is clearly and tightly defined between different levels of the education system. Typically, there is a difference between traineeships in upper secondary education and those which form part of higher (academic and vocational) education. The former are more likely to have content determined at a national level. For example, in **Hungary** the content of traineeships which are part of higher education study curricula is largely determined at the local level, whereas that of VET traineeships is more centrally defined through the specific requirements of the VET system. To this end, it is compulsory to have a traineeship contract between either the educational institution and the employer or the trainee and the employer, which details various aspects of the VET traineeship. Similarly, in both in **Romania** and **Bulgaria** traineeships as part of upper secondary VET are regulated by national curricula, while HEIs have a greater degree of autonomy in shaping the content and practice of traineeships associated with their courses.

Where regulation takes place at a national level, it more often relates to the length of the traineeship rather than the precise content. A number of MS define the duration of educational traineeships at a national level. For example, in **Bulgaria**, all educational traineeships have their length defined nationally (though content is determined at the local level, e.g. by the HEI). In **Hungary**, the length of traineeships for certain professional Bachelor's degrees is set at one semester. Similarly, certain professional higher education qualifications in **Denmark**, involve compulsory traineeships with a formally specified duration. In **Greece**, traineeships offered by the TEIs are legally specified and regulated and must last at least six months. However, there are also examples where the length of educational placements is more flexibly determined at local level. For example, in the **UK** educational traineeships are often one year in length (e.g. sandwich courses), but HEIs can also offer two six-month blocks of placements or shorter compulsory placements of around six weeks.

It should also be noted that in some countries, where placements form part of VET programmes, traineeships may actually take place within educational institutions if a suitable work-based placement cannot be found (e.g. DE, DK, HU, IE, RO, SE, UK, etc.). For example, this is the case for almost half of VET programmes in **Denmark**. Inability to find a suitable placement has also been cited as a factor for **UK** students choosing to opt out of their placement year when undertaking university sandwich courses.

There tends to be less concern about questionable practices in traineeships associated with educational programmes, particularly when these are compared to traineeships in the open market. However, there are some examples of questionable practices in certain cases. For example, in **Latvia** concerns have been raised about low trainee remuneration in VET placements. Similarly, in **Hungary** there are some concerns about the content of VET traineeships in relation to labour market needs.

6.3 Traineeships which form Part of Mandatory Professional Training

Like placements integrated into education courses, traineeships forming part of mandatory professional training are more likely to have well-defined content and to be accompanied by a written contract. In contrast to those related to education courses, where content is defined at the local level, especially as regards higher education, in mandatory professional traineeships this is more often determined at national-sectoral level by relevant regulatory bodies and/or professional associations, or even by legislation.

For example, in the **UK** the Architects Registration Board (ARB) and the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) oversee the entire training process, including traineeships, associated with architectural studies.²⁰⁴ In **Greece**, the provisions of legal traineeships were initially outlined in the *Legislative Decree 3026/1954* (Code for Lawyers) and amended with subsequent legislation. Accordingly, law graduates must complete an 18-month traineeship at a law practice, after which they have to pass a set of bar exams. Those supervising trainee lawyers must ensure that these are not assigned tasks which are not relevant to the legal profession (e.g. general administrative work). In addition, they must, *inter alia*, provide them with work assignments on cases of increasing complexity and with personalised mentoring and guidance on specific cases. Similar rules are laid down by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) in the **UK**.

However, this is not always the case. For example, architecture placements in the **UK** have much less prescribed content than those related to legal training. In this case, the trainee together with the host organisation (architect practice) identifies and determines tasks deemed suitable for providing him/her with sufficient work-related experience to pass his/her Professional Practice exams.

The length of mandatory professional traineeships is also usually determined at the national level, although there is a considerable degree of variation both across MS and between different professions. For example, in **Cyprus** legal traineeships last a year, while in the **UK** trainee lawyers must complete two years' practical experience. Moreover, in **Luxembourg** and **Cyprus** trainee teachers have to undertake a traineeship lasting 8-12 months as opposed to architecture trainees in **Belgium** and the **UK** who must complete a total of 24 months' practical experience.

6.4 Traineeships in the Open Market after Graduation/ Completion of Studies

The aim of these traineeships is provide graduates with work experience before they secure more stable employment. As expected, these traineeships are the least likely to have a pre-defined content. To a large extent, the content and practice of these traineeships are determined jointly by the trainee and the employer, although the latter is unsurprisingly likely to have more control over these aspects. This does not necessarily mean that these placements are entirely devoid of structure and content. For example, the study found that many employers in the **UK** voluntarily provide well-structured traineeships with pre-defined content. However, overall the evidence suggests a high degree of variability in this area.

Indeed, some MS do make some effort to define the content of open market traineeships, e.g. by requiring or prohibiting certain types of activities. For example, in **France** a series of laws, including the recent *Loi Cherpion*, specifies that trainees cannot perform tasks corresponding to those carried out by regular staff of the host organisation. In addition, it stresses the requirement for the learning content of the traineeship to be of high quality and closely linked to the trainee's studies and/or training and professional development activities. Similarly, in **Austria** the *Volontariat contract* requires that trainees do not carry out regular work within the company and are not integrated into its work structures. This is because the focus of this contract is supposed to be on training.

Likewise, in **Spain** the *Contrato para la Formación* and *Contrato en Prácticas* spell out the responsibilities of firms and trainees in some detail in an attempt to promote the learning content of such placements. However, it should be noted that in **Austria** there are concerns about employers failing to abide by these regulations, while in **Spain** many employers prefer unregulated *becas* when employing young people. As a result, despite such regulatory attempts similar issues regarding the questionable and variable quality of open

²⁰⁴ <http://www.architecture.com/TheRIBA/TheRIBA.aspx>

market traineeships emerge in these MS as they do in countries with substantially less regulation such as the **UK**.

Overall, although the extent of poor quality traineeships can vary by type of traineeship, it is this type of traineeships which has attracted most criticism and given rise to grave concerns. For example, in the **UK** most concerns about traineeships relate almost exclusively to those outside formal education while, for the most part, traineeships linked to an (academic or vocational) education course appear to be of reasonable quality. Similar concerns about traineeships which are outside formal education have been reported in the majority of MS (e.g. AT, BE, BG, CZ, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, MT, PL, PT, RO, SI, UK, etc.).

6.5 Transnational Traineeships

There was limited information regarding practice and content of transnational traineeships. In general, the study found that transnational traineeships are often more tightly regulated, well-structured and closely supervised. This, in turn, is likely to ensure that one's transnational traineeship fits in a coherent manner with the programme of study and accreditation system. That said, in few MS there are concerns that employers appear to be using these transnational traineeships, including those associated with EU mobility programmes such as the LdV programme, more as a way of filling short-term positions with cheap labour (e.g. BG, ES, LT, LV, SK, etc.).

6.6 Questionable Employer Practices and Action Taken by Governments

With the notable exception of the **Netherlands** questionable practices in relation to traineeships appear to be prevalent across MS, with little variation by types of regulatory regime. The main concerns relating to traineeships across all countries relate to: (i) lack of high quality learning content; (ii) low trainee protection and rather poor terms and conditions; (iii) no or insufficient trainee compensation; (iv) the use of trainees to carry out mundane tasks instead of activities closely linked to their learning needs; (v) substitution of trainees for regular employees; etc. (see Box below). Significantly, low or no trainee compensation has been highlighted as a major issue of concern in almost all MS. In a number of countries concerns about traineeships are related to broader concerns about young people becoming trapped in precarious or unstable employment through an endless series of such placements (e.g. AT, DE, EE, EL, ES, FR, IE, IT, LT, LV, PL, PT, UK, etc.).

Questionable practices also appear to be particularly driven by the vulnerable labour market position of young people which, in turn, allows some employers to 'take advantage' of those who are struggling to gain entry to employment. This is particularly the case in countries and sectors where large numbers of young people are trying to find work, e.g. all Southern European countries, France, the UK, Ireland, Baltic countries, etc. That said, questionable practices can also be found in countries such as Germany and Austria.

Questionable Employer Practices

- **Low or poor learning content:** tasks assigned to trainee irrelevant to learning needs
- **Poor working conditions:** e.g. lack of social security and/or health insurance protection, long hours, heavy workload, no sick or holiday pay, etc.
- **Lack of or low trainee compensation**
- Using trainees **as substitutes for regular staff**

- **Target selection:** employing trainees who would otherwise have been hired as regular employees
- **Renewal of successive traineeship contracts** with no offer of a more permanent job once traineeship is completed

6.6.1 Traineeships as part of Active Labour Market Policies for Unemployed Young People

There are some concerns, mainly related to ALMP-related basic work experience placements for the lower skilled or long-term unemployed, that such traineeships may result in substitution, displacement and/or deadweight effects. For example, employers may be tempted to replace regular, fully-paid workers with 'free' or 'cheaper' (thanks to subsidies) trainees, including graduates (e.g. AT, BE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FR, IT, LT, LV, PL, PT, RO, UK, etc.). For example, the Belgian *Cour des Comptes* has highlighted the deadweight effects of certain traineeship schemes such as the *Plan Formation Insertion*. Specifically, it found that 50 per cent of the funding was channelled to the recruitment of young or less-skilled job seekers who would have been hired anyway.²⁰⁵

In the **UK**, issues have been raised over young unemployed people being 'forced' into Work Experience placements under the threat of losing unemployment benefits, although the scheme is intended to be voluntary. Additionally, participants have reported low quality training and work-related activities within placements with little supervision or opportunity for skills development. Similarly, in **Ireland** it has been noted that some traineeships advertised through the *JobBridge* scheme appear to be more akin to regular jobs than traineeships. In **Luxembourg**, there are concerns that some ALMP traineeships lack the required training dimension.

The extent to which these concerns have resulted in a government response varies, although there has been a growing realisation that action is required. In most cases, this has entailed the introduction and/or tightening of monitoring rules, stronger quality assurance mechanisms, and occasionally, the complete overhaul of the programme or even its discontinuation. For example, in **Greece** the *STAGE programme* was discontinued in November 2009 amid growing criticism that trainees were used on the basis of successive contracts as a source of cheap labour in the public sector.

It was replaced by the *Work Experience Programme for New Labour Market Entrants* which sought to address the plethora of criticisms of the STAGE programme by being accompanied by a robust PES-driven monitoring and quality assurance mechanism. For example, it explicitly sets the maximum duration of the placement to 12 months, with no possibility for renewing the traineeship contract. That said, the programme provides employers with incentives in the form of subsidisation of social security contributions if the trainee, upon completion of the traineeship, is offered a permanent employment contract. Similarly, in **Ireland**, *JobBridge* traineeships are monitored to ensure that they meet the necessary standards, while a whistle blowing facility is available to trainees concerned about the quality of their placement. In **Luxembourg**, there are company-based routes for reporting poor quality traineeships, e.g. through union or workplace representatives.

6.6.2 Traineeships as Compulsory or Optional Part of Academic and/or Vocational Study Curricula (i.e. Traineeships during Education)

In general, there is very little evidence of questionable employer practices in educational traineeships. Where this does occur, it tends to relate strictly to a lack of trainee remuneration, e.g. VET traineeships in **Latvia**. In some cases, there is also evidence of poor

²⁰⁵ OECD, (2007). *Des Emplois pour les Jeunes – Belgique*, OECD Publishing, <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/36/55/38090801.pdf>

quality control of the content and practice of the traineeship, despite the existence of formal traineeship-related structures and procedures. This includes lack of clarity in the aims and objectives of practical training; no opportunity for the trainee to carry out genuine work-related activities during the traineeship; absence of supervision and guidance; and lack of feedback from the host organisation, e.g. **Estonia**. Moreover, the wide variation on how these traineeships are organised, supervised, quality assured and assessed not only between MS, but also between educational institutions within a MS, means that issues might arise as regards their content and quality e.g. **Greece**.

In general, the level of support from educational institutions varies both across and within MS. As our study found, this support is not always particularly useful and relevant to trainees. In some cases, the level of assistance from educational institutions to trainees is simply limited to the provision of a list of potential host organisations, or an internet platform with information about traineeships, with students being mostly responsible for sourcing traineeships by themselves (e.g. AT, DK, FR, NL, RO, etc.). Moreover, even in **France** which is characterised by a high degree of traineeship-related regulations, whereby the educational institution is formally assigned the role in organising and supervising traineeships on the basis of the *Convention de Stage*, there are reports of lack of proper monitoring by the educational establishment. As has been reported, this has, in turn, led to fictitious university registrations, with some educational institutions 'abusing' the system by providing traineeship contracts for a fee without proper supervision and quality assurance of the traineeship.²⁰⁶

6.6.3 Traineeships which form Part of Mandatory Professional Training

Questionable employer practices in mandatory professional traineeships are also not as widespread as for other types of traineeships, notably those in the open market. That said, in a number of MS traineeships for certain professions, especially medicine, law and architecture, have attracted some criticism about questionable employer practices and possible trainee exploitation (e.g. AT, BE, EE, EL, ES, IT, LV, RO, UK, etc.). For example, in **Belgium** concerns have been expressed about the high workloads, long hours and low pay of medical and legal trainees. This is also the case for legal trainees in **Greece** and **Italy** as well as for medical trainees in the **UK**. Similarly, in the **UK**, traineeships linked to professional training for architecture have been criticised for offering low or no compensation.

In general, there appears to have been little effort by government to address such issues. In the **UK**, the Royal Institute for British Architects (RIBA) has brought in some requirements to pay trainees above the minimum wage in RIBA Chartered architect practices. However, this does not cover all architect practices and the move was criticised as insufficient by Archaos, the organisation representing young architects. In a similar vein, the Athens Bar Association (in line with other regional Bar Associations) strongly recommends that trainee lawyers receive at least €600/month compensation, although this is not legally binding. Despite these provisions, there is a lot of anecdotal evidence about widespread exploitation of trainee lawyers by their employers, including long working hours, no or very little compensation, heavy workload, etc.

6.6.4 Traineeships in the Open Market after Graduation/ Completion of Studies

Questionable practices are most commonly reported in relation to open market traineeships. Concerns about this form of traineeship have been raised in a (growing) number of MS including **Austria, Bulgaria, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Romania, Spain** and the **UK**. Indeed, in many MS, traineeships in the open market have attracted most criticism because they are associated with reports of (i) poor or non-existent learning

²⁰⁶ Mongourdin-Denoix, S., (2011). *Op.Cit.*

content which relates to trainee's developmental needs (e.g. DE, EE, EL, ES, FR, HU, IT, LT, LU, LV, PL, PT, UK, etc.); (ii) poor terms and conditions, including lack of social security coverage and/or health insurance, low or no compensation, no sick or holiday entitlement and/or pay, etc. (e.g. AT, BE, BG, CZ, DK, EL, ES, FR, IE, IT, LV, MT, PL, PT, SI, UK, etc.); (iii) trainee exploitation, including heavy workload and/or long working hours (e.g. BE, EL, ES, FR, IE, IT, LU, SI, UK, etc.); (iv) replacement of regular staff by trainees who are used as cheap or even free labour (e.g. AT, BE, BG, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LV, MT, PL, PT, RO, UK, etc.); (v) lack of transparency in the recruitment process (e.g. AT, EL, IT, RO, UK, etc.); (vi) lack of equity of access due to poor terms and conditions, including no or insufficient remuneration (e.g. BG, EE, EL, ES, IT, LT, LV, UK, etc.); etc.

In some MS there have been sufficient concerns regarding the situation of these trainees to warrant additional regulation. However, with the exception of few MS, notably **France**, there is limited evidence of a large scale government response to questionable employer practices in open market traineeships across the EU, and even less evidence of success. Much government action appears to be focussed on the provision of advice and good practice guidelines as well as the enforcement of existing rules. It should be noted that in some countries this approach has the support of social partners. For example, in both **Austria** and the **UK** employer associations and trade unions favour better enforcement of existing regulation as opposed to the introduction of new laws. Elsewhere, governments have explicitly rejected calls for further regulation. For example, in **Germany** opposition parties put forward specific proposals for the regulation of traineeship content as well as trainee rights to remuneration which were turned down by the government.

Moreover, in the **UK** where there is a lively debate about traineeships and equity of access to professions, e.g. law, accountancy, finance, etc., the government encourages the development of and compliance with voluntary quality guidelines by employers. Indeed, on 18 July 2011, a consortium of 60 professional associations launched, with the support of the UK Government, a *Code of Best Practice for Quality Internships* as a way of addressing concerns and issues surrounding such schemes (see Section 8).²⁰⁷

As mentioned earlier, **France** stands out as a country which since 2006/2007 has, in response to concerns about trainee exploitation and poor terms and conditions, consistently sought to regulate in a quite explicit and direct manner all traineeships, including those in the open market. For example, on 26 April 2006 the French Government launched the *Charte Des Stages Étudiants en Entreprise* which clarified the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved in a traineeship, i.e. the HEI, the host organisation (company) and the trainee.²⁰⁸ Significantly, this charter stresses the learning dimension of the traineeship, stipulates that the traineeship is regulated by the provisions included in the *Convention de Stage*, and requires the monitoring and evaluation of the placement.²⁰⁹ In autumn 2007, the *Comité des Stages et de la Professionnalisation Des Coursus Universitaires* was set up in order to oversee the implementation of this traineeship-related charter. A succession of laws followed, with the latest piece of relevant regulation, July 2011's *Loi Cherpion*, seeking to further reinforce the protection of trainees from possible exploitation and improve the trainee's terms and conditions for *all* traineeships. For example, it limits the length of a traineeship to six months per academic year, i.e. a trainee cannot undertake a traineeship with the same company for more than six months.

It also increases the involvement of Works Councils in relation to traineeships by requiring that the annual report of companies employing fewer than 300 employees should include information about the number of trainees and their terms and conditions. In particular, it is compulsory that Works Councils in such companies are kept informed on a quarterly basis about the number of trainees, their terms and conditions and assigned tasks. However, to

²⁰⁷ <http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/BISCore/higher-education/docs/C/11-1068-common-best-practice-code-for-quality-internships.pdf>

²⁰⁸ http://www.travail-emploi-sante.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/Charte_stages_etudiants_en_entreprise.pdf

²⁰⁹ OECD, (2009b). *Op.Cit.*

date the impact of such regulation on open market traineeships has been varied even in France. In a similar vein, in an attempt to address traineeship-related issues **Italian** legislators have recently lowered the maximum duration of traineeships and set a time limit after graduation (not more than 12 months).

6.6.5 Transnational Traineeships

There was limited evidence on questionable practices in transnational traineeships, although, as mentioned earlier, in some countries such as **Lithuania** some employers appeared to be using LdV placements as a source of cheap labour. Similar concerns have been raised in few other MS (e.g. BG, EL, ES, LV, SK, etc.).

In the Table overleaf, we present country-specific information about traineeship-related practices and content, including incidence of questionable employer practices and government responses.

Table 6.1: Traineeship-related Practices and Content, Employer Questionable Practices and Government Response

	AT	BE	BG	CY	CZ	DE	DK	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HU	IE	IT	LT	LU	LV	MT	NL	PL	PT	RO	SE	SI	SK	UK
Extent to which content of traineeships is formally defined (e.g. learning dimension/practical work etc.)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	x	✓
Questionable employer practices	✓	✓	x	x	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	x	?	✓	?	✓
Measures taken by Government	x	✓	x	x	✓	x	?	✓	x	x	x	✓	x	?	✓	x	?	x	x	x	x	✓	x	?	?	?	✓

Key: (✓) Yes (X) No (?) Unavailable/Unclear

7. Trainee's Terms and Conditions

In relation to a trainee's terms and conditions this study found a quite fragmented and diverse situation in most countries, since different types of traineeships are associated with different trainee-related rights, terms and conditions. However, there are some common factors which have been identified across countries.

In most MS **the trainee's terms and conditions depend on the type of traineeship. In general, traineeships which form part of academic and/or vocational study curricula are more regulated, monitored and quality assured by either relevant legislation and/or educational institutions.** Such traineeships are usually associated with a minimum set of trainee terms and conditions, typically set out in a written traineeship agreement and overseen by the educational establishment. However, the length of the traineeship, working conditions including working hours, and the trainee's terms and conditions such as remuneration and/or social security coverage, usually differ according to whether the traineeship is compulsory or voluntary; the age, educational level and employment status of the trainee; the specific study curricula requirements; the regulations of individual educational establishments; and, in some cases, the law.

For example, in **Germany**, compulsory and voluntary traineeships are subject to different regulations. To this end, regulations on mandatory traineeships (both vocational and academic) define both their duration and the legal requirements for employers to certify in detail the work-related activities and tasks assigned to the trainee. No other rules apply, while the traineeship contracts can be either written or oral, trainee remuneration is voluntary and there is no holiday entitlement. On the other hand, voluntary traineeships are subject to the same regulations, but here trainees are entitled to appropriate remuneration, holidays and sick leave.

Compulsory traineeships related to some professions such as law, medicine, teaching, accountancy, etc. and the associated trainee's terms and conditions are governed by **specific regulations often developed and overseen by the relevant professional associations** in nearly all MS.

The trainee's terms and conditions are typically **less regulated for traineeships in the open market** and, as such, have attracted a lot of criticism especially from trade unions, trainees and trainee associations, youth organisations and the media. This is the case, for example, in **Spain** with the *Becas no convenidas* which are unregulated and offer minimum social protection to trainees. These are traineeships offered directly to graduates by private employers through unilateral agreements, without the mediation of an educational establishment. Although their initial aim was to help students specialise in a limited number of fields, they can now be found in all sectors. These *becas* have given rise to serious concerns about their potential for trainee exploitation, especially since some employers are using them as a way of avoiding social security and insurance payments.²¹⁰

A traineeship contract is normally signed prior to the start of the traineeship and specifies such aspects as the scope, content, duration, structure, and terms and conditions of the placement. However, these provisions are, in many cases, only laid out at a rather basic level and their details depend very much on the actual context of the traineeship. **The specific role, function and characteristics of the traineeship contract (and thus of trainee-related rights) are different among countries and vary across sectors and types of traineeships.** In **Denmark**, for example, in lengthier traineeships related to further education (including apprenticeships), there are specific regulations in place which require a written agreement between the trainee and the employer and typically also involve the approval and endorsement of the educational

²¹⁰ OECD, (2007). *Op.Cit.*

institution. Similar arrangements exist for all traineeships which are linked to educational programmes (academic or vocational) in most MS. In some cases, the traineeship-related rules, terms and conditions also vary according to the size of the firms where the traineeship takes place. In **Germany**, for example, especially in larger enterprises, specific traineeship policies are negotiated and agreed between employer and employee representatives.

The trainee's terms and conditions are also related to the employment status of the trainee which, in turn, determines one's rights at work. When a traineeship is regulated through an 'employment' type of contract, it is usually covered by relevant employment legislation. In this case, national employment law which covers a range of employment rights such as maximum working hours, holidays, sick leave, social security and/or health insurance coverage, compensation, etc. is likely to apply. Not surprisingly, **greater social protection is available when an 'employment' type contract is in place**. However, it is worth stressing that, increasingly, companies which take on trainees as part of government-sponsored programmes, including those linked to ALMPs and education described earlier, are required to pay (either in full or in part) the trainee's social security contributions (e.g. AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, EE, EL, IE, FR, LT, LU, MT, NL, PL, PT, SI, etc.). Alternatively, it may be the state or the educational establishment itself which resumes this responsibility. However, no such obligation exists for the traineeships in the open market which a growing number of young people are currently undertaking.

In general, in contrast to apprentices, **trainees are not considered to be employees** and, as such, their rights, terms and conditions, including remuneration are not tightly defined and regulated, at least as regards certain types of traineeships. In most cases, trainees are considered to be students and the primary purpose of the traineeship is learning and acquiring practical, work-related experience. For example, in **Belgium** trainees are seen as 'students' and have the status of 'non-contractual worker'. This, in turn, implies that trainees are not entitled to a wage as such, only to expenses and/or compensation (at the company's discretion). To this end, a variety of Belgian schemes include some compensation for trainees. Similarly, in **France** a succession of laws stress that trainees are *not* employees and their presence in the company is solely for learning and professional development purposes. Even so, as shown below, a raft of French legislative measures seek to offer minimum protection and improve the rights, terms and conditions of trainees.

Without an employment contract, trainees are entitled, in some cases, only to health insurance and/or work accident insurance. This is more common in countries which regulate traineeships (e.g. AT, BG, CY, DE, EL, ES, FI, FR, LT, NL, PL, RO, SK, SI, etc.). Typically, trainees are covered by special type of contracts which, crucially, are *not* regular employment contracts (e. g. AT, BE, BG, CY, EL, ES, FR, IE, LU, NL, PL, PT, RO, SI, SK, etc.). For example, according to the Labour Code, in **Bulgaria**, an employer can conclude a special contract with a student trainee. The remuneration and overall costs of traineeships are regulated by the individual contract concluded between the company, the educational institution and/or the trainee. The employer is obliged to provide the trainee with compensation, health insurance coverage, travel and subsistence expenses, etc.

Similarly, in **Greece**, students who undertake a compulsory traineeship are entitled to compensation equalling the basic wage (which corresponds to the lowest grade of someone with secondary education) as well as to medical/health and work accident insurance. In the **Netherlands**, trainees have a specific recognised legal status. The legislation regulates such traineeship-related aspects as working hours and entitlement to holidays and sick leave. Trainees are not entitled to social benefits as such, but are eligible for health insurance as well as liability, third party liability and work accident insurance coverage.²¹¹

In **Slovenia**, the Employment Relationship Act (ERA) regulates the general conditions of traineeships. According to the Act, employers and trainees must sign a written traineeship

²¹¹ GHK, (2011). *Op.Cit.*

contract. The duration of traineeship must not be longer than one year (except in public administration, medicine and law). Trainees should receive compensation not lower than the minimum wage, while they are also entitled to earn 70 per cent of the basic salary at the workplace. Employers have to pay the all social security contributions.

In some MS such as **Denmark, France, Germany, and Ireland**, the trainee's rights, terms and conditions, including remuneration are set by collective agreements (e.g. DE, DK etc.) and/or specific regulation (e.g. FR, IE, etc.). For example, in **Ireland**, the *National Traineeship Scheme* defines a standard traineeship working week at 30-40 hours. Failure to participate for this length of time can result in a reduction of the traineeship allowance. Trainees are also entitled to 1.75 annual leave days for each month of the traineeship and to all public holidays.

In **France**, all traineeships require a tripartite written contract (*Convention de Stage*) signed by trainees, employers, and educational institutions (e.g. universities, colleges, training institutes, etc.). Although this is explicitly *not* an employment contract, it does set out in great detail the trainee's rights, terms and conditions. Indeed, the trainee's remuneration, social security and insurance coverage as well as other types of compensation are legally regulated. For example, according to Article 30 of *Act n° 2009-1437*, those undertaking a traineeship lasting for more than two months in the same academic year, should receive minimum compensation in the form of a bonus (called *gratification*) regardless of the number of hours worked.²¹² The amount of trainee remuneration should be specified in the *Convention de Stage* and can be set by sectoral or inter-professional agreements. In the absence of a specified amount, the minimum hourly trainee compensation is set at 12.5 per cent of the hourly social security cap (€23 in 2012).²¹³

As long as the trainee's remuneration is at most equal to this cap, both the employer and the trainee are exempt from social security contributions (including CSG and CRDS). The sickness and work accident insurance coverage of the trainee (WA/WI) is also the responsibility of the sending institution if the remuneration remains within the limit of this cap; otherwise, it is paid by the host enterprise/organisation. If the traineeship lasts for less than two months, a bonus can be offered to the trainee on a voluntary basis. It is worth noting here that social partners, especially trade unions, youth organisations and platforms representing trainees, notably *Génération Précaire*, have criticised the fact that, even with these provisions, trainees continue to be poorly paid, since they can, at most, earn one third of the national minimum wage (NMW).²¹⁴

In other countries, such as **Italy, Estonia and Sweden**, students are not usually covered by contracts, either special 'employment' type or training-related. Here the trainee's rights, terms and conditions depend on specific agreements between the sending organisation, the company and the trainee. For example, in **Italy**, when the traineeship is part of educational programmes and/or ALMPs, this does not constitute an outright employment contract (unlike apprenticeships). As a result, the trainee is not entitled to remuneration for time spent in training (although in practice the host organisation may choose, at its own discretion, to reimburse expenses, provide benefits in kind such as meal vouchers, etc.). Likewise, there is no obligation on the part of the company to hire the trainee at the end of the traineeship. The compensation, in this case, is considered to be the opportunity for career orientation and the training provided to the young person. The trainee's rights depend on the agreement reached between the trainee, the company and the promoting/sending organisation, although the latter has the legal obligation to insure the trainee against work accidents.

²¹² The law explicitly states that this is *not* a wage.

²¹³ For example, this amounts to €436,05 per month in 2012 for a full-time traineeship (151,67 hours).

²¹⁴ Robin, B., (2008). *Decree regulating Students' Work Placements strongly criticised*, EIROnline/Eurofound, 26.6.2008, <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/2008/05/articles/fr0805039i.htm>

Similarly, in **Estonia**, in contrast to apprenticeships where the level of remuneration is regulated, there are no regulations regarding trainee compensation. Not surprisingly, during their practical training at a workplace students are covered by health and safety regulations. The same applies to **Sweden** where there is no national legislation about the trainee's terms and conditions. In this case, the *Upper Secondary School Ordinance* and *Higher Education Ordinances* regulate all aspects of traineeships at upper secondary school, college and university level. The Work Environment Authority regulates the working hours for trainees aged under 18.²¹⁵ Student trainees are usually unpaid.

In general, **legal provisions for the trainee's terms and conditions in most countries are very fragmented and do not cover all types of traineeships in a consistent and coherent way**. For example, in **Belgium**, legal provisions only apply to traineeships associated with secondary education, while in the **Czech Republic** only to apprenticeships and in **Estonia** to VET traineeships. Similarly, in many MS there are specific legal provisions about the terms and conditions of trainees on mandatory professional training. For example, such special provisions apply in **Ireland, Italy, Greece, and Romania**. In **Italy** such provisions also apply to 'summer traineeships'.

In a number of countries the situation as regards the trainee's terms and conditions is more differentiated (e.g. AT, BE, CY, CZ, DE, FI, FR, IE, EL, LU, PL, UK, etc.). In the **UK**, for example, the lack of a legal definition of a traineeship or trainee has led to ambiguity over the entitlement of trainees to compensation, usually in the form of NMW. No special rules exist as regards the NMW and trainees. Rather, whether trainees are entitled to remuneration, including the NMW, depends on whether they are classified as a 'worker' under the *National Minimum Wage Act 1998*, in which case, they are entitled to be paid at least the NMW. In contrast, if they are classified as volunteers (who have no obligations to work and no formal contract), they are not entitled to compensation.

In *traineeships outside formal education*, trainees may be defined as a 'worker' covered by the NMW and by working time regulations and, as such, have similar rights to any other employee. However, this is not always the case, as many UK employers claim informal traineeships do not constitute work and that trainees are therefore exempt from the NMW. At the same time, with regard to *traineeships which form part of formal education*, trainees are exempt from NMW, while students have no access to benefits. Following recommendations from the Low Pay Commission that the situation of trainees needs to be clarified, the government has committed itself to providing additional guidance on when trainees should receive a minimum wage.^{216,217}

In the **Czech Republic**, trainees in secondary education are considered to be students and, as such, do not sign a contract with the employer and do not have an 'employee' status. On the other hand, *international trainees* have a 'dual status'. They are regarded as students, but they have to first sign a contract with the intermediary organisation and, second, with their host organisation abroad. The rights, terms and conditions of trainees in not-for-profit organisations are also sometimes set out in a written contract, although trainees in such organisations are usually not paid.

Trainees' entitlement to social benefits is often dependent on the regulations pertinent to a particular type of traineeship, its duration and whether the trainees are enrolled in a formal educational programme. Again, the extent to which a trainee is covered by social security provisions relates to the existence of an 'employment' as opposed to training contract. This is the case, for example, in **Austria** where there is a duality between

²¹⁵ Sveriges Riksdag, (2010). *Op.Cit.*

²¹⁶ Low Pay Commission, (2011). *Op.Cit.*

²¹⁷ Department for Business, Innovation and Skills/BIS, (2009). *Internships and National Minimum Wage – Frequently Asked Questions*,
<http://www.brighton.ac.uk/careers/employers/resources/Internships%20and%20National%20Minimum%20Wage%20%20Frequently%20Asked%20Questions.pdf>

traineeships accompanied with an employment contract and those linked to training. This, in turn, means that traineeships are partly carried out within the framework of existing types of contracts and partly within specific contractual arrangements.

All provisions of employment law are applicable to traineeships organised as regular temporary employment contracts. As a result, if trainee compensation is above the minimum earnings threshold, these are fully covered by social security insurance provisions. On the other hand, trainees undertaking traineeships on freelance service contracts are excluded from employment law and, as such, are not legally entitled to remuneration. The level of payment varies considerably between sectors, with the highest traineeship-related remuneration in technical and business sectors and the lowest in sectors such as healthcare and social work, architecture, creative industries, media, and NGOs.

Crucially, there is **no common definition of what is an 'appropriate' trainee remuneration and again there are great variations between both types of traineeships and countries**. The **remuneration** of trainees is linked to a wide range of factors, including (i) the specific type of traineeship; (ii) its duration; (iii) the age, qualification level and prior experience of the trainee; (iv) trainee eligibility for compensation; (v) the precise form of remuneration (i.e. cash or in kind benefits or both, and/or whether it only covers trainee expenses, e.g. travel, subsistence, accommodation, etc.); etc. Where trainees do receive compensation, this tends to be linked to NMW for young people (or, in few cases, the adult NMW). This applies in most countries where there is a NMW (e.g. BE, EL, ES, LU, LV, MT, NL, PT, RO, SI, SK, UK, etc.), while in countries with no NMW (i.e. AT, CY, DE, DK, FI, IT and SE) trainee remuneration levels are determined in a variety of ways, including collective bargaining agreements. In those countries which have provisions for trainee remuneration, these often apply only to traineeships which are compulsory, notably in VET. The NMW serves as a benchmark for trainee remuneration in countries where it is set by law (e.g. EE, EL, SI, SK, UK, etc.), while collective agreements may apply in other countries (e.g. AT, DE, DK, etc.).

There are **some attempts to improve the rights, terms and conditions of trainees** in recent years by governments and/or other organisations, in particular trainee associations/platforms, trade unions, student unions and youth organisations (e.g. BG, CY, DE, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, IE, IT, LU, PT, UK, etc.). Indeed, some countries have started to prepare **new legislative acts/measures covering the trainee's rights, terms and conditions**. Recently, in **Germany**, each of the three opposition parties in the German Bundestag, Social Democrats, Green Party and Die Linke introduced bills related to traineeships. The Social Democrats proposed a remuneration of at least €350 per month and, similarly, the Green Party and Die Linke suggested a threshold of €300. In addition, Die Linke argued in favour of limiting the duration of traineeships to three months. The Green Party sought to make written contracts and certification compulsory for all traineeships.

Similarly, in **Finland** in January 2008 the Ministry of Employment and the Economy set up a Working Group with the remit to identify how to improve the legal position of the 'workers who are not officially in employment'. The aim was to amend the legal position of workers who are not officially in employment, so that they would be covered by employment and social protection legislation. This Working Group's Memorandum was completed and delivered to the Ministry of Employment and the Economy in September 2009.

As highlighted throughout this report, **France** has also sought to improve the trainee's rights, terms and conditions through a succession of laws over a number of years. In that regard, the most recent legislation, notably the 2011 Cherpio *Loi Cherpion* reinforced, through its Article 27 (*Encadrement des Stages*), the student's rights as a trainee (who is typically assigned student/pupil as opposed to employee status).²¹⁸ Significantly, this legislation reinforcing the protection of trainees on compulsory and optional/facultative

²¹⁸ <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000024408887>

traineeships came about as a response to questionable employer practices. In particular, it was strongly felt that some employers tended to exploit the trainee's status as student/pupil and assign them the same work tasks as those given to their regular employees. However, unlike the latter, trainees have fewer rights and poorer terms and conditions.

In **Greece**, the new *Work Experience Programme for New Labour Market Entrants*, aged 16-24, is the successor to the old STAGE programme which attracted a plethora of criticisms as regards inadequate trainee protection and terms and conditions. As such, the new programme, in a deliberate attempt to improve the trainee's terms and conditions foresees the following: (i) the signing of a traineeship/work placement contract; (ii) 100 per cent subsidisation of both employer and employee social security contributions; (iii) paying trainees 80 per cent of the NMW (as defined by the General National Collective Agreement); (iv) that work placement should take place only in private sector companies; and (v) the duration should be 6-12 months. Crucially, the new programme also provides strong incentives for companies to retain trainees by continuing to offer employers subsidised social contributions (70 per cent) if they convert the initial 12-month traineeship/work placement contract into a regular employment contract for another 18 months.

In the Table overleaf we present a summary table of the rights, terms and conditions of trainees across all MS.

Table 7.1: The Trainee's Rights, Terms and Conditions across MS

Topic	AT	BE	BG	CY	CZ	DE	DK	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HU	IE	IT	LT	LU	LV	MT	NL	PL	PT	RO	SE	SI	SK	UK	
Whether trainees are covered by employment law provisions	✓	x	✓	✓	x	✓	x	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	x	x	✓	x	x	x	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	
Whether it is common practice to offer a traineeship contract	✓	✓	✓	x	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	?	?	✓	?	✓	
Whether there has been an increase in type of traineeship contracts	✓	?	✓	✓	?	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	?	✓	✓	?	✓	?	x	?	?	✓	?	?	?	?	✓	
Whether there is social security protection	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	x	x	x	✓	x	?	✓	?	x	x	✓	x	x	x	x	x	?	x	✓	✓	?	?	
Whether there is variation across sectors on social security protection	✓	x	✓	?	?	✓	?	✓	✓	x	?	✓	?	?	x	?	x	x	x	x	x	?	x	?	?	?	?	✓
Existence of NMW related to trainee compensation	x	x	x	✓	?	x	x	x	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	?	x	x	✓	?	✓	x	✓	x	✓	✓	x	
Whether Government is taking action to strengthen the trainee's rights, terms & conditions of trainees	x	x	✓	✓	?	✓	?	x	✓	x	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	x	x	?	x	?	?	x	?	?	?	?	x	
Whether other organisations are taking action to strengthen the trainee's rights, terms & conditions	x	x	✓	✓	?	✓	?	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	x	✓	?	x	?	?	✓	?	?	?	?	✓	

Key: (✓) Yes (X) No (?) Unavailable/Unclear

8. Quality Assurance of Traineeships

In a number of MS and for certain types of traineeships, especially those in the open market, the study identified widespread concerns about the quality, learning content, transparency of recruitment, equal access, working conditions such as hours and workload, trainee's terms and conditions such as the lack of insufficient compensation, the potential for trainee exploitation and use of trainees as cheap or free labour, etc. Such concerns have been expressed by key stakeholders at both EU and national levels, e.g. European Parliament, YFJ, ETUC, trainees' associations and platforms, trade unions, student unions, youth organisations, the media, etc. There is also growing concern that, in recent years, young people on traineeships have been used to replace regular employees and/or in entry level jobs, particularly in certain sectors. This may, in turn, have an inimical impact on youth employment.

In the previous sections we have already described in some detail these concerns which, in the face of the proliferation of traineeships taken up by a growing number of young people across the EU, have gone up the political agenda. Indeed, with traineeships becoming the source of growing concern in most MS, there are some concrete attempts in a number of countries to implement specific quality frameworks.

Awareness about issues which relate to the quality of traineeships and the potential for trainee exploitation is rising among all countries and has, in some cases, led to specific quality assurance initiatives. Indeed, in response to such heightened concerns a number of MS have actively sought to improve the quality of traineeships by strengthening quality assurance mechanisms (e.g. AT, BG, CZ, DE, DK, EL, FI, FR, IE, IT, LU, NL, PT, SE, UK, etc.). These include **traineeship-related legislation** as well as **specific quality frameworks** either regulated by public institutions (e.g. educational establishments, PES, etc.); or developed by social partners; or promoted on a voluntary basis by employer associations, professional bodies and even government.

In **Ireland**, for example, under the *National Traineeship Scheme (JobBridge)*, host organisations must develop a traineeship specification setting out clearly the trainee's tasks and responsibilities. In addition, it must include information about the department where the traineeship will take place as well as provisions for mentoring and training of the trainee.²¹⁹ All aspects of the traineeship should be further specified in the *Standard Internship Agreement*. Both the eligibility of the host organisation for the scheme and the traineeship offered are checked by the scheme provider, i.e. the Employment Services Division of FÁS.

To ensure compliance with the scheme, the Department of Social Protection and the Employment Services Division of FÁS, which is operating the scheme under the National Employment and Entitlements Service, monitor *JobBridge* traineeships. The aim is to ensure that these are of sufficient quality and that both host organisations and trainees are abiding by the spirit and the rules of the scheme. Crucially, this stipulates that the traineeship must not displace an existing employee and the host organisation must have no vacancies in the area of activity where the traineeship is offered. To this end, in order to participate in *JobBridge*, host organisations must make a declaration that they will not replace an employee with a trainee. Significantly, the scheme also sets limits to the maximum number of trainees who the host organisation can take on at any given time. These relate directly to its number of full-time employees: organisations with fewer than 10 employees can take on one trainee at most, those with 11-20 employees two trainees, etc.

²¹⁹ Worklink, (2011). *A Resource Guide for Host Organisations to JobBridge*, October, http://www.worklink.ie/sites/default/files/WL8-2-A%20Resource%20Guide%20for%20Host%20Organisations%20to%20JobBridge_1.pdf

In **Italy**, in the face of growing evidence about employer questionable practices and exploitation of trainees, action aimed at addressing quality aspects of traineeships has been taken at both national and regional levels. For example, local institutions are active in this field, while awaiting a draft bill specifically regulating traineeships, expected to be ready by the end of 2011. To this end, the Tuscany Region has produced a *Carta dei Tirocini e Stage di Qualità in Toscana* ('Charter on Quality Traineeships in Tuscany').²²⁰ Likewise, the Province of Perugia has signed a 'protocol agreement on Quality Traineeships' with the Provincial Directorate of the Ministry of Labour, the Istituto Nazionale Previdenza Sociale (INPS)²²¹, the Istituto Nazionale Assicurazione contro gli Infortuni sul Lavoro (INAIL)²²², and the province's Tripartite Commission (representing labour, management, and government).²²³ The aim is to ensure that traineeships are actually used as an opportunity for learning and career orientation as well as to consolidate the local network of relevant actors in order to improve the quality and implementation of traineeships.

In **Austria**, there are two initiatives aimed at 'kitemarking' organisations which offer high-quality traineeships. The first one is a yearly study assessing the quality of traineeships in participating companies.²²⁴ It is carried out by a student consulting company (uniforce Consulting) in co-operation with the Vienna University's Institut für Wirtschaftspsychologie and mainly attracts larger private companies.²²⁵ There is a registration fee for participating companies which must also have hosted a minimum of four traineeships in the previous year. The second initiative is a seal of quality for traineeships developed by the Austrian National Student Union in co-operation with the already mentioned trainee platform Generation Praktikum. It was first presented in April 2011 and is also based on an empirical study. It is expected that the traineeship-related quality seal will be first awarded in 2012.

In **Belgium**, there is no formal provision to ensure the quality of a traineeship, especially since when it is not formally evaluated. That said, universities are now increasingly seeking to organise an evaluation feedback mechanism on traineeships. The Flemish government has also launched an awareness raising campaign on the importance of high quality traineeships.

In most countries the **quality assurance mechanisms depend on the particular type of traineeship**. Those linked to formal study curricula are usually organised, co-ordinated monitored and quality assured centrally by the educational institutions, while traineeships outside formal education are typically less regulated and a greater cause for concern. Overall, the **key areas of concern** are **trainees' terms and conditions**, notably **no or insufficient compensation**, lack of social security and/or health/medical insurance coverage, etc.; **working conditions**, e.g. long working hours, heavy workload, etc.; **equity of access**, especially in relation to unpaid traineeships and not transparent recruitment procedures; and **the quality of training and work experience trainees receive**, e.g. poor or irrelevant learning content, mundane tasks, or conversely, activities usually carried out by regular staff, etc.

Quality assurance standards may be **compulsory or voluntary**. Voluntary schemes are often considered to be less bureaucratic and not associated with 'excessive' regulation and, as such, more likely to encourage a greater supply of traineeships by employers.²²⁶ At the same time, however, it is worth noting the potential for poor quality traineeships, where there are no compulsory standards. However, even when compulsory quality standards exist such as those pertinent to traineeships associated with mandatory professional

²²⁰ <http://www.giovanisi.it/>

²²¹ <http://www.inps.it/portale/default.aspx>

²²² <http://www.inail.it/Portale/>

²²³ <http://www.provincia.perugia.it/guidetematiche/sviluppoeconomicoformazioneelavoro/stageetirocini/tirocininformativi>

²²⁴ www.placetoperform.at

²²⁵ <http://www.placetoperform.at/studiendetails.php>

²²⁶ Panel on Fair Access to the Professions, (2009). *Op.Cit.*

training, these do not necessarily provide sufficient trainee protection since their proper implementation and monitoring are also critical to guaranteeing high quality traineeships.

For **traineeships which form optional or compulsory part of academic and/or vocational study curricula (i.e. traineeships during education)**, it is worth highlighting the example of **Finland**, where the Finnish polytechnics have access to a shared national system of student feedback - OPALA.²²⁷ This electronic evaluation system collects feedback from graduating students about the quality of their course; traineeships completed as part of degree programmes; and the support and counselling they received during studies, including the placement. In addition, it collects information about the student's transition to the labour market. The OPALA survey questions have been prepared by the Ministry of Education and polytechnics. Crucially, the Ministry of Education uses student feedback from OPALA for the evaluation of both education programmes and associated traineeships, while the polytechnics use this information to compare and improve their degree programmes and associated traineeships.

As mentioned earlier, in **France**, the *Convention de Stage* defines the various rights and obligations of all parties involved in a traineeship, i.e. educational institution, host organisation and trainee. This puts the onus on the educational institutions for assessing the quality of the traineeships and on employers for providing trainees with well-structured placements involving work-related tasks and activities relevant to the trainees' learning and professional development needs, effective supervision and mentoring and certain minimum terms and conditions, including compensation in the form of a bonus (*gratification*). France is a notable example of a **compulsory model of traineeship-related quality assurance**, with the educational institution, working closely with the host organisation, being primarily responsible for ensuring that the traineeship is of sufficient quality.²²⁸

Similarly, in the **Netherlands** there is a standard 'traineeship agreement' which employers are required to sign when taking on trainees as part of an educational programme. This has been developed by the Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education (Nuffic), the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU), and the Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences (HBO-raad). The standard 'traineeship agreement' (*Cospa-Stageovereenkomst*) specifies the aims and objectives of the traineeship as well as its focus, scope and learning content, including the tasks and activities which the trainee is expected to undertake (Article 1); the supervision and evaluation mechanism associated with the traineeship (Article 2); the traineeship-related arrangements, including its duration, working hours, ECTS credit value, trainee compensation (e.g. expenses), etc. (Article 3); provisions about the trainee social security and insurance coverage (Article 4); dispute resolution procedures (Article 5); etc.²²⁹

Moreover, in the Netherlands, the *Kenniscentrum Beroepsopleiding Bedrijfsleven (KBBs)* (Knowledge Centres for VET and Industry), together with companies and vocational schools are responsible for the quality of traineeships within the regulated and public VET system. In particular, KBBs are responsible for developing and implementing a quality assurance system which applies to traineeships. In other words, besides developing sector-based qualifications, KBBs also recruit and monitor firms in relation to the quality of their traineeships. Indeed, these centres are responsible for ensuring that companies and organisations which offer traineeships (as part of VET) are assessed once every four years on the basis of specific criteria. The recruited firms are registered in a public web register, which includes only officially recognized training companies.²³⁰ Furthermore, each education subsystem has its own quality assurance procedures, while some universities also carry out their own monitoring as regards traineeship-related quality assurance. Companies and organizations willing to provide vocational education and/or traineeships need to meet a

²²⁷ <http://opala.pkamk.fi>

²²⁸ OECD, (2010). *Developing Internships in the Western Balkans*

²²⁹ <http://www.nuffic.nl/nederlandse-organisaties/netwerken/cospa/stageovereenkomst>

²³⁰ www.stagemarkt.nl

number of quality criteria set by the bodies of the national industry organisations, and have to be granted permission to offer traineeships. From 2012 onwards an official quality assurance monitoring system is planned to come into operation.

In the **Czech Republic** the National Institution of Technical and Vocational Education (*Národní ústav pro vzdělávání – NUOV*) provides methodological guidelines for the quality of traineeships in secondary education. A National Qualification Framework and School Qualification Framework have also been established in that regard. In addition, representatives of employers and public educational institutions co-operated in setting up Qualification Standards Frameworks for secondary education which include traineeships. In the case of transnational traineeships, quality is assured through the rules of international programmes and/or organisations as well as the Ministry of Education's accreditation system. A similar accreditation process applies for organisations offering re-training courses.

In **Denmark**, quality assurance practices depend on the guidelines of the specific study programme and educational institution. The learning objectives for the traineeship may be individually set or prescribed in the curriculum – or both. The Danish Evaluation Institute (EVA) is responsible for the accreditation of higher education programmes.²³¹ Practical training, including traineeships, and its quality is considered one of the key factors taken into account in EVA's accreditation process of the professional Bachelor's educational programmes. Written contracts are seen as a good way of committing the different parties to quality traineeships, because it also serves as an evaluation tool.

In **Sweden**, as traineeships are mainly undertaken within VET, it is the Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket)²³² and the Swedish School Inspectorate (Skolinspektionen)²³³ under the Ministry of Education and Research which are responsible for both VET and the quality monitoring of traineeships. At both national and local levels councils for each vocational programme have been set up tasked with, *inter alia*, ensuring their quality. These councils also identify emerging skills needs and assist the National Agency for Education in its policy development.²³⁴ The actual quality assurance for traineeships at upper secondary school (APU) is carried out by schools and employers. Schools are responsible for arranging traineeships and verifying their quality, e.g. they have to vet and select suitable training environments where trainees are not exposed to any risks and provide the employer with a detailed profile of the trainee, including his/her knowledge and skills.

On the other hand, the employer is directly responsible for the trainee in terms of ensuring that: i) the traineeship is carried out according to the agreed specifications; ii) trainees receive proper work-related orientation and guidance; iii) trainees are working under the direction, supervision and support of a suitably trained person; iv) supervisors are adequately trained for their trainee-related assignments and have enough time to fulfill the related tasks; and v) incidents or accidents involving the trainees are reported to the school.^{235,236} In APU-traineeships, the host organization's working hours also apply to the trainee, unless the school principal decides otherwise.

In a number of countries (e.g. BG, CZ, DK, LU, NL, SE, etc.) the quality of the traineeships is monitored and assured through specific training-related accreditation mechanisms which are in place. These often involve the social partners and educational institutions (at both secondary and tertiary education levels). In **Bulgaria**, for example, the social partners are

²³¹ <http://www.eva.dk/>

²³² <http://www.skolverket.se/>

²³³ <http://www.skolinspektionen.se/>

²³⁴ EACEA, (2010). *New Skills for New Jobs - Policy Initiatives in the Field of Education: Short Overview of the current Situation in Europe*, November, http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/thematic_reports/125EN.pdf

²³⁵ Arbetsmiljöverket 'Arbetsmiljön för elever på praktik'

²³⁶ Arbetskyddsstyrelsens författningssamling, Mindreåriga. AFS 1996:1

actively involved in the quality assurance of traineeships at different levels. The most important tripartite bodies dealing with continuous vocational training (CVT) include the Managing Board of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training (NAVET)²³⁷ which has 16 expert occupation-specific Commissions and the National Advisory Council for Vocational Qualification (NCVQ). The former is directly responsible for the accreditation and licensing procedures of different occupations, thus affecting the quality of CVT provision, including traineeships.

In **Luxembourg**, there has been a concerted effort to ensure the quality of traineeships, with the direct involvement of social partners. The *2008 Loi sur la Réforme de la Formation Professionnelle* has sought to promote the quality of traineeships in a variety of ways. For example, it makes the production of an evaluation report compulsory for all education-related traineeships. Trainee tutors are expected to make sure that the traineeship matches the educational content set out in the traineeship agreement. Trainees are encouraged to report any traineeship which does not include a learning dimension, either to the union representative at the workplace, or to their training provider. In the case of CIE-EP or CAE traineeships, union representatives are in charge of verifying that traineeships do not replace regular employment contracts.

There is also evidence of well-structured quality mechanisms for **traineeships which form part of ALMPs for unemployed young people**. For example, in **Greece**, the new *Work Experience Programme for New Labour Market Entrants*, the successor to the old *STAGE programme*, launched in 2010, outlines in some detail quality assurance procedures applicable to its placements. OAED, the Greek PES which is the programme's Intermediary Management Agency and Co-ordinating body, is responsible for the quality assurance of the programme, including the vetting of the participating private sector companies and the regular in situ inspection for the duration of the placement. Indeed, in order to follow the way traineeships are implemented by companies, OAED staff must compile a dossier for each of the participating companies where, *inter alia*, they should file the regular in situ reports prepared by the OAED inspectors.

Similar robust quality assurance mechanisms are in place for a number of other government-sponsored traineeship programmes, e.g. **Portugal's Programa Estágios Profissionais**, **Cyprus's Scheme for the Job Placement and Training of Tertiary-Education Graduates**, etc. However, it is also worth noting that, as mentioned earlier, in the **UK**, the *Work Experience programme* for the young unemployed has very little in the way of quality assurance because it is felt that excessive monitoring would put employers off. That said, employers do have to ensure that Work Experience placements do not displace regular staff.

The **UK** experience is particularly interesting for the typically voluntaristic quality assurance approach adopted in the case of **traineeships in the open market**. This type of traineeship has been subject to no or the least regulation and little by way of formal quality assurance processes. Instead, it is characterised by a proliferation of voluntary quality charters and frameworks aimed at providing good practice guidelines to organisations which take on trainees. Two have had a particularly high profile. Specifically, in 2009 the UK's Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development (CIPD) produced an *Internship Charter* aimed at promoting quality traineeships.²³⁸ More recently, on 18 July 2011, a consortium of 60 professional associations launched, with the support of the UK Government, a voluntary *Code of Best Practice for Quality Internships* as a way of addressing concerns about such schemes, including those associated with mandatory professional training (see Box below).

²³⁷ <http://www.navet.government.bg>

²³⁸ <http://www.cipd.co.uk/publicpolicy/promoting-productive-internships-internship-charter.htm>

Code of Best Practice for Quality Internships (UK)

- **Preparation** – Firms need to think beforehand about the effective use of the trainee
- **Recruitment** – Recruitment practices for trainees should be the same as those for regular employees. Traineeship adverts should clearly state the trainee’s roles and responsibilities as well as pay, duration and working hours
- **Induction** – All trainees should have a formal induction to the company
- **Treatment** – Trainees should be treated the same as regular employees, integrated into the organisation and given meaningful work
- **Supervision and mentoring** – There should be a supervisor with ring-fenced time in their schedule to work with the trainee. The supervisor should establish performance and learning objectives, conduct performance reviews and provide feedback
- **Certification, reference and feedback** – Trainees should receive a certificate/reference letter and have opportunity to feedback to the organisation on their experience

Source: <http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/BISCore/higher-education/docs/C/11-1068-common-best-practice-code-for-quality-internships.pdf>

Although the *Code of Best Practice for Quality Internships* touches on trainee remuneration, it does not include it as part of its best practice principles. Instead, it exhorts employers to comply with the law whereby trainees, unless classified as volunteers, are entitled to NMW, and mentions that higher pay might attract higher calibre candidates to traineeships. It should be noted that both the *Internship Charter* and the more recent *Code* are entirely voluntary and have no legal force. It is still unclear what impact voluntary quality assurance schemes have had on the quality of open market traineeships.

8.1 Transnational Traineeships

Transnational traineeships, especially those promoted through the main EU mobility programmes such as LdV and Erasmus have particularly well-developed quality frameworks. For example, the quality assurance of **LdV** transnational training placements is quite robust. Indeed, the programme places a strong emphasis on the quality of the placement, including pedagogical, linguistic and cultural preparation and arrangements for the Leonardo trainee’s stay abroad with a view to optimising the impact of the mobility experience. For example, participating organisations have to follow the ten principles set out in the *European Quality Charter for Mobility* which covers all aspects of transnational learning mobility, from proper preparation prior to the placement and clear delineation of roles and responsibilities of all parties involved (the sending, host and intermediary organisations as well as the participant) through to the production of a learning plan aimed at ensuring the relevance of the placement’s learning scope and content as well as recognition (e.g. through Europass).²³⁹

Significantly, the LdV programme has also developed its own charter for vocational training related mobility, i.e. the *Leonardo da Vinci Mobility Quality Commitment*.²⁴⁰ The recipient of

²³⁹ Recommendation (EC) No 2006/961 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on transnational mobility within the Community for education and training purposes: European Quality Charter for Mobility [OJ L 394 of 30.12.2006]. The ten principles/guidelines of this Charter are: (i) information and guidance; (ii) learning plan; (iii) personalization; (iv) general preparation; (v) linguistic aspects; (vi) logistical support; (vii) mentoring; (viii) recognition; (ix) reintegration and evaluation; and (x) commitments and responsibilities.

²⁴⁰ European Commission, (2009c). *Green Paper - Promoting the Learning Mobility of Young People*, COM(2009) 329 final, Brussels, 8.7.2009, http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/doc/quality_en.pdf

the LdV project grant, e.g. the co-ordinating institution, is responsible for ensuring that all participating organisations, including where appropriate intermediary organisations, abide by the principles contained in the Quality Commitment (see Box below).

Principles of the Leonardo da Vinci Mobility Quality Commitment

- Clear description of objectives, needs, expected learning outcomes, content and duration of the training period abroad
- The placement is an integral part of the vocational training course
- Clear match between the training needs of the individual beneficiary, his training curriculum, the qualification to be achieved and the content of the placement (traineeship)
- Individual, linguistic and cultural preparation of the individual beneficiaries is ensured
- Pedagogical monitoring of the individual beneficiaries is ensured (tutoring and mentoring in cooperation between sending and host organisation, follow-up of learning agreement)
- Validation of the competences and learning outcomes acquired by the individual beneficiary and assessment of the general outcome within the specific vocational training field (use of Europass Mobility on request, use of ECVET, when applicable)
- Logistic support to individual beneficiary (travel, accommodation, host organisation)
- Dissemination activities are foreseen

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/doc/quality_en.pdf

All parties involved in LdV learning mobility, including the participant, the sending and the receiving/host organisations have to sign the *LdV Training Agreement and Quality Commitment* and confirm that they will abide by the principles of the Quality Commitment.²⁴¹ The training agreement, *inter alia*, specifies in detail the roles and involvement of all actors at the different stages of the learning mobility process. Special effort is also directed at ensuring the suitability and quality of all participating organisations, while particular attention is paid to the quality of intermediary organisations. Their quality can be assessed on the basis of past performance and the satisfaction of both the co-ordinating body and participants in previous projects.

As is the case for LdV, **Erasmus**-related learning mobility, including student mobility for work placements, is subject to robust quality assurance procedures. First, the participating HEIs must as a minimum hold an *Extended Erasmus University Charter*.²⁴² This Charter, which is awarded by the European Commission following a call for proposals, provides a general framework for HEIs' Erasmus-related European co-operation activities.²⁴³ As such, it outlines the fundamental principles and the minimum requirements with which HEIs must comply when involved in Erasmus transnational student mobility for placements.²⁴⁴ To this end, it requires participating HEIs to ensure the highest quality in the organisation of

²⁴¹ http://www.pro-mobility.net/pdf/toolkit/de/pmtp_33_4.pdf

²⁴² http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc/eucplacement_en.pdf

²⁴³ Significantly, as part of the application process HEIs have to include information on the following issues: (i) specific measures aimed at ensuring high quality in student placements, including the quality of arrangements for support of mobility, eg recognition of the period of work placement, language preparation, information, accommodation facilities, etc.; (ii) details on how the work programme and the placement agreements are prepared and implemented; and (iii) practical arrangements agreed between parties involved in the placement. In addition HEIs should specify the monitoring and evaluation of the placement(s) period as well as its recognition in the curriculum, http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/funding/2012/documents/call_euc/euc_guidelines_2012_en.pdf

²⁴⁴ The receiving enterprise or organisation does not have to have signed such a Charter.

student placements as well as to promote the full recognition of completed student activities specified in the compulsory *Placement Agreement*. This grant agreement covers the mobility period and is signed between the student and his/her home HEI.

Second, in addition to the above, prior to starting the placement abroad, a *Training Agreement* must be signed by the home institution, the host organisation and the student. This provides a detailed description of the work programme for the placement period, including the main duties/responsibilities of the student and the knowledge, skills and competences to be acquired through the placement. The agreement also includes information about the monitoring and evaluation plan which should accompany the placement. Crucially, it also spells out clearly the terms and conditions associated with the placement such as duration, working hours, holiday entitlement, dress code, and financial compensation/contribution (€ per month, amount received for food /transport/accommodation, etc.).²⁴⁵ The *Training Agreement* must also include the *Erasmus Quality Commitment* which replicates the principles of the *European Quality Charter for Mobility*. The *Erasmus Quality Commitment* is the standard document which outlines the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved (see Box below).

ERASMUS QUALITY COMMITMENT

THE SENDING HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION, UNDERTAKES TO:

- Define the learning outcomes of the placement in terms of the knowledge, skills and competencies to be acquired
- Assist the student in choosing the appropriate host organisation, project duration and placement content to achieve these learning outcomes
- Select students on the basis of clearly defined and transparent criteria and procedures and sign a placement contract with the selected students
- Prepare the students regarding general health and safety aspects, give the student the opportunity to feed back to the university any problems they experience with regard to health and safety and give the host institution the opportunity to feed back to the University any concerns regarding the student or placement arrangements.
- Prepare students for the practical, professional and cultural life of the host country, in particular through language training tailored to meet their occupational needs
- Provide logistical support to students concerning travel arrangements, visa, accommodation, residence or work permits and social security cover and insurance
- Give full recognition to the student for satisfactory completed activities specified in the Training Agreement
- Evaluate with each student the personal and professional development achieved through participation in the Erasmus programme

THE SENDING INSTITUTION AND HOST ORGANISATION JOINTLY UNDERTAKE TO:

- Negotiate and agree this tailor-made Training Agreement (including the programme of the placement and the recognition arrangements) for each student and the adequate mentoring arrangements
- Monitor the progress of the placement and take appropriate action if required

²⁴⁵ Students may be awarded an Erasmus grant to help cover the travel and subsistence costs (including insurance and visa costs) incurred in connection with their placement period abroad. Students may get a financial contribution or a contribution in kind by the host enterprise/organisation.

THE HOST ORGANISATION UNDERTAKES TO:

- Assign to students tasks and responsibilities (as stipulated in the Training Agreement) to match their knowledge, skills, competencies and training objectives and ensure that appropriate equipment and support is available
- Draw a contract or equivalent document for the placement in accordance with the requirements of the national legislation
- Appoint a mentor to advise students, help them with their integration in the host environment and monitor their training progress
- Provide practical support if required, check appropriate insurance cover and facilitate understanding of the culture of the host country
- With regard to health & safety, the student is to be treated as an employee of the host organisation who will take charge of the primary duty of care and consequent liabilities by
- Providing the student with an induction in the workplace health and safety arrangements, including fire precautions, specific hazards and health and safety precautions
- Including the student in your risk assessment programme as it affects activities undertaken by them
- Providing appropriate instruction and training in your working practices and in the particular control measures identified in your risk assessments
- Providing ongoing supervision and training for the student in the performance of their duties
- Having a system of recording and investigating accidents and incidents. Notify the University of Bristol of any accidents and incidents involving the student.

THE STUDENT UNDERTAKES TO:

- Comply with all arrangements negotiated for his/her placement and to do his/her best to make the placement a success
- Abide by the rules and regulations of the host organisation, its normal working hours, code of conduct and rules of confidentiality. Not to do anything that puts themselves or other people's health and safety at risk.
- Follow all health and safety instructions, information and training. Bring any health and safety concerns to the attention of the host institution immediately
- Communicate with the sending institution about any problem or changes regarding the placement
- Submit a report in the specified format and any required supporting documents at the end of the placement

Source: http://www.ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/documents/studentagree_en.doc

Finally, prior to taking up an Erasmus work placement abroad, each participating student is issued by his/her home HEI with the *Erasmus Student Charter*.²⁴⁶ This sets out the student's rights and obligations as well as their basic entitlements (e.g. full recognition of placement

²⁴⁶ http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc1057_en.htm

abroad; transcript of record of work undertaken at the end of placement, etc.). The Charter provides the students with a clear and concise idea of both what they are entitled to and what is expected of them during the placement abroad.

The Table overleaf summarises information about the traineeship-related quality assurance mechanisms in MS.

Table 8.1: Quality Assurance of Traineeships

Topic	AT	BE	BG	CY	CZ	DE	DK	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HU	IE	IT	LT	LU	LV	MT	NL	PL	PT	RO	SE	SI	SK	UK
Whether there is a quality framework/formal practices/regulations for quality assurance of traineeships	?	x	?	✓	✓	x	✓	?	?	?	?	✓	?	✓	?	?	✓	?	✓	✓	?	?	?	✓	✓	✓	?
Whether there are informal/common/voluntary practices for quality assurance of traineeships	?	✓	✓	?	✓	?	✓	✓	?	?	✓	?	?	?	?	?	✓	?	?	✓	?	?	?	?	✓	?	✓
Whether there is a body organisation in charge of quality assurance of traineeships	?	x	?	✓	✓	?	?	?	?	?	?	✓	?	✓	✓	?	?	?	✓	✓	?	?	?	✓	✓	?	?
Whether the quality of traineeships is source of concern	✓	✓	✓	x	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	?	✓	✓	?	✓	?	?	✓	?	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓
Whether Government/social partners are taking actions to improve/implement quality assurance procedures	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	?	✓	?	?	?	?	✓	?	✓	✓	?	✓	?	✓	✓	?	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓
Whether other organisations are taking actions to improve/implement quality assurance procedures	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	?	✓	?	✓	?	?	✓	?	?	?	?	✓	?	?	✓	?	✓	?	✓	?	?	✓

Key: (✓) Yes (X) No (?) Unavailable/Unclear

9. Overall Assessment of Traineeships

In this section we discuss the public perceptions of traineeships (in their various forms) and their (perceived and/or real) benefits and drawbacks (as identified in both the national reports and case studies completed for this project). In addition, we present a short discussion on the overall assessment and impact of traineeships.

The theoretical assumptions behind the positive impact of traineeships and their benefits are based on the principle that work experience improves the employability of trainees and, as a result, can make school-to-work transitions faster and smoother. Traineeships enable trainees to acquire a first work-related experience and, thus, gain a valuable insight into and hands-on knowledge of an actual work environment. Trainees learn how to apply their theoretical knowledge in practical tasks and activities in a work context and develop more subject-specific skills. In addition, trainees enhance their employability by developing skills, including soft skills, which are relevant to employer requirements. Crucially, traineeships which provide work-related experience to young people can also be a gateway into the labour market. They offer trainees the opportunity to show their competences, skills, knowledge and attitudes to a potential employer, while at the same time, allow them to build good professional networks which can help them in their future career. However, as discussed in the following sub-sections, the benefits and effectiveness of traineeships vary considerably between the different types of traineeships.

9.1 Benefits/Advantages of Traineeships

In the sections below we discuss briefly the benefits of traineeships for trainees, employers and educational institutions.

9.1.1 Benefits to Trainees

One of the main benefits identified by the existing literature and confirmed by this study's findings is the opportunity for trainees **to learn specific technical skills** in their chosen field and in line with actual employer needs. Trainees can thus acquire skills, competences and knowledge which match exactly, or as closely as possible, employer requirements. In addition, young people have the opportunity to develop a more **in-depth understanding of** and gain **a valuable insight into the work environment** in which they will be working in the future.

Well-organised traineeships which maintain high standards are an effective way to **gain practical, work-related experience**, the lack of which is a key barrier to young people's labour market entry. For example, the great majority of students in **Germany** regard the quality of education-related traineeships as excellent (as opposed to the ones in the open market). Students believe that relevant tasks, high learning content and good mentoring helped them in their **professional development** and **career orientation in the labour market**. Traineeships are also considered very useful in helping them **acquire job-related information, practical skills** and **work-related experience** deemed relevant to employer needs and thus valued by them.

There is an extensive literature and evidence base about the benefits of traineeships and work placement more generally. For example, Ball, Collier, Mok, and Wilson summarised the benefits of traineeships identified by Harvey²⁴⁷ et al. as providing young people with the

²⁴⁷ Harvey, L., Geall, V., and Moon, S., (1998). *Work Experience: Expanding Opportunities for Undergraduates*, Centre for Research into Quality, University of Central England in Birmingham.
<http://www.uce.ac.uk/crq/publications/we/wecon.html>

opportunity to: (i) put theory into practice in a way which helps them align their knowledge and skills to actual employer requirements; (ii) develop an awareness of workplace culture, norms and routines; (iii) understand and learn to respond effectively to rapidly changing work environments; (iv) develop a range of practical, work-related 'soft' skills such as time management, confidence, adaptability, team-working, interpersonal and communication skills; etc. Additional traineeship-related benefits identified by the authors are: (v) short-term financial benefits for trainees who can support their studies with additional income (where compensation is available); (vi) enhanced employment prospects and potential future wages; (vii) assistance in developing career strategies; and (viii) (in some cases) the opportunity to work in a multicultural environment and learn other languages.²⁴⁸

There is evidence that traineeships do indeed **ease the entry of young people into the labour market**. This is an important outcome in a number of MS (e.g. AT, BG, CY, CZ, DE, EL, FI, FR, LU, MT, NL, PL, PT, SI, SK, UK, etc.). Similarly, in most countries traineeships associated with mandatory professional training are a major **entry route into certain professions**, e.g. medicine, law, education/teaching, architecture, engineering, etc. (e.g. AT, BE, CY, DE, EE, EL, ES, FR, HU, IT, MT, PL, RO, SI, UK, etc.). In some countries traineeships are also explicitly seen as an opportunity for **personal development**, in terms of helping a young person acquire or enhance his/her **'soft', transversal**, and even **active citizenship skills** (e.g. DK, EE, FI, LU, SE, UK, etc.).

Another advantage of traineeships are the **networking opportunities** they provide young people. The latter can, in this way, start building their professional networks which can help them with their career (e.g. DK, EL, IE, IT, PL, PT, RO, UK, etc.). For example, in **Denmark**, the opportunity to meet new people, test different employers and start developing professional networks through traineeships was identified as one of the main benefits. On the other hand, in countries where word-of-mouth and informal networks are among the main recruitment methods, such networking is deemed crucial in helping a young person get a foothold into the labour market (e.g. EL, ES, IT, PT, etc.).

9.1.2 **Benefits to Employers**

Employers also benefit in a number of ways from traineeships. Most obviously, traineeships give firms access to a growing number of skilled and experienced young workers, leading to improved productivity and quality as well as safer working practices.^{249,250} Crucially, employers who offer traineeships can reap immediate benefits from the new ideas and fresh thinking that young people bring to their organisation, while at the same time can help build a talent pool for their specific company and/or sector.²⁵¹ In this way, they can help increase the number of skilled and experienced graduates/labour market entrants, thus having a positive long-term effect on the workforce skills development. This is very important also in the face of current demographic trends, notably the EU's ageing population, which may result in a more intense war for talent in the future. For example, some evidence from the **UK** suggests that during the recent recession companies did not lay off young trainees and apprentices (as they did in previous recessions) because, *inter alia*, of such considerations.

Traineeships can also help firms **improve the effectiveness and reduce the costs of their recruitment**. They provide employers with the opportunity to assess the quality of potential applicants over a significant period of time with a limited risk. For example, in the

²⁴⁸ Ball, C., Collier, H., Mok, P., and Wilson, J. (Eds.), (2006). *Research into Barriers to Work Placements in the Retail Sector in the South East*

²⁴⁹ NCVET, (2009). *High Quality Traineeships: Identifying What Works*, A National Vocational Education and Training Research and Evaluation Programme Report, <http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED507210.pdf>

²⁵⁰ Mutual Learning Programme, (2009). *Summary of the Peer Review of the 'Professional Traineeship for Young Adults', Portugal, 19th-20th November 2009*, http://www.mutual-learning-employment.net/uploads/PortuguesePeer_Review-%20full_summary-final.pdf

²⁵¹ CIPD, (2010). *Internships: To Pay or Not to Pay*, Policy Analysis and Recommendations, June, http://www.cipd.co.uk/NR/rdonlyres/5A28F718-CC39-4B95-97BC-B0C93123BF8D/0/5258_Internships_report1.pdf

US, 83 per cent of employers use traineeships to identify new recruits.²⁵² Our study did indeed find that across the EU traineeships are seen as a valuable **recruitment channel** which gives employers the opportunity to **screen and select the most talented trainees** (e.g. AT, BE, BG, CY, DE, EE, FR, HU, IE, LT, LU, LV, PL, PT, SI, UK, etc). That said, in few MS traineeships are not viewed by employers as a recruitment tool. For example, in **Romania** employers appear reluctant to take on trainees, even when traineeship schemes are financed by the ESF. Conversely, in **Cyprus**, the traineeship-related benefits for employers include the opportunity to (i) attract high calibre graduates at initially reduced costs; (ii) allocate tasks more effectively amongst employees, including senior management, so that they can focus on more strategic aspects of the company; and (iii) provide graduates with more structured practical training which is closely aligned to their business needs.

Traineeships can also help change the training culture in companies, by developing the willingness of employers to invest in training.²⁵³ Significantly, a company's involvement in a traineeship programme can also be seen as a mark of business quality and corporate social responsibility (CSR).²⁵⁴ Indeed, in some countries **the provision of quality traineeships is seen as an integral part of an organisation's CSR and employer brand** (e.g. AT, DE, IE, NL, SI, UK, etc.).²⁵⁵ For example, in the recently launched **UK's Common Best Practice Code for High-Quality Internships** it is stated that greater access to high-quality traineeships can help an organisation meet its CSR objectives by promoting social mobility and diversity in the professions.²⁵⁶ In a similar vein, in both the **Netherlands** and **Slovenia**, the AIESEC traineeship programme also explicitly links the offer of quality traineeships with the promotion of a positive and strong employer brand and CSR which, in turn, can enhance an organisation's attractiveness to the best talent.²⁵⁷ It is worth noting here that the link of quality traineeships with a company's CSR has also been more widely argued by academics and researchers.²⁵⁸

Finally, traineeships embedded in educational programmes promote both the forging of closer links and the two-way communication and exchange of information between education and industry. This enables, *inter alia*, **the incorporation of new and emerging labour market trends and requirements into study curricula**, so that these are more relevant and responsive to the skills and knowledge requirements of employers.

There is a major difference between large and small businesses in how they approach the issue of traineeships. Not surprisingly, large organisations adopt a long-term approach linked to their talent management and integrate traineeships in their recruitment methods. In this case, traineeships form part of a systematic strategy aimed at ensuring that they attract and retain the most talented trainees (e.g. AT, BG, CY, CZ, EE, FR, IE, HU, LT, NL, PL, SE, SI, SK, UK, etc.). In contrast, SMEs tend to adopt a more short-term approach and use trainees on an ad hoc basis. In some cases, the trainee might eventually be hired, but this is not a common outcome in SMEs.

The above discussion notwithstanding, these benefits to firms need to be balanced with concerns about the quality of the traineeships and the trainee's terms and conditions discussed in previous sections of this report.

²⁵² OECD, (2010). *Op.Cit.*

²⁵³ Mutual Learning Programme, (2009). *Op. Cit.*

²⁵⁴ NCVET, (2009). *Op. Cit.*

²⁵⁵ http://graduatetalentpool.bis.gov.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home_page/About_the_Graduate_Talent_Pool/What_are_internships_/p!eXbbcmd

²⁵⁶ Gateways to the Professions Collaborative Forum, (2011). *Common Best Practice Code for High-Quality Internships*, July, <http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/BISCore/higher-education/docs/C/11-1068-common-best-practice-code-for-quality-internships.pdf>

²⁵⁷ http://www.aiesec.org/cms/aiesec/AI/Central%20and%20Eastern%20Europe/SLOVENIA/Partners/Employer_branding.html

²⁵⁸ Tuca, M., (2011). Corporate Social Responsibility – Supporting Policy Frameworks in the EU, <http://egpa-conference2011.org/documents/PhD/Tuca.pdf>

9.1.3 Benefits to Educational Institutions

Where traineeships are part of an educational course, there are also clear benefits for the institution involved. For example, traineeships allow for a **labour market 'relevance check' of the study curriculum**.²⁵⁹ Trainees have the opportunity to test their theoretical knowledge in genuine work settings. This information can, in turn, inform the study curricula of educational institutions in order to ensure that these remain relevant to employer requirements, thus **enhancing the employability of their students**.

As mentioned earlier, **traineeships can also help forge close ties with employers**. These links can evolve into other forms of collaboration such as **education-business partnerships**, the undertaking of **joint projects**, further **funding opportunities**, etc. For example, in **Greece** one of the explicit aims of traineeships associated with higher education courses is the forging of close links with companies for research purposes.

The benefits cited above are more or less common to all types of traineeships, including those which form part of ALMPs for unemployed young people and those offered in the open market (provided they meet certain quality standards). That said, on the basis of this study's findings, the study has singled out two types of traineeships which have additional/distinctive benefits for trainees.

9.1.4 Traineeships as Compulsory or Optional Part of Academic and/or Vocational Study Curricula (i.e. Traineeships during Education)

There is ample, long-standing and consistent evidence that **educational systems which combine theoretical study with practical, work-related training are more effective in easing young people's school-to-work transition**. Within this context, the benefits of educational traineeships which were identified in the course of this study include the following: (i) the acquisition of a first work-related experience linked to one's study subject and/or one's integration into the work environment; (ii) the more meaningful and comprehensive in-depth understanding of the scientific/technical knowledge acquired as part of the studies through its practical application in a work context; (iii) the development of a wide range of work-related 'softer' skills such as team-working, autonomy, creativity, initiative, communications skills, etc.; (iv) the opportunity for the trainee to show his/her abilities, knowledge and competences to a potential employer as well as to develop a proper sense of professionalism; (v) the smoother transition of students from the world of education to that of work through both their early familiarisation with the demands, norms and routines of the work environment and their exposure to employment relations, working conditions and earnings levels; (vi) the opportunity to forge closer links between the educational institutions and industry with a view to developing study curricula which are more responsive to employer needs; etc. Overall, such traineeships allow young people to develop links with the labour market and acquire work experience which is strongly related to their studies.

According to Bullock, Gould and Hejmadi, students do benefit from time spent on traineeships since these *'have enhanced their understanding of their own life choices, enabled the acquisition of transferable skills and provided a tangible link between theory and application'*.²⁶⁰ For example, in **Romania**, a survey on trainees at the Bucharest Polytechnic University reveals that they consider work experience (usually acquired through a traineeship) as the most influential factor in enhancing their employability. The survey identified high levels of satisfaction amongst trainees with almost 90 per cent stating that the practical learning content of the traineeship was good or very good. In particular, students appreciated the fact that traineeships gave them the opportunity to apply the theoretical knowledge acquired during their studies in genuine work settings. Interestingly,

²⁵⁹ OECD, (2010). *Op. Cit.*

²⁶⁰ Bullock, K., Gould, V. Hejmadi, M., and Lock, G., (2009). *Op. Cit.*

for some trainees the learning content of the traineeship itself was better than the theoretical course. Similarly, in **Finland** analysis of the OPALA feedback from polytechnics' students shows that in 2010 over 88 per cent of the respondents believed that the tasks performed during the traineeship contributed to their learning, while over 81 per cent felt that the counselling and support during the traineeship was sufficient.

Traineeships embedded in the educational system or parts of university courses are a valuable tool to **strengthen the links between educational institutions and the labour market, promoting more active involvement of employers in the education system**. This is deemed particularly important in countries with traditionally weak links between education and labour market such as **Greece, Italy, Spain** and **Portugal** (so-called 'Southern Europe Model'). The need to strengthen the links between educational establishments and employers was also identified in former communist countries (e.g. BG, CZ, EE, HU, LT, LV, PL, RO, SI, SK, etc.). Interestingly, in this case this need is associated with the fact that, with the fall of communism, the once strong links between the worlds of education and employment weakened due to the disappearance of large state-owned companies which tended to absorb most new labour market entrants.

Moreover, in an increasing number of countries **educational institutions also seek to enhance their understanding of employer skill needs** by working in partnership directly with employers through, *inter alia*, the promotion of traineeships as part of their study curricula (e.g. AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LV, MT, NL, PL, RO, SI, SK, UK, etc.). As mentioned earlier, the aim is the incorporation of new and emerging skills and knowledge into study curricula, so that these are more closely aligned to actual employer requirements. For example, in **Italy**, with remarkable variations between regions, this collaboration is deemed crucial in allowing educational institutions to assess their courses and programmes against labour market requirements. Similarly, in both **Greece** and **Cyprus** educational traineeships are seen as an excellent mechanism for creating a two-way interaction and exchange of knowledge between education and business. Likewise, in **Lithuania**, one of the main traineeship-related benefits identified by universities was the feedback received from employers on the design, content and implementation of their study programmes.

9.1.5 Transnational Traineeships

The main benefits of these traineeships as reported by trainees in the 2011 Eurobarometer survey are the improvement of the young people's language skills and their inter-cultural awareness and understanding.²⁶¹ Trainees also felt that these traineeships definitely improved their 'soft' skills and employability. In particular, the main benefits reported were the opportunity to (i) improve their foreign language skills (57 per cent); (ii) enhance inter-cultural awareness (40 per cent); (iii) become able to adapt to new situations (22 per cent); (iv) acquire new professional skills (18 per cent); (v) develop better interpersonal skills (17 per cent); (vi) have better opportunities for future employment (16 per cent); and (vii) acquire academic knowledge (12 per cent).

The benefits of transnational traineeships are being increasingly recognised by both the EU and MS, most of which are actively promoting youth-related learning and work mobility through EU mobility programmes such as Erasmus and LdV; other international programmes such as AIESEC and IAESTE; and national programmes (e.g. AT, BE, CY, CZ, DE, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, IE, IT, LT, LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SK, UK, etc.) (see also Sections 3.4 and 5.5).

²⁶¹ Eurobarometer, (2011). *Op.Cit.*

9.2 Drawbacks of Traineeships

Across most countries the **lack of or low compensation** associated with traineeships has been identified as one of their main drawbacks (e.g. AT, BE, BG, CZ, DE, EE, EL, ES, FR, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, MT, PL, PT, SI, UK, etc.). This is the most common theme and starkest message which emerges in public debates, available literature, including 'grey' material and social media, information provided by trainees and their associations (either at national and/or EU levels), and this study's findings. That said, whether traineeships should be paid or not is a contentious issue in many countries. On one hand, employers argue that trainees gain work-related experience which will improve their employability, while taking on board a trainee can be time-consuming and resource intensive for the host organisation.

On the other hand, trainees who are not or insufficiently compensated have to rely on other sources of financial support, including own and/or family resources. This, in turn, raises concerns about equity of access, since those from less privileged backgrounds may not be able to draw on such resources in order to undertake traineeships to gain work-related experience and enhance their employability. Even more disturbingly, trainees are in many cases asked to carry out tasks usually performed by regular, fully-paid staff for which they receive no or low compensation. Overall, the issue of no or low trainee compensation (associated as it is more generally with poor trainee-related terms and conditions such as lack of social security coverage) has become critical, not least because a significant segment of young people may have to undertake a series of traineeships before securing stable employment. This can, in turn, seriously impede their ability to become financially self-sufficient and lead an independent and autonomous life.

Moreover, there are concerns about employers using traineeships as a form of unpaid employment, with 'cheaper' trainees being used for entry level jobs and/or other job vacancies instead of regular staff. Indeed, in a number of countries since the outburst of the economic crisis and despite a drop in overall employment levels, there has been an increase in traineeships, especially those which are unpaid (e.g. BE, EE, ES, IE, IT, LU, LV, MT, UK, etc.). For example, in **Luxembourg**, since the beginning of the economic crisis, in the banking sector an increasing number of open positions are solely for, mostly unpaid, traineeships. Similarly, there has been a growth in traineeships in the **UK** since the start of the recession.²⁶²

The potential for trainee exploitation is the second most common issue of concern. In many cases, there is a real risk for trainees, especially those on traineeships in the open market and, to some extent, on those associated with mandatory professional training, to be used as cheap or free labour by employers (e.g. AT, BE, BG, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LV, MT, PL, PT, RO, UK, etc.). At the same time, there are increased reports of heavy workloads and long working hours imposed on trainees, not least because high levels of youth unemployment can make it easy for some employers to deploy questionable practices and take advantage of trainees.

Trainee exploitation is more common where the aims and objectives of the traineeship are not clearly spelled out and agreed at the outset; the practical content, including tasks and activities of the traineeship, is not specified; there is a lack of supervision, mentoring and guidance of the trainee in situ; there is no 'third party' overseeing and monitoring the traineeship; etc. Having a clear regulatory and/or quality framework setting some minimum standards can contribute to the better protection of trainees; however, as described in other parts of this report, a lot depends on *how* such a framework is implemented and monitored.

In addition, in some countries the study identified a traineeship-related **gender pay gap** with a larger proportion of women in unpaid or low paid placements. However, this could be related to sectoral labour market segregation rather than to direct discrimination, since it

²⁶² Enterprise Europe Network London/EEN-London, (2010). *Op.Cit.*; Low Pay Commission, (2011). *Op.Cit.*

may be that more women can be found in poorly paid sectors, or sectors known for low quality traineeships. For example, in **Germany**, sectors with high proportion of unpaid trainees include the creative industries and media/journalism, while in **Austria** poor quality traineeships are more common in the health and social care sector, media, NGOs and the culture sector. In the **UK**, unpaid traineeships are prevalent in certain sectors, notably creative industries, media, journalism, public relations and the third sector (including NGOs).

It is worth adding that in **Germany** an on-going debate centres around the fact that low paid traineeships, which do not provide sufficient compensation to cover one's living expenses, add cost to the welfare system, thus transferring costs from businesses to the society as a whole. Moreover, in **Slovenia**, traineeships as a tool for hiring young graduates at lower pay are seen as likely to both increase the risk of a downward wage competition and worsen the employment conditions of young people in the labour market.

Apart from no or low trainee compensation, a common criticism of traineeships is that these are, in many cases, associated with **poor terms and conditions** for trainees, including lack of social security and/or health/medical insurance coverage, no entitlement to holidays, no sick or holiday pay, etc. Not surprisingly, it appears that the economic crisis and the need for greater labour flexibility has exacerbated the situation as regards the terms and conditions of trainees in many MS, especially those undertaking traineeships in the open market (e.g. AT, BE, BG, CZ, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FR, IE, IT, LU, LV, MT, PL, PT, SI, UK, etc.).

The **poor quality or even lack of relevant learning content** is another issue raised in many countries and across all types of traineeships (e.g. AT, DE, EE, EL, ES, FR, HU, IT, LT, LU, LV, PL, PT, UK, etc.). There are concerns about the fact that trainees are asked to perform tasks which are either irrelevant to their learning needs or mundane, e.g. photocopying. For example, in **Poland** there are reports of both poor terms and conditions such as low trainee remuneration and questionable employer practices, such as exploitation (i.e. traineeships in the open market seen as a source of cheap or free labour), poor learning content, or even total absence of actual learning content, etc.

Crucially, another criticism levelled at traineeships, or at least at certain types of traineeships, is that in many cases that fail to help trainees secure quality employment, either with host or another organisation. This creates, in turn, the risk of young people being trapped in endless series of traineeships without getting a firm foothold in the labour market (e.g. AT, BE, DE, EL, ES, FR, IT, UK, etc.).

Although concerns such as those discussed above have been raised for various types of traineeships, the ones offered in the open market have attracted most criticism, not least because these are the least regulated and most often associated with questionable employer practices. The drawbacks of specific types of traineeships are discussed below.

9.2.1 Traineeships in the Open Market - After Graduation/ Completion of Studies

A key criticism here relates to reports and some evidence that trainees are increasingly utilised as **substitute for regular employees**, since these traineeships are largely unregulated and lack robust quality assurance and monitoring mechanisms (like the ones which apply to educational traineeships) (e.g. AT, BE, BG, DE, EE, EL, ES, FR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, MT, PL, PT, RO, SK, UK, etc.). For example, in **Germany** in a recent survey 81 per cent of trainees stated that they were assigned tasks normally performed by regular staff. In the **UK**, there is growing concern that employers are using trainees, including graduates, to fill entry level jobs or 'basic/routine' occupations on low or no pay, while in some cases there is also a real risk of trainee exploitation. In **France**, despite the high degree of regulation, there are also serious concerns that traineeships may be used as a source of cheap or free labour by employers. It is reported that, in many cases, traineeships fail to provide the first step towards decent and stable work, while they often trap young

people in precarious employment and insecurity.²⁶³ Similar concerns have been expressed in a number of other countries, e.g. **Austria, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Poland, Portugal, Spain**, etc.

This debate is much more intense, and even, acrimonious, in MS with high unemployment and/or unfavourable labour market conditions for young people (e.g. EL, ES, IT, PT, etc.), where trainees are often used as cheap or free labour. For example, in **Greece**, under the old *STAGE programme*, trainees were used as 'cheap' substitutes for regular staff in the public and municipal sectors, especially when the latter could not recruit due to budget constraints and a recruitment freeze. Such stagiaires were employed with low pay, no social security coverage, no holiday/sickness pay, etc.²⁶⁴ Similarly, in **Portugal** there are reports that the exploitation of trainees as a source of cheap or free labour and the use of traineeships as substitute for regular employment is a common phenomenon. There is also a growing number of reports about employers using traineeship contracts to avoid offering social security and health/medical insurance coverage to trainees. Other countries like **Spain** and **Italy** have also reported similar examples of questionable employer practices in private, public and third sectors.

For example, in **Spain**, as mentioned earlier, the unilateral traineeships (*Becas no-convenidas*) have attracted a lot of criticism. It is common for most graduates to undertake one or more traineeships in order to acquire work-related experience while in search for more permanent employment. However, there is growing concern about questionable employer practices associated with these *becas*, including trainee exploitation, poor terms and conditions such no or low compensation and using trainees to replace regular staff. Crucially, although in Spain traineeships are a common form of employing young people, such placements seldom lead to employment contracts. In addition, as is usually the case across the EU, young people are mostly employed on flexible, including temporary, contracts. This situation has arguably led to a dual youth labour market, with a large proportion of young people being caught in an endless series of traineeships and precarious jobs. Indeed, both recent literature and international studies as well as this study confirm that the trap of temporary and/or precarious employment affects a growing proportion of young Spaniards.²⁶⁵ The same youth labour market issues apply to other countries, notably **Italy**.

Similarly, in **Luxembourg**, trade unions have expressed concerns that the increased use of traineeships and flexible work arrangements for young workers may lead to a polarisation in the labour market where young people are at risk of remaining trapped in precarious and unprotected employment. In a same vein, there is great concern in **Belgium** that extensive use of traineeships may aggravate the already highly vulnerable position of young people in the labour market.

Against the above discussion, it worth juxtaposing the traineeship-related debate in countries with a tradition of good youth-related employment practices such as **Finland**. Here the public debate focuses on the unfairness of low or unpaid traineeships and on whether it is fair to ask young people to accept poorly paid work experience placements before entering the labour market, especially after completion of their studies. In contrast, traineeships linked to Finnish educational programmes have long been promoted and seen as an effective way of connecting young people with the world of work while studying (but crucially *not after* completion of studies).

²⁶³ Mongourdin-Denoix, S., (2011). *Op.Cit.*

²⁶⁴ Fakou, C., (2010). *Employment Conditions and the Stagers' Movement: OGA Case Study*, Panteion University of Social and Political Science, September

²⁶⁵ Garcia, J.R., (2011). *Youth Unemployment in Spain: Causes and Solutions*, BBVA Working Series Papers, Madrid, 27.9.2011, http://www.bbva-research.com/KETD/fbin/mult/110926_Observatorio_economico_espana_tcm348-270041.pdf?ts=552012

Not surprisingly, it seems that the condition of the labour market is a crucial factor in determining the extent of use and potential abuse of traineeships as well as the trainee's terms and conditions. In countries with deteriorating labour markets and high youth unemployment levels, young people are more likely to be subjected to questionable employer practices, including possible exploitation. Significantly, the provision of less favourable terms and conditions to trainees are sometimes justified by governments and the public as the best alternative, or least painful option to youth unemployment and/or inactivity. That said, the practice of using traineeships and voluntary work as free labour is allegedly a growing phenomenon even in countries with traditionally better functioning labour markets such as Germany and Austria. This, in turn, means that the boundaries between voluntary work and traineeships are sometimes unclear and blurred. This, in turn, risks exposing young volunteers to exploitation and lack of basic protection, which they would, in some cases, have received as trainees (e.g. AT, BE, EE, ES, LT, LV, IT, PL, SK, UK, etc.).

9.2.2 Traineeships as Compulsory or Optional Part of Academic and/or Vocational Study Curricula (i.e. Traineeships during Education)

Although this type of traineeships attracts the least criticism in most MS, few concerns have been raised in relation to some aspects of such placements. For example, in **Finland**, there are complaints about **unrealistic expectations of employers** about trainees' skills. There are also some concerns that, despite being commonly accompanied by structured quality assurance and monitoring systems, these traineeships may in some cases not provide adequate protections to trainees. In general, exploitation of trainees is mitigated in traineeships linked to academic curricula, where educational institutions (i) play a strong supervision, monitoring and quality assurance role; (ii) specify clear learning objectives with the employer; and, crucially, (iii) oversee the trainee during the traineeship. However, in some MS there are concerns about how well such a role is performed by the educational institution as regards both the proper assignment of trainees to companies in a way that best matches their learning needs and the close supervision and monitoring of the trainee in situ so as to safeguard the quality of the traineeship (e.g. AT, DK, EE, EL, ES, FR, IT, LT, RO, UK, etc.).

A **shortage of available placements** seems to be one of the main obstacles for students wishing to undertake a traineeship (e.g. BG, CZ, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, HU, IE, IT, LT, LV, PT, RO, SI, SK, UK, etc.). This is usually associated with the existence of weak links between the educational system and the labour market (e.g. CZ, EE, EL, HU, LV, RO, SK, UK, etc.); the type of industry, especially if it is dominated by SMEs which find it difficult to mobilise internal resources to manage and mentor trainees (e.g. CY, EE, EL, IE, IT, MT, PT, UK, etc.); the impact of the economic downturn (e.g. DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, HU, IE, IT, LT, LV, PT, UK, etc.); etc. Moreover, in former communist countries (e.g. BG, CZ, EE, HU, LT, LV, PL, RO, SI, SK, etc.) the disappearance of large state-owned companies resulted in a significant decrease of available traineeships as small businesses are less likely to provide as many opportunities for traineeships. Additionally, the availability of traineeships depends on the tradition of a specific sector, i.e. whether it is expected that one undertakes a traineeship before starting one's career, e.g. journalism/media, creative industries, etc.

There are also persistent **employer complaints about a mismatch between the skills and knowledge acquired through the formal educational system and those required in the labour market** (e.g. BG, EL, ES, FR, IT, LT, LV, PT, RO, UK, etc.). For example, in **Lithuania**, employers regard the educational institutions as passive towards their (employer) needs and have expressed concerns over the perceived lack of interest from universities in promoting work experience schemes for their students. This alleged lack of attention towards traineeships combined with the lack of co-operation between educational institutions and employers has a negative impact on the availability and quality of traineeships and education-business partnerships. On the other hand, Lithuanian universities reported the lack of financial resources as the main obstacle in organising

traineeships for students, while the second issue identified was the difficulty to convince employers to link up with educational institutions.

Issues reported by students in **Romania** mainly related to weak links between the educational system and employers. Specifically, almost one fourth (24 per cent) of university students stated that the time allocated to practical training as part of their course was used entirely as planned as opposed to just over half (51 per cent) for whom it was not used entirely as planned. Although the national curriculum makes such training mandatory, only 43 per cent of the students completed their practical training outside the university. In addition, there was a shortage of traineeships which adequately met the study curricula requirements, while employers complained that the educational system was unable to meet their skills needs.

9.2.3 Traineeships which form Part of Mandatory Professional Training

As mentioned earlier, despite the high degree of regulation of such traineeships, in a number of countries there is growing (anecdotal) evidence of questionable employer practices and possible trainee exploitation (e.g. BE, EE, EL, ES, IT, HU, LV, RO, UK, etc.). There are reports that young people in traineeships which form part of mandatory professional training are, in many cases, used as replacement of regular staff and/or cheap or even free labour. Moreover, such traineeships are often characterised by poor working conditions such as heavy workload and long working hours. They are also, in many instances, associated with poor trainee-related terms and conditions, including no or low compensation, lack of social security and/or health/medical coverage, no leave entitlement. Significantly, in some cases, their learning content is relatively poor or not very relevant to the trainee's professional development needs. For example, in **Greece** there is a lot of anecdotal evidence of exploitation of trainees undertaking traineeships linked to mandatory professional training, e.g. law. Similarly, trainee doctors in a number of countries such as the **UK** and **Belgium** have consistently reported poor working conditions, including long working hours.

9.2.4 Transnational Traineeships

Although there is a general positive attitude towards transnational traineeships across most MS, in **Denmark** the public opinion seems to disagree. Specifically, a survey carried out in 2009 amongst Danish university students showed that international experience was not considered to be of particular value, despite the fact that practical training had a significant role in the national study curricula. This was mainly because students believed that the trouble of sourcing, organising and completing a traineeship abroad outweighed its benefits. Only a minority of 4 per cent considered experience abroad as the most important factor when seeking a job. However, there were differences between academic fields; students of technical subjects were more likely to believe that international experience would lead to better career opportunities. The view that international experience does not necessarily improve one's employability in the Danish labour market was supported by another 2009 survey conducted amongst 26 public and private sector companies. According to this survey, international experience had less or no importance in the recruitment process (unless the company was a multinational).

This ambivalence toward youth-related transnational work and/or learning mobility is reflected in a 2011 Eurobarometer survey which found that only 9 per cent of young Danes choose to go abroad as part of their higher education studies as opposed to an EU average of 26 per cent.²⁶⁶

²⁶⁶ Eurobarometer, (2011). *Op. cit.*

9.3 Effectiveness of Traineeships

As mentioned earlier, across the EU there is a growing awareness of the benefits of traineeships in terms of facilitating the school-to-work transition. However, as far as the effectiveness of traineeships is concerned there is an uneven and rather patchy body of evaluation literature across the EU, especially in the face of the great diversity of these schemes. Some forms of traineeships, notably those associated with educational programmes and ALMPs have been the subject of more systematic evaluation as opposed to others, especially those undertaken in the open market on an ad hoc basis by a growing number of young people. This section presents evidence collected as regards the impact and effectiveness of the various types of traineeships under study.

9.3.1 Traineeships as Part of Active Labour Market Policies for the Young Unemployed

It seems that those schemes with strongest links with the labour market and direct involvement of employers such as the *Contrats de Professionalisation* in **France**, the *FÁS traineeships* in **Ireland** and the **Portuguese Programa Estágios Profissionais** yield more positive employment outcomes. For example, 76 per cent of companies which offer traineeships under the latter retain their trainees upon completion of the placement. In a similar vein, the high completion rate of the *Job Experience Scheme* in **Malta** is attributed to the active promotion of this scheme among employers.

A well-structured approach combined with close and active stakeholder, including employer, engagement appear to be the key success factor of youth-related programmes in **Luxembourg**. After nine months on the scheme *Contract d'appui à l'emploi (CAE)*, 55 per cent of trainees were offered an employment contract, against 35 per cent of those not on the programme. This scheme involves a contract between PES and the trainee, the reimbursement of part of the trainee compensation and social security contributions, and a lump sum paid to the employer if the trainee is hired at the end of the traineeship.

Even more successful seems to be the *Contrat d'Initiation à l'Emploi - Expérience Pratique (CIE-EP)*. In this case, for 86 per cent of participants the traineeship led to a job within six months, as opposed to 57 per cent not on this type of contract. Significantly, this scheme was designed on the basis of a proposal and with the active co-operation of L'Union des Entreprises Luxembourgeoises (UEL) and the Chamber of Commerce of Luxembourg, i.e. is characterised by strong employer involvement. It specifically requires a traineeship contract and a minimum trainee remuneration, while it also offers a lump sum to the employer if the trainee is employed on an open-ended contract after the traineeship. Interestingly, former trainees have priority if, upon completion of the traineeship, there is a job vacancy in the host organisation.²⁶⁷

As mentioned earlier, in a growing number of countries there are concerted efforts to address aspects of traineeships which have given rise to serious concerns through the introduction of traineeship-related legislation and/or quality frameworks, which have also had bearing on traineeships associated with ALMPs. The aims of such policy interventions were to (i) achieve a certain 'regularisation' of traineeships and the provide minimum protection to trainees; (ii) introduce or build on robust quality assurance mechanisms in an attempt to address deadweight, substitution and displacement effects as well ensure the quality to the traineeship; (iii) offer financial incentives to employers, including wage and social security contribution subsidies both during traineeship and, crucially after, if the trainee is employed at the end of the placement; etc. Such measures have been identified as key success factors for improved traineeship-related effectiveness (e.g. AT, BE, BG, CY, DE, DK, EL, ES, FI, FR, IE, IT, LU, NL, PL, PT, RO, UK, etc.).

²⁶⁷ Zanardelli, M. and Brosius, J., (2010). *Evaluation de l'Efficacité des Mesures en faveur de l'Emploi instaurées par la Loi 5611*, Rapport rédigé pour le compte du Ministère du travail et de l'emploi, CEPS/INSTEAD, janvier

Although it is rather early to properly assess the impact of these policy interventions, the study found that, in few instances, such attempts have had a rather adverse effect in the supply of traineeships. For example, in **Greece** the introduction of more stringent rules for its new *Work Experience Programme for New Labour Market Entrants*, resulted in low take-up by employers. Apart from the impact of the unprecedented economic crisis on the companies' capacity of taking on trainees, this low take-up is also explained by the fact that the subsidisation of trainees does not constitute a strong incentive for employers in a country where there is a high degree of undeclared or 'unsecured' labour. In addition, because this programme involves quarterly in situ inspections by OAED inspectors, employers seem to wish to eschew such quality assurance and control procedures.

On the other hand, in **Cyprus**, the *Scheme for the Job Placement and Training of Tertiary-Education Graduates* has been very successful in enhancing the employability of graduates and helping them in securing their first job. An ex-post independent evaluation of the scheme for the 2009-2010 period found that the overwhelming majority (93.5 per cent) of young participants were gainfully employed, with 84.1 per cent being taken on by their host organisation. Significantly, for 82.7 per cent of participants the contribution of the scheme to their employment was 'good to very good'. As far as participating companies are concerned, 76.7 per cent hired the graduates to whom they had offered the placement, while 95.3 per cent found useful the time they invested in the scheme.²⁶⁸

The success of this programme has led to its inclusion as an ALMP in the Special Prevention Action Plan for combating youth unemployment. Several factors contributed to the effectiveness of the programme. These included: (i) the combination of 'real' work experience with training; (ii) the provision of well-structured company placements, with a clear focus on the trainee's learning and professional development needs; (iii) the effective combination of different policy interventions (e.g. training with wage subsidies); (iv) the sharing of costs by all parties involved which, in turn, guarantees a greater employer commitment; etc. The simplicity and flexibility of the scheme were also deemed as key factors in enabling it to cover a wide range of sectors, company sizes and occupations.

In 2009, the **Latvian** State Employment Agency (SEA) promoted vocational and training measures as part of ALMPs. Of those participating to these programmes 8.4 per cent were employed within six months, while for two out of three trainees the company-based traineeship was a decisive factor in helping them secure a job. In **Lithuania**, research on traineeships targeted at the unemployed has also revealed some positive employment outcomes. However, it also showed that there is scope for improvement because the quality monitoring system does not involve collaboration between educational institutions, employers and labour market institutions.

In a similar vein, there is evidence that in **Denmark** on-the-job training is the most effective ALMP-related measure in terms of employment outcomes and earnings. Indeed, the remarkably high number of VET traineeships every year demonstrates both how practical, work-related experience is regarded as both an essential part of study curricula and a critical element in improving one's employment prospects. As was stated, this shows, in turn, the importance of practical work experience to Danish employers.

In **Slovakia**, ALMPs aimed at helping young people enter the labour market have played a crucial role during the economic crisis. For example, *Graduate Practice* is an ALMP measure which allows registered young job seekers aged up to 25 to gain specific work-related skills and competences through a work placement/traineeship. Although due to the economic crisis Slovakia experienced a dramatic decrease in the supply of traineeships, the number of unemployed young people on *Graduate Practice* increased by 194 per cent. Crucially, this

²⁶⁸ Human Resource Development Authority/HRDA, (2011c). *Summary of the Peer Review on the Scheme for the Job Placement and Training of Tertiary-Education Graduates*, Peer Review Meeting, Larnaca, 20-21 October 2011, http://www.mutual-learning-employment.net/uploads/ModuleXtender/PeerReviews/92/Full_summary_of_the_Peer_Review_Cyprus_approved_by_COM.pdf

increased take-up was accompanied with much improved implementation which resulted in better employment outcomes. Specifically, although in 2009, almost 38 per cent of young people who had successfully completed their *graduate practice* were subsequently employed, in 2010 this proportion increased to 60 per cent.²⁶⁹

9.3.2 Traineeships as Compulsory or Optional Part of Academic and/or Vocational Study Curricula (i.e. Traineeships during Education)

Traineeships which are part of academic or vocational study courses seem to have the best outcomes in terms of effectiveness, quality, learning content, trainee experience, including terms and conditions and, crucially, labour market transitions (e.g. BG, CY, DE, EL, FI, FR, HU, IE, LV, MT, NL, PL, RO, SI, UK, etc.). For example, OECD's estimates based on data from the EU-wide REFLEX survey of graduates suggest that study-related work experience increases a graduate's likelihood of finding a job immediately upon graduation by 44 per cent; lessens the probability of over-qualification by 15 per cent; and reduces the occurrence of skills mismatch by 26 per cent.²⁷⁰

Such findings are confirmed by national-level data. For example, in **Greece**, students who completed a traineeship as part of their undergraduate studies and were active five to seven years after graduation were 44.5 per cent more likely to be employed than their counterparts who did not do so.²⁷¹ Similarly, the **Netherlands** reports high labour market entry rates for UAS graduates which offer compulsory traineeships as part of their Bachelor's curriculum. Specifically, research by the Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences (HBO-raad) conducted in 2008 shows that, 18 months after graduation, 85 per cent of the 2006/2007 graduate cohort were employed at a job at the 'right' level (Bachelor's), while 83 per cent were working in the professional field for which they were trained.²⁷²

UK employers also put a premium on young people, including graduates, having acquired some work experience either through traineeships and/or work placements linked to sandwich courses (i.e. university courses which combine academic studies with one-year work placements). For example, a 2007 report highlighted that many employers preferred graduates from sandwich degrees, because they have gained practical experience and were, thus, familiar with the world of work, its routines, norms and requirements.²⁷³ According to a more recent 2011 report almost half of those who had taken up an undergraduate traineeship managed to secure long-term employment as a result of such a placement. Specifically, 28 per cent of graduates secured long-term employment with their host organisation, with a further 18 per cent securing employment with another employer.²⁷⁴

The positive effect of educational traineeships is also borne out by data from individual educational institutions. For example, data released by the University of Plymouth shows that 60 per cent of those who had completed a traineeship through the *Plymouth Graduate Internship Programme (PGIP)* were retained in full-time employment by the host

²⁶⁹ Cziria, L. and Kostolná, Z., (2011). *Slovakia: EIRO CAR on Helping Young Workers during the Crisis: Contributions by Social Partners and Public Authorities*, Eurofound, Dublin, <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/studies/tn1101019s/sk1101019q.htm>

²⁷⁰ OECD, (2010). *Op.Cit.*

²⁷¹ Karamessini, M., (2010). *Transition Strategies and Labour Market Integration of Greek University Graduates*, The Hellenic Observatory, LSE, February, <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/26364/1/GreeSE32.pdf>

²⁷² Van der Werf, E., (2008). *Employability and Work Placements: Preparing Students for the Labour Market*, Presentation at the Warsaw Seminar, <http://www.slideshare.net/youthagora.unica/warsaw-seminar-els-van-der-werf-2367309>

²⁷³ Department for Education and Skills/DfES, (2007). *Employer and University Engagement in the Use and Development of Graduate Level Skills*, Report by T Hogarth et al. for DfES, Research Report 835 www.dcsf.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/RR835A.pdf

²⁷⁴ CRAC and Oakleigh Consulting, (2011). *Op.Cit.*

organisation.²⁷⁵ Similarly, evidence from business graduates indicates that a traineeship can reduce the time between graduating and securing their first position by 54 per cent.²⁷⁶

Evidence from other countries also points to positive employment outcomes in relation to traineeships. For example, in **Germany** 50 per cent of trainees found a job within 12 months of graduation. Although this is indeed a positive employment outcome, it should also be noted that the other 50 per cent were either unemployed or in some form of precarious and/or less stable employment. It is worth adding here that in Germany the most effective placements seem to be those in sectors with a long tradition of traineeships and those with a clear regulatory framework such as traineeships associated with mandatory professional training, e.g. lawyers, doctors, etc. German statistics also show that graduates from its dual VET system are less likely to take up traineeships upon completion of their training. This may, in turn, suggest that, by already combining theoretical knowledge with practical work experience, such graduates are better prepared for immediate labour market entry as opposed to students with exclusively school-based education and training.

In **Italy**, the employment rate of young graduates who undertook a post-graduate traineeship was 65 per cent against 58 per cent of those who did not. This difference is even greater when looking only at those who were not already employed at the end of their studies. In this case, 60 per cent of young graduates who had completed a post-graduate traineeship found a job against 44 per cent of those who had not done so.²⁷⁷ In a similar vein, a 2011 survey of **Romanian** upper secondary school pupils found that for the majority of them (78 per cent) a VET traineeship facilitates their entry into the labour market and helps them secure stable employment.

A 2011 study in **Spain** concludes that in order to improve the employability of graduates, it is necessary to strengthen the links between the Spanish educational system and employers, e.g. by introducing compulsory traineeships in order to provide students with valuable work-related skills and experience. The study also highlights the need for employers to play a greater role in the design of study curricula and the financing of traineeships.²⁷⁸

In **Austria**, the effectiveness of traineeships in easing the entry into labour market depends on the sector in which they take place. It is very likely that a well organised traineeship completed before graduation leads to a job offer from the same employer after graduation. However, this is mainly true in technical and business sectors, while traineeships in media and cultural services are not so successful in securing employment.

Significantly, robust evidence in the **US**, produced in July 2011, demonstrates the links between paid work experience and its positive impact on employability. According to this survey, 61 per cent of students who completed a paid traineeship in the for-profit sector were offered a job at the time of graduation, against 38 per cent of students who undertook an unpaid traineeship and one third of students who did not have any type of work experience.²⁷⁹

The above discussion notwithstanding, there is also some evidence of less successful traineeship programmes in education, such as the *Graduate – Activate Yourself and Get the Job!* in **Slovenia**. This programme, launched in 2009, was especially designed to help young graduates secure employment after completing a traineeship with an employer, while

²⁷⁵ Plymouth University, (2010). *Graduate Internships helping to generate Jobs in the Region*, University News Centre, <http://www.plymouth.ac.uk/pages/view.asp?page=31423>

²⁷⁶ Gault, J., Redington, J. and Schlager, T., (2000). 'Undergraduate Business Traineeships and Career Success: Are they Related?', *Journal of Marketing Education*, Vol. 22, No. 1, pp. 45-53

²⁷⁷ Almalaurea, (2011). *Condizione Occupazionale dei Laureati - XIII Indagine 2010*, <http://www.almalaurea.it/universita/profilo/profilo2010/>

²⁷⁸ Garcia, J.R., (2011). *Op.Cit.*

²⁷⁹ National Association of Colleges and Employers/NACE, (2011). *Class of 2011 Student Survey*

still being a university student. The latter was given a grant if they offered full-time employment to trainees. However, according to available data, in 2009-2010 only 44 graduates took part in this programme against an initial target of 600 for the period 2009-2011.²⁸⁰

9.3.3 Traineeships in the Open Market after Graduation/Completion of Studies

Across the EU employers put a premium on young people having acquired work-related experience through traineeships. According to **UK** employers, traineeships outside formal education represent an effective mechanism for equipping graduates with such skills. As the CIPD research found, almost eight in ten employers (78 per cent) consider that traineeships are beneficial to trainees in the long run. In addition, for 76 per cent such placements allow them to screen potential new staff, while for 69 per cent traineeships are a good way to develop new talent in an industry sector. Finally, about half believe that they are a cost-effective resource (52 per cent), and that they can help develop management and leadership skills among existing staff (50 per cent).²⁸¹

Such findings were confirmed by a national survey on graduate employment. In addition, it found that traineeships in the UK are seen as an effective way of introducing graduates in new professional areas which they may otherwise not have chosen. They provide them not only with the chance to apply their knowledge and skills in a real world environment and become familiar with its norms, routines and requirements, but also with important networking opportunities which can be useful for their future employment and career prospects.²⁸²

9.3.4 Transnational Traineeships

Across the EU employers appreciate the fact that young people with work experience abroad have acquired broader international knowledge and better inter-cultural understanding which, in turn, makes them globally mobile professionals. In addition, transnational trainees have the opportunity to develop soft skills such as ability to work and interact with people from different cultures, flexibility, self-confidence, etc., along with specific technical and language skills. Significantly, transnational trainees also become familiar with and adapt to the requirements of the EU-wide labour market.

Indeed, there is growing evidence that transnational traineeships have a positive effect on the employability of trainees. For example, a study on the impact of LdV trainee experience shows a strong impact on the personal, linguistic, social and professional development. Specifically, according to respondents undertaking a LdV placement improved (i) self-confidence (70 per cent); (ii) adaptability (73 per cent); (iii) teamworking (62 per cent); (iv) language skills (66 per cent); (v) ability to manage unexpected situations (65 per cent); (vi) ability to interact with people (72 per cent); and (vii) ability to handle new challenges (71 per cent). Crucially, 58 per cent of unemployed young people received a job offer after their training abroad, while 32 per cent of employed people found a workplace in another country. Moreover, for 27 per cent the transnational experience improved the quality of their jobs and 34 per cent secured jobs with greater responsibility.²⁸³ A more recent evaluation of the *Lifelong Learning Programme* also indicates that the mobility

²⁸⁰ Employment Service of Slovenia (ESS), (2010). *Letno Poročilo 2009 (Annual Report 2009)*, http://www.ess.gov.si/trg_dela/publicistika/letna_porocila

²⁸¹ Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development/CIPD, (2010). *Op.Cit.*

²⁸² Prospects – Careers Service, (2010). http://ww2.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home_page/Labour_market_information/plifeXak

²⁸³ WSF Economic and Social Research, (2007). *Analysis of the Effects of Leonardo Da Vinci Mobility Measures on Young Trainees, Employees and the Influence of Socio-economic Factors*, Report prepared for DG EAC, May, http://ec.europa.eu/education/pdf/doc218_en.pdf

experience is very positive for one's employability. For example, 85 per cent of participants in LdV mobility found their training placements abroad beneficial for their career.²⁸⁴

The above discussion highlights the fact that, although it is difficult to accurately measure the causal link between undertaking a traineeship and securing employment, there is consistent evidence showing that, provided they meet certain quality standards, traineeships do improve the employability of trainees. Given the great diversity of traineeships, the robust and rigorous assessment of the precise magnitude of the impact of *all* forms of traineeships in facilitating smooth labour market transitions can be a challenge, especially when one seeks to collect comparative data from 27 MS. That said, the 2011 YFJ's first EU-wide trainee survey results pointed to relatively good employment outcomes. Specifically, as a result of their traineeship 16 per cent of respondents were offered a job by the host organisation at the end of their placement, while another 18 per cent found a job with a different employer. This means that undertaking a traineeship has helped just over one third of the survey respondents make a successful labour market transition. Moreover, about 30 per cent of survey respondents expected that doing a traineeship would help them find work with another employer.²⁸⁵

However, it should also be borne in mind that, if labour market conditions are not favourable and questionable employer practices towards young people are widespread, '*activation measures [such as those involving traineeships] can simply postpone unemployment, since a job placement or a training opportunity does not guarantee that an individual will subsequently attain work*'.²⁸⁶

The above discussion notwithstanding, there is also criticism about the low, in some cases, effectiveness of traineeships. For example, in **Italy**, the *Tirocini per l'Inserimento Lavorativo* (TIL) under the *FIXO* programme were not particularly effective, since only 10 per cent of young graduates were employed on various contract types at the end of the traineeship. Similarly, there is evidence that in **Spain** traineeships are used by some employers to reduce the cost of employment (e.g. wages, social security and health/medical insurance contributions, etc.).²⁸⁷

In general, the precise impact of certain types of traineeships, notably those in the open market, on young people's long-term employment prospects and quality of employment remains rather unclear, not least because of a dearth of robust EU-wide evaluation studies. The rather questionable impact of some traineeships has also been recently confirmed by the 2011 YFJ trainee survey mentioned above. Although the concept of traineeship is designed to, *inter alia*, offer a first stepping stone into the labour market by creating a bridge between the worlds of education and employment, the survey results paint a mixed picture. Crucially, trainees are, very often, on their second or third traineeship. Indeed, 63 per cent of survey respondents have completed one or two traineeships, while the remaining 37 per cent had undertaken three or more traineeships.²⁸⁸

Similar findings have emerged in specific MS. For example, a small-scale survey of former trainees conducted by Interns Anonymous in the **UK** showed that for the vast majority (82 per cent) the traineeship did not lead to employment with host organisation nor did their employer help them with their job search (83 per cent). Where the traineeship did not lead to a job in their preferred sector, over 40 per cent were now unemployed, and over 23 per

²⁸⁴ Public Policy and Management Institute, (2010). *Interim Evaluation of the Lifelong Learning Programme (2007-2013)*, Report prepared for DG EAC, February, http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/evalreports/education/2011/llpreport_en.pdf

²⁸⁵ European Youth Forum, (2011). *Op.Cit.*

²⁸⁶ Simões, N. and Naumann, R., (2010). *Anticipating and Managing Restructuring Portugal*, International Training Centre, ILO

²⁸⁷ Robberecht A-M., (2010). *Young People facing a Dead End? More and Better Jobs in Europe!*, Study prepared for the ETUC Conference, September 2010, http://www.etuc.org/IMG/pdf/Les_jeunes_dans_l'impasse_En_with_table1.pdf

²⁸⁸ European Youth Forum, (2011). *Op.Cit.*

cent working in another sector. Moreover, at least 37 per cent of respondents had undertaken three or more traineeships.²⁸⁹

Overall, traineeships which form optional or compulsory part of academic and/or vocational study curricula with strong employer links appear to be the most effective in terms of learning content, traineeship quality and experience, terms and conditions and labour market entry rates (e.g. AT, DE, DK, EL, FI, FR, IE, IT, LV, NL, RO, UK, etc.). In the same vein, well-structured traineeship programmes linked to ALMPs have, in some instances, yielded positive employment outcomes. Transnational traineeships, notably those supported by EU mobility programmes such as Erasmus and LdV have also been shown to improve youth employability. The box below presents some examples of effective traineeship programmes.

Effectiveness of Traineeships

- **Portugal:** 76 per cent of host organisations participating in the long-standing *Programa Estágios Profissionais* retain the trainee at the end of the placement.
- **The Netherlands:** 85 per cent of the 2006/2007 UAS graduate cohort (who had completed a compulsory traineeship as part of their studies) were employed at the 'right' level in line with their qualification and 83 per cent were working in chosen professional field within 18 months after graduation.
- **Cyprus:** 84.1 per cent of graduates on the *Scheme for the Job Placement and Training of Tertiary-Education Graduates* were taken on by host organisation at the end of the placement.
- **Luxemburg:** for 86 per cent of participants in the *Contrat d'Initiation à l'Emploi - Expérience Pratique (CIE-EP)* the traineeship led to a job within six months, as opposed to 57 per cent not taking part in the scheme.
- **Ireland:** the labour market entry rate of FÁS traineeships is about 70 per cent.
- **Italy:** 60 per cent of young graduates who had completed a post-graduate traineeship found a job compared to 44 per cent of those who had not done so.
- **Greece:** students who participate in traineeships which form part of their undergraduate studies were 44.5 per cent more likely to be employed than their counterparts who did not do so.
- **UK:** 28 per cent of recent graduates which completed a traineeship (as part of the HEFCE's Scheme) secured employment with host organisation and 18 per cent with other employers. About a third of participants of the *Graduate Talent Pool* secured employment after completing a traineeship in the open market.
- **Germany:** 50 per cent of trainees found a job within 12 months of graduation; for 15 per cent the traineeship was directly linked to positive employment outcomes.

9.4 Main Success Factors for Traineeships

Overall, it seems that educational traineeships (as part of either vocational or academic study curricula) are, in most cases, particularly effective in facilitating school-to-work transitions. The main factors which make these traineeships successful are shown in the Box below.

²⁸⁹ Low Pay Commission, (2011). *Op.Cit.*

Main Success Factors for Effective Traineeships

- Traineeships are secured in **close co-operation with employers** and thus promote a two-way interaction and exchange of knowledge between the educational system and industry, especially in relation to employer skills requirements.
- Close and on-going dialogue between employers and educational institution generates **study curricula** which are more relevant for and **responsive to the skills and knowledge requirements of employers**.
- Students have the **opportunity to gain a first work-related experience linked to one's study subject** and thus develop an in-depth understanding of the scientific knowledge acquired as part of the studies through its practical application in a work context.
- Student trainees are able to **demonstrate their abilities, knowledge and competences to potential employers**.
- By allowing students to become familiar with the demands, norms and routines of the work environment and their exposure to real working conditions traineeships allow smoother school-to work transitions.
- **A well-structured approach to organising traineeships**, including **close monitoring and rigorous quality assurance procedures** by both the sending (educational institutions) and host (employer) organisations. These can, to some extent, guarantee the **quality and learning content of the placement**.
- These structured quality assurance procedures allow educational institutions to build strong links with **employers who are motivated to provide high quality traineeships**.
- Such traineeships are typically accompanied by a **written traineeship agreement** which, inter alia, specifies the focus, scope and **content of the traineeship**, including duration and the tasks and activities expected to be carried out by the trainee; delineates clearly the **roles and responsibilities of all parties involved**; and sets out in detail the **trainee's terms and conditions**.

The Table overleaf presents first, a comparative summary of the above discussion and second, relevant country-specific information in greater detail.

Table 9.1: Benefits and Drawbacks of Traineeships

	AT	BE	BG	CY	CZ	DE	DK	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HU	IE	IT	LT	LU	LV	MT	NL	PL	PT	RO	SE	SI	SK	UK
Whether there are drawbacks linked to traineeships	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✓
Whether there are advantages linked to traineeships	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	?	✓	✓
Whether there are available evaluations on traineeships programmes	x	✓	x	✓	x	✓	?	x	✓	?	x	✓	x	✓	✓	x	✓	x	✓	✓	x	?	x	?	x	✓	✓

Key: (✓) Yes (X) No (?) Unavailable/Unclear

10. Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter summarises the study's main findings, conclusions and recommendations.

10.1 Key Findings and Conclusions

Here we present the main findings and conclusions of this study.

10.1.1 Increased Policy Focus on Traineeships as Mechanisms which facilitate Young People's Labour Market Entry

Young people have been disproportionately adversely affected by the Great Recession of the late 2000s. The dramatic rise in youth unemployment and employment precariousness combined with considerable skill mismatches have prompted governments across the EU to **increasingly focus on traineeships** and practical work-based experience as effective mechanisms which can help young people, including the young unemployed and graduates, in their school-to-work transition (e.g. AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SK, UK, etc.).

As a result, traineeships in a variety of forms feature prominently in national programmes aimed at tackling youth, including graduate, unemployment. For example, they form part of ALMPs in a growing number of countries. Similarly, in an effort to forge closer links between education and industry with a view to improving the labour market relevance of the curriculum and enhancing student and graduate employability, traineeships are increasingly a voluntary or compulsory part of both secondary and higher vocational and academic study curricula. Recognising the benefits of learning mobility, transnational traineeships (as part of either EU or other international programmes as well as national programmes) are also actively promoted across the EU. Finally, in view of the proliferation of traineeships undertaken by young people in the open market, a growing number of MS have also either introduced programmes promoting such traineeships and/or regulations or voluntary quality charters aimed at providing some protection to trainees.

Although due to lack of aggregate and comparable numerical data it is difficult to measure the exact magnitude of the phenomenon, there is in almost all MS a definite upward trend in all forms of traineeships, including those in the open market.

10.1.2 Funding of Traineeships

Across MS the most common methods of financing the various types of traineeships include European and national/regional funds; institutional assistance, for example, university grants; personal financing; and company resources.

Where public funding is available, this commonly involves considerable support from European funds, notably the ESF (e.g. BE, CY, CZ, EL, ES, IE, FI, IT, LT, LV, MT, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, etc.). Indeed, as part of its support for youth employment measures, the ESF has enabled MS to promote traineeships (and workplace experience placements more generally) as a way of facilitating school-to-work transitions. Moreover, considerable EU financial support aimed at promoting learning mobility through, inter alia, transnational traineeships is also available through the Erasmus and LdV programmes. There is also plenty of evidence across MS of national funds aimed at increasing the supply of a wide range of traineeships (e.g. AT, BE, CY, EL, ES, FI, IE, LU, LV, MT, NL, MT, PT, RO, SE, UK, etc.).

The practice of personally financing participation in traineeships was also common, at least for some types of traineeships (e.g. BE, DE, EL, ES, IE, IT, LU, PL, RO, UK, etc.). Indeed, a particular aspect of certain types of traineeships, notably those in the open market, relates

to the fact that, in many cases, because trainees receive no or insufficient compensation, they have to rely to other sources of financial support, including own savings and/or family support. There is also evidence that companies are providing some compensation to their trainees, although this is usually discretionary (e.g. AT, FI, FR, IE, NL, PL, SE, UK, etc.).

10.1.3 Plurality of Regulatory Frameworks for Traineeships

Across Europe there is a plurality and variety of legislation and regulations governing traineeships. This legislative/regulatory diversity exists not only between MS, but also between the different types of traineeships themselves which, in turn, reflects the fact that the concept of traineeship itself is very diverse.

Traineeship-related legislation can be found in laws and regulations associated with either education and training or employment policies, including ALMPs. It usually seeks to define and regulate traineeships, the trainee status and associated terms and conditions. However, there are also instances where no traineeship-related regulations exist, notably certain traineeships in the open market.

Some MS seek to regulate directly traineeships-related issues (e.g. by Laws which explicitly apply to traineeships (e.g. EE, ES, HU, IT, FI, FR, PL, PT, RO, SI, etc.)). In that regard, France stands out as a country which has, since 2006, adopted an explicit 'regulated' approach to traineeships through a raft of laws.

In most MS traineeship-related regulations either do not exist or are included in other legislation, typically Education and Training Laws which relate to secondary, including vocational, and tertiary education (e.g. AT, CY, CZ, DE, EL, IE, LU, MT, PL, PT, SK, UK, etc.). Traineeships which form part of academic study curricula are typically regulated, organised and overseen independently and autonomously by the educational institution itself.

Although legal provisions vary substantially within the countries themselves depending on the type of traineeship, in most MS there are legal provisions which regulate: (i) the written traineeship contract setting out the formal obligations for the parties involved - for example, the trainee, employer and/or educational institute (e.g. BE, EL, ES, FR, IE, IT, LV, NL, PL, RO, SE, etc.); (ii) the length of a traineeship (e.g. BE, CZ, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, IT, LU, MT, PT, RO, UK, etc.); and (iii) the trainee remuneration and/or social security coverage (e.g. AT, DE, DK, EL, ES, IE, FR, LT, MT, PT, RO, SE, etc.).

In many MS there are labour market policies specifically aimed at supporting unemployed young people, including graduates through traineeship schemes, which are often regulated by specific legislation and regulations (e.g. BE, BG, CY, EE, EL, IE, FR, IT, LT, LU, MT, NL, PL, PT, SK, etc.).

Significantly, in view of the rapid expansion of traineeships across the EU, individual trainees and/or trainee associations/platforms, trade unions and youth organisations have started testing the law. Indeed, there has been a steady rise in the number of cases where trainees have successfully secured damages for unfair treatment and poor terms and conditions (e.g. unpaid work, having a long period of traineeship recognised as employment, etc.). This has, in turn, led to the emergence of a growing body of traineeship-related case law and court rulings in some countries (e.g. BG, DE, DK, EL, MT, UK, etc.).

The above discussion notwithstanding, the study found that **legislative and regulatory frameworks do not necessarily guarantee the quality of traineeships**. Rather, **it is the implementation of regulations and the robust monitoring of the entire process which play a key role in ensuring quality traineeships**.

Another area of concern is the inadequacy of regulations and lack of quality assurance mechanisms for traineeships in the open market which have, in many cases, been criticised

for poor learning content and trainee terms and conditions, trainee exploitation, etc. A number of countries stand out both the widespread use of such traineeships and for government initiatives aimed at promoting their quality (e.g. AT, BE, DE, EL, ES, FR, IT, PL, PT, UK, etc.). In general, **the study identified a need of a certain degree of regulation and/or quality assurance for traineeships in the open market.** In some countries quality assurance standards as another form of 'soft' regulation have also been introduced through traineeship-related quality frameworks, charters, guidelines or codes of good practice, etc.

10.1.4 Lack of a Common Definition of Traineeships and Trainees

There is a great discrepancy across the EU in the extent to which traineeships and/or trainees are clearly defined. In relation to the **definition of traineeships**, in most MS there is either a legal definition (e.g. AT, BE, BG, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, HU, IT, LV, MT, NL, PL, RO, SE, SI, SK, etc.), or at least, a common national understanding of the concept of a traineeship (e.g. AT, CZ, DE, EL, ES, FI, HU, IE, LU, MT, NL, PL, RO, UK, etc.).

There are clear differences between traineeships and apprenticeships. The latter are based on an employment contract which regulates, *inter alia*, the apprentice's terms and conditions, while in most MS the traineeship is explicitly *not* an employment contract, and as such, it is either partly or not at all regulated.

Trainee-related definitions also vary significantly across the EU. Typically, the trainee is a pupil, student or trainee who is temporary working to acquire on-the-job experience which is relevant to his/her studies. Significantly, in most MS the legal position of a trainee is *not* equal to the legal position of a regular employee or apprentice.

In general, in almost all countries where a common definition of traineeship exists, there is a strong link between education and work experience. Across the MS the **common defining characteristics of legal frameworks relating to traineeships** are: **(i) the general educational purpose; (ii) the practical element of learning; and (iii) the temporary character of the traineeship.**

10.1.5 Great Diversity of Traineeships

Across and within MS the study identified a wide range of traineeships. However, as a result of the scoping phase, it focused in the following five types of traineeships:

1. Traineeships as part of ALMPs aimed at facilitating School-to-Work Transitions

Traineeship programmes linked to ALMPs and seeking to increase the overall supply of traineeships have been introduced or broadened across the majority of MS (e.g. AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, EE, EL, ES, FR, IE, LV, MT, PL, PT, SE, SI, SK, UK, etc.), due to the proven effectiveness of schemes which combine education with work-based learning and practical work experience in easing the labour market entry of young people. Traineeships linked to ALMPs are commonly targeted at: (i) unemployed young people whose numbers are rising due to the Great Recession (e.g. AT, BE, CY, DK, EE, EL, ES, IE, FI, FR, HU, LT, LU, LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, SE, UK, etc.); (ii) early school leavers and low skilled or unqualified young people who face considerable difficulties in entering the labour market (e.g. ES, FR, IE, LU, MT, SE, etc.); (iii) disadvantaged young people at risk of social exclusion (e.g. BE, CY, EE, ES, FR, IE, LU, NL, MT, UK, etc.); etc.

Crucially, in the face of rising graduate unemployment a growing number of MS have promoted traineeships in national programmes, including ALMPs, specifically targeted at young graduates with the aim of facilitating their school-to-work transition (e.g. AT, BG, CY, CZ, DK, EL, ES, FI, IE, IT, LU, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, UK, etc.).

2. **Traineeships as Compulsory or Optional Part of Academic and/or Vocational Study Curricula (i.e. Traineeships during Education)**

Across the EU it has become increasingly common for traineeships to be formally integrated into curriculum requirements for both higher vocational and academic education qualifications (e.g. AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, EL, FI, FR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, MT, NL, RO, SE, SK, PL, UK, etc.). Indeed, in most MS, traineeships have become common elements of study curriculums in upper secondary and higher (vocational and academic) education. This is due to the fact that a considerable body of evidence has consistently shown that educational systems which integrate theoretical knowledge with work-related practical training – be it apprenticeships or other forms of alternance based-education – are more effective than others in assisting the school-to-work transition.

The extent to which a traineeship forms a compulsory element of the curriculum, rather than optional, depends on the type of education (vocational or academic). **Traineeships have always been a compulsory element of higher vocational education.** The Universities of Applied Sciences which have strong professional focus and put a special emphasis on practical application of knowledge have always included compulsory traineeships as part of their study curricula (e.g. AT, DE, EE, EL, FI, IT, NL, UK, etc.). However, **in the last few years traineeships are increasingly becoming an integral part of all/most academic study curricula.** Linked to this is the fact that there seems to be a major policy push for traineeships to form (compulsory or optional) part of study curricula, not least because these are seen as a effective tool in facilitating youth labour market transitions.

Traineeships linked to educational programmes vary by type, focus and duration. Typically, traineeships linked to education last between two and six to nine months and are undertaken towards the end of studies.

The proportion of graduates undertaking traineeships or work placements as part of higher education studies vary widely across the MS, with high take-up among graduates in the Netherlands (87 per cent), France (84 per cent), Finland (80 per cent) and Germany (79 per cent); rather modest in Spain (57 per cent) and Austria (45 per cent); and rather low in the UK (32 per cent) and Italy (22 per cent).²⁹⁰

3. **Traineeships as Part of Mandatory Professional Training**

Across MS there are certain professions where there is a legal requirement to undertake a compulsory traineeship as part of mandatory professional training either in the final years of undergraduate studies or just after graduation, e.g. medicine, law, education/teaching, architecture/engineering; etc. Such traineeships are considered to be a critical element of the final qualification and, in most cases, are a pre-requisite for licence to practice. They are both well-defined and regulated in terms of learning content, duration, quality assurance, etc., and are usually overseen by relevant professional associations and bodies in each MS. Despite the high degree of regulation of mandatory professional traineeships, there are growing concerns about the potential for abuse and exploitation of young people undertaking such placements (e.g. BE, EE, EL, ES, IT, LV, RO, SI, UK, etc.).

4. **Traineeships in the Open Market after Graduation/Completion of Studies**

In the recent years there has been an expansion of traineeships which young people undertake after graduation, not least because employers increasingly put a premium on them having acquired work experience through such placements. This type of traineeship has attracted most criticism since it tends to be unregulated and, in some cases, has been associated with reports of trainee exploitation, the replacement of regular staff by trainees who are used as cheap or even free labour, poor terms and conditions, including lack of social security coverage, low or non-existent learning content, etc. Quite disturbingly, in

²⁹⁰ Brennan, J. Patel, K., and Tang, W., (2009). *Op.Cit.*

some instances, traineeships fail to prove young people with a high quality learning experience and be the first step towards an open employment contract. Indeed, in some countries there are growing concerns that some traineeships are replacing entry level jobs and/or trapping young people in an endless series of such placements, depriving them of the possibility to secure decent work and become fully independent (e.g. AT, DE, EL, ES, FR, IT, PT, UK, etc.).

For example, in both **Italy** and **Spain** young graduates feel increasingly obliged to undertake one (or even a series of) traineeships in the open market while looking for employment. Spanish graduates are increasingly offered by companies unilateral traineeship contracts (*Becas unilaterales de empresas privadas – Becas no convenidas*) which are unregulated, offer minimum social protection to trainees and may lead to potential trainee exploitation.

In the face of widespread criticism of this type of traineeships, a number of countries are actively seeking to either explicitly regulate or promote good practice through quality frameworks.

5. Transnational Traineeships

Across all MS there is evidence of growing popularity of transnational work-related mobility. Indeed, EU mobility programmes have increased the number of transnational work placements across most MS, with the largest programmes being the LdV programme (e.g. AT, BE, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, IE, IT, LT, LV, MT, NL, PT, RO, SE, SL, UK, etc.) and Erasmus (e.g. AT, BE, CY, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, IE, IT, LT, LV, MT, NL, PT, RO, SE, SL, UK, etc.). Crucially, work placements in companies abroad are increasingly popular among students, the main reason being the expressed desire by students to improve their employment prospects through practical work.

A number of countries are actively promoting traineeships abroad, either through EU or other international youth mobility programmes such as AIESEC and IAESTE (e.g. DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, IE, IT, MT, NL, PT, SE, UK, etc.) as well as national initiatives (e.g. DK, ES, FI, MT, PT, NL, PT, etc.).

10.1.6 Sectors where Traineeships are more common

The type, range and profile of sectors where traineeships are more prevalent differ, to some extent, according to the specific type of traineeships. In certain sectors such as medicine and law traineeships are part of mandatory professional training. However, there are a number of sectors where traineeships are increasingly common. These include (i) the creative industries (e.g. culture, art and publishing); (ii) media/journalism and PR; (iii) tourism and hospitality industry; (iv) business administration; (v) banking, finance and accountancy; (vi) manufacturing (especially for VET traineeships); (vii) third sector/NGOs; (viii) public sector; etc.

Some sectors have also been associated with questionable employer practices as regards traineeships, notably (i) creative industries, media and journalism (e.g. AT, DE, DK, FR, IE, IT, UK); (ii) the public sector (e.g. BE, BG, DE, EL, ES, FI, FR, IT, SI, PL, PT, etc.); (iii) the third Sector/NGOs (e.g. AT, BE, ES, IT, PL, SK, UK); (iv) the legal sector (e.g. BE, EL, IT, UK); (v) the medical sector (e.g. AT, BE, EL, IT, UK); etc.

In general, questionable employer practices in relation to traineeships can be found across MS, with little variation as regards types of specific regulatory regime and institutional framework. The main types of questionable practices identified include low or poor learning content; poor working conditions; inadequate compensation; using trainees as substitutes for regular staff; repeatedly renewing traineeship contracts without offering a permanent position; etc. Low or no trainee compensation has been highlighted as a major issue of concern in almost all MS.

10.1.7 Great Variety of Trainee's Terms and Conditions

The trainee's rights, terms and conditions vary considerably both between different types of traineeship and MS. For example, traineeships linked to study curricula and mandatory professional training have more clearly defined terms and conditions usually set out in written traineeship agreements between educational institutions, host organisations and trainees. The trainee's terms and conditions associated with mandatory professional training are set by the specific regulations of the relevant professional bodies, or in some cases, by law. Traineeships in the open market, which are less regulated, tend to have the least favourable terms and conditions and, as such, have been criticised by trade unions, trainees and trainee associations, youth organisations and the media.

Similarly, there is great variation between MS in relation to the trainee's terms and conditions associated with different forms of traineeships. For example, in France all trainees undertaking any traineeship lasting for more than two months, should receive minimum compensation in the form of a bonus which is defined by a sectoral or extended inter-professional agreement. Similarly, in the UK those undertaking a traineeship in the open market are entitled to national minimum wage.

In general, the extent to which trainees receive compensation depends on the type, purpose and duration of traineeship; existing legislation; the trainee-related policies of the host organisation; the precise form of remuneration (i.e. cash or in kind, and/or whether it only covers trainee expenses.); etc. Where trainees do receive remuneration, this tends to be linked to the NMW (e.g. BE, EL, ES, LU, LV, MT, NL, PT, RO, SI, SK, UK, etc.). In countries without a NMW, trainee remuneration levels are determined through alternative methods such as collective bargaining agreements (e.g. AT, CY, DE, DK, FI, IT, SE, etc.).

Crucially, there is no consensus on whether trainees in any form of traineeship should receive compensation or on what constitutes 'appropriate' remuneration. One of the main criticisms common to all types of traineeship across the MS is the lack of or low level of compensation which raises concerns about equity of access; the risk of trainee exploitation; and the ability of young people to lead an independent life (e.g. AT, BE, BG, DE, EE, EL, ES, FR, IT, LU, LV, MT, PL, PT, SI, UK, etc.).

Indeed, the issue of the trainee's terms and conditions has increasingly become the focus of lively political debate across the EU (e.g. AT, BE, BG, DE, DK, EL, ES, FR, IT, LT, LV, PL, PT, SI, UK, etc.). As a result, a number of MS with the aim of improving trainees' terms and conditions have introduced or are in the process of developing new legislative/regulatory measures and/or quality frameworks (e.g. AT, BG, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, IE, IT, LU, NL, PT, SE, UK, etc.).

Overall, the great variety of traineeship-related definitions, regulations, educational systems etc. across the EU has resulted in a rather complex, confusing and diverse landscape of trainees' terms and conditions.

10.1.8 Growing Emphasis on Quality Assurance

In a number of MS and for certain types of traineeships the study identified widespread concerns about the quality, learning content, working conditions, equality of access, less formalised traineeships in companies, trainee's terms and conditions, potential for trainee exploitation and use of trainees as cheap or free labour, etc. In the face of the proliferation of traineeships taken up by a growing number of young people across the EU, such concerns have gone up the political agenda.

In response to such heightened concerns a number of countries have actively sought to improve the quality of traineeships by strengthening quality assurance mechanisms. These include traineeship-related legislation as well as specific quality frameworks either regulated by public institutions (e.g. educational establishments, PES, etc.); or developed by the social partners; or promoted on a voluntary basis by employer associations, professional

bodies and even government (e.g. AT, BG, CZ, DE, DK, EL, FI, FR, IE, IT, LU, NL, SE, UK, etc.).

In general, quality assurance standards may be compulsory or voluntary. Voluntary schemes are often considered to be less bureaucratic and not associated with 'excessive' regulation and, as such, more likely to encourage a greater supply of traineeships by employers. At the same time, however, it is worth noting the potential for poor quality traineeships where there are no compulsory standards. To date, the impact of voluntary quality assurance schemes on the quality of open market traineeships is still unclear, or rather, requires further empirical investigation and robust evaluation.

10.1.9 Effectiveness of Traineeships

Across the EU there is a growing awareness of the benefits of traineeships in terms of facilitating the school-to-work transition. In general, traineeships allow young people to (i) apply theoretical knowledge in real work settings; (ii) learn specific technical skills which better match employers' needs; (iii) gain practical, work-related experience, the lack of which is a key barrier to their labour market entry; (iv) become familiar with world of work, its norms and routines; (v) start develop their professional networks; (vi) enter a particular profession; etc. At the same time, traineeships offer employers the opportunity to, *inter alia*, screen and select the most talented candidates, expand their talent pool and benefit from the trainees' new ideas, fresh thinking and creativity.

However, as far as the effectiveness of traineeships there is an uneven and rather patchy body of evaluation literature across the EU, especially in the face of the great diversity of these schemes. Overall, the most effective traineeships in facilitating school-to-work transitions are those undertaken during education and, in some instances, those linked to well-structured ALMPs. Specifically, traineeships which form part of academic and/or vocational study curricula seem to achieve the best outcomes in terms of learning content, traineeship quality and experience, terms and conditions and labour market entry rates (e.g. AT, DE, DK, EL, FI, FR, IE, IT, LV, NL, RO, UK, etc.). Similarly, well-structured traineeship programmes linked to ALMPs have, in some instances, yielded positive employment outcomes (e.g. BE, CY, DK, FR, IE, LU, LV, MT, NL, PT, SE, SK, UK, etc.). Transnational traineeships, notably those supported by EU mobility programmes such as Erasmus and LdV have also been shown to improve youth employability.

Overall, the main success factors attributed to the most effective traineeships (those undertaken during education) in facilitating school-to-work transitions include (i) the strong links between employers (host organisations) and the education system; (ii) a well-structured approach in the organisation, oversight and evaluation of the traineeship (typically driven by the educational institution); (iii) close monitoring of traineeships so that the quality and learning content of the traineeship can be safeguarded; (iv) clearly delineated roles and responsibilities of all parties involved; (v) a traineeship agreement which specifies in great detail the focus of traineeship, duration, trainee's terms and conditions; etc.; (vi) robust quality assurance mechanisms; etc.

10.2 Recommendations

This study has highlighted a number of traineeship-related areas where further action is required either at EU and/or national levels.

There is a Need for a clear Definition of Traineeships at EU Level to underpin any future European Policy Initiatives

This report has highlighted great variation in and lack of consistency of definitions both between types of traineeships and MS. Given the great variety of traineeships, this

definition may outline the key aims and features of these schemes, while leaving some space for the specificities of particular types.

There is a Need to reinforce and further support the current Trend of increasingly including Traineeships as an integral Part of Study Curricula

Traineeships play a key role in improving the links between the education system and the labour market, which a growing body of evidence suggests can have a positive impact on youth employability. Furthermore, cross-national evidence suggests that traineeships linked to education programmes and regulated by academic institutions tend to be of a higher quality than other forms of traineeships, particularly unregulated open market traineeships. Policy measures could include clear links between traineeships and credits towards the final qualification and further use of EU funding to support placement offices at educational institutions. Crucially, in view of the intense criticism levelled at the traineeships in the open market, if these are totally unregulated, **traineeships should take place preferably during studies and not after graduation.**

There is a Need to increase the Supply of Quality Traineeships

Given the positive impact that certain forms of traineeships have on young people's employment prospects, policy makers at both EU and national levels should consider measures to increase the supply of traineeships. In particular, SMEs which, with the notable exception of IVET, appear to be less likely to offer traineeships, should be encouraged to do so, e.g. through financial incentives, awareness raising campaigns, etc.

There is a Need for high Quality Traineeships, e.g. through a Quality Framework for Traineeships

While there is evidence that traineeships can benefit young people, the effectiveness of certain types, notably those in the open market, as a mechanism for easing the transition into the labour market has been called to question. Similarly, there is also widespread concern about the learning content, trainee's terms and conditions and overall quality of traineeships, particularly those in the open market. As a result, there is a strong case for policy makers to attempt to rein in some of the more egregious examples of abuse of traineeships and promote high quality traineeships. Poor quality traineeships are likely to be of limited benefit to participants. A **Quality Framework for Traineeships** can provide clear and practical guidelines about high quality traineeships as well as the key elements of traineeship-related quality assurance mechanisms.

Indeed, the European Commission is expected to put forward such a framework in the last half of 2012. This should, *inter alia*, provide a **clear definition of terms and conditions associated with traineeships**, not least because evidence suggests that **minimum terms and conditions are linked to high quality and effective traineeships**. The terms and conditions should, in turn, be clearly set out in a **well-structured written traineeship contract** which must specify (i) the purpose of the traineeship; (ii) the learning content; (iii) the duration of the traineeship; (iv) roles and responsibilities of all parties involved; (v) supervision, mentoring and monitoring arrangements; (vi) trainee remuneration; (vii) working conditions (e.g. working hours, etc.); (viii) social security and health insurance coverage; (ix) holidays and sick leave entitlement; (x) dispute resolution rules; and (xi) evaluation procedures. In relation to the latter, all parties involved, including employers and trainees, should fill in compulsory evaluation forms at the end of the traineeship. The quality framework should promote the use of traineeship contracts spelling out the rights and responsibilities of all parties.

The offer of **quality traineeships could also be linked to a positive and strong brand image and/or corporate social responsibility goals** of companies. Firms should be encouraged to see quality traineeships as an opportunity to enhance their reputation, brand

and image which, in turn, can improve their ability to attract the best talent. This could be linked to an **online EU-wide platform of quality traineeships**, which would highlight and advertise companies offering best practice traineeships, especially in the face of a growing number of platforms and websites where one can find trainees' assessments of placements. Such a platform could also evolve into an **EU-wide database of companies which offer high quality traineeships**. The platform would act as a 'soft' peer review and pressure mechanism encouraging employers to improve the quality of their traineeships as well as providing potential trainees with a source of information about the best quality traineeships across the EU.

There is a Need for some Financial Support to certain Groups of Trainees

This study highlighted concerns about trainee compensation which has knock on effects for equity of access to traineeships. Insufficient trainee compensation can lead to increased reliance of young people on parental financial support or own savings which disadvantages those from less privileged backgrounds who may not be able to draw on such resources. To this end, there is a need for some financial support to young trainees, especially those from less privileged backgrounds, e.g. along the lines of apprentice-related compensation.

Indeed, the provision of some financial support to trainees seems critical to positive employment outcomes. For example, a recent US survey has demonstrated the causal link between paid traineeships and positive employment outcomes. Specifically, 61 per cent of students who completed a paid traineeship in the for-profit sector were offered a job at the time of graduation, against 38 per cent of students who did an unpaid traineeship and one-third of students who did not have any type of work experience. This may, in turn, suggest that when employers invest in trainees, they are more likely to retain them.

There is a Need to improve the Transparency of Traineeship Recruitment

There appears to be a lack of transparency in the recruitment process for some forms of traineeships, notably those in the open market and those associated with mandatory professional training. This, in turn, means these often go to those with personal connections or access to privileged knowledge about traineeship opportunities. A recent policy development to improve the transparency of trainee recruitment is the **online EU Panorama**, due to be launched in late spring 2012, which is expected to provide information about how various types of traineeships can be accessed across the EU. Since the study has also identified a traineeship-related information gap among all relevant parties, including employers and trainees, the EU Panorama will also provide information about all types of traineeships, including rules and regulations, quality assurance frameworks and, crucially, the trainee's rights, terms and conditions.

There is a Need for more robust Data on all Types of Traineeships at EU and national Levels

Finally, the study identified different degrees of traineeship-related data availability between MS and a dearth of aggregate and comparable data across the EU. This is particularly true for the traineeships in the open market, which have also attracted most criticism. Given the growing importance of traineeships for effective school-to-work transitions, there is a **clear need for better information and robust data on all types of traineeships at both national and EU levels**. To this end, a coherent, consistent and valid way of both measuring and comparing the phenomenon of traineeships across the EU should be further developed.

For example, national stakeholders (e.g. statistical offices, PES, educational institutions, social partners and relevant professional associations, youth organisations, etc.) should be involved in a more systematic and co-ordinated way in taking part in traineeship-related surveys based on standardised formats and definitions. The results of these surveys could

then feed into a centrally co-ordinated national management information system. Alternatively, the collection of standardised and comparable traineeship-related data can be tackled at EU level, e.g. through the inclusion by Eurostat of appropriate modules in the European Labour Force Survey. However, for both options there is an urgent need for the development of methodologies which would allow for the proper and valid measurement of the phenomenon across the EU, e.g. through a well-designed EU-wide feasibility study.

Linked to the need for improved data collection is the **requirement for rigorous and co-ordinated qualitative and quantitative monitoring** of the various forms of traineeships, not only for gauging take-up and future trends, but also for gathering information about their profile; length; content and scope; terms and conditions; integration into education; effect on individuals' careers; role in relation to companies' recruitment policies; etc. The need of such monitoring is all the more vital since, according to this study's findings, regulations do not necessarily guarantee the quality of traineeships, while proper implementation of traineeship-related policies is crucial for high quality traineeships and their effectiveness in terms of learning and employment outcomes.

The collection of this data could help support a better, more methodologically sound and **robust assessment and evaluation of the effectiveness of different forms of traineeships**, especially as regards the employment outcomes associated with each type. Similarly, further evaluation is required in order to provide more evidence about the links between the quality of traineeships and their effectiveness.

National Report on Traineeships Austria

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1. Traineeships as part of Member State's Youth Policy Measures

The most recent figures indicate that Austria had the second lowest youth unemployment rate of the European Union in July 2011 (7.8 per cent of young people aged 15 to 24 were unemployed, with the only lower rate occurring in the Netherlands at 7.5 per cent). Youth unemployment has generally been on a relatively low level in Austria in recent years (ten per cent in 2009, 8.8 per cent in 2010) compared to the EU average. However, there is still a marked difference between the unemployment rate of young people and the average level of unemployment (3.8 per cent in 2009, 4.8 per cent in 2010, and 4.4 per cent in 2011). The ratio between overall unemployment and unemployment of young people aged between 15 and 24 has remained more or less constant since 2004, which means that youth unemployment has not disproportionately grown since. Of unemployed people aged between 15 and 24, 17.3 per cent had unemployment spells of one year or longer in 2010, compared to 12.7 per cent in 2009 and 13.8 per cent in 2008.

Regarding the transition from education to work, until a few years ago young people had growing difficulties in finding an apprenticeship place due to a diminishing amount of enterprises offering such places. This has changed in recent years, mainly through the introduction of a federal programme offering an educational guarantee to young people under 18 which is now complemented by similar programmes set up by the provincial governments. The educational guarantee implies that youths who cannot find an apprenticeship place in an enterprise are provided the opportunity to complete an apprenticeship in special training centres called 'Lehrwerkstätten'. Alternatively, youths are offered a (shorter) course of instruction or a workplace within three months after finishing compulsory school. The educational guarantee has however been subject to criticism as its offerings are sometimes believed not to be sufficiently recognised by employers. There are additional labour market policy measures to facilitate the transition from education into employment, especially aimed at young people with learning difficulties or adaptation problems. Some of these projects are co-financed by the ESF.

Traineeships do take place in some of these measures. An example is the institution of the so-called 'Schnupperlehre', a trial apprenticeship which enables youths to experience an occupational field for a few days before deciding on the branch of their apprenticeship. Another measure funded by employment centres including a traineeship-like arrangement is called work training ('Arbeitstraining') which is described in a little more detail below. Apart from this, traineeships predominantly occur during educational offerings like the Austrian institution of vocational training schools and colleges or university studies, either as compulsory parts of curricula or as voluntary activity (see the subchapter on types of traineeship below).

There is no minimum wage in Austria, neither for young people nor in general. Branch-specific baseline incomes are in collective agreements. These often include compensations for apprentices, which are sometimes also applied to traineeships (see below).

Table 1.1: Summary of main Traineeship Types in Austria

Traineeship Types/Programme	Brief Description
Short-term traineeships with professional orientation purpose ('Schnupperlehre')	Short-term trainees stay in a company for just up to one week for professional orientation purposes. These traineeships are voluntary and usually target 14 to 18 year old pupils on compulsory and secondary school level.
Traineeships as mandatory part of VET schools and colleges	Traineeships are included in the curricula of VET schools and colleges of all fields except business. The amount of time prescribed varies between fields but typically encompasses several months distributed over the holidays between school years.
Mandatory traineeships as part of study programmes at Universities and Universities of Applied Science (Fachhochschulen)	Mandatory traineeships are included in all study programmes at Austrian Universities of Applied Science. At general Universities, the picture is more complicated, with some programmes generally prescribing work experience, some only at some Universities and not at others, some giving credit points for traineeships without prescribing them and some not including traineeships at all. The length of work experience prescribed varies substantially between study programmes.
Voluntary traineeships during studies	University students whose study programmes do not prescribe work experience frequently take up voluntary traineeships in fields of employment attractive to them in order to increase their labour market chances after graduation. The border between voluntary traineeships and other types of student employment is a potentially floating one.
Voluntary traineeships after graduation	Graduates of general Universities and, to a lesser degree, of Universities of Applied Science take up traineeships in order to increase their chances of eventually ending up in a more stable kind of employment and/or due to not being able to find a regular job right after graduation.
Work training funded by national employment centre ('Arbeitstraining')	Work training is aimed at providing participants with an opportunity to acquire practical experience at an organisation, typically but not necessarily during or after an educational programme. It can last from one to twelve weeks, participants receiving a daily allowance by the employment centre. Work training is rather a type of funding of traineeships than a traineeship type in the sense of being linked to one particular type of school, study programme or educational stage. It can thus be assumed to potentially overlap with some of the types described in this table.
'Gerichtsjahr'	The Gerichtsjahr is a compulsory traineeship for law school graduates who want to work as a lawyer, judge etc. It takes place at a court and consists of assistant work for a judge. This kind of traineeship is subject to detailed regulation by federal or state law (duration of 12 months, remuneration etc.)

Traineeship Types/Programme	Brief Description
'Unterrichtspraktikum' (teaching traineeship)	The 'Unterrichtspraktikum' is mandatory for University graduates who are set to become teachers at secondary schools. It consists of supervised teaching at such a school and lasts one year.
'Trainee-Programm'	The so called 'Trainee-Programm' is a type of traineeship that aims to prepare university graduates for expert and executive positions. This kind of traineeship is very similar to a regular employment, though remuneration is lower. The trainee has got a limited contract with an employer of one to two years. During that time, trainees work in different sections of the company.
Transnational Traineeships (Leonardo da Vinci Program, Carlo-Schmid-Programm)	In many cases transnational traineeships are identical with other types of traineeships (e.g. traineeships prescribed in study programmes can be completed abroad). However, there are also specific programmes for transnational traineeships: e.g. the EU-funded Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci programme.

2. Legislative Framework for Traineeships

2.1 Legal framework for and governance of traineeships

In Austrian Law, there is no legal definition of traineeships. This implies an important role of existing jurisdiction in assessing the legal status quo. Particular provisions on traineeships are found in some collective agreements (mostly stating minimum payment of trainees) as well as the law on the employment of foreigners (AusländerInnenbeschäftigungsgesetz).

2.2 Definition of traineeships and trainees

According to the jurisdiction, traineeships in Austria can be organised and implemented in two basic ways: either within the frame of a temporary work contract which can be either a regular contract or the more flexible freelance service contract ('freier Dienstvertrag') or as a so-called training relationship ('Ausbildungsverhältnis', often also called 'Volontariat'). This applies to traineeships at all educational stages (compulsory traineeships for pupils of vocational schools, compulsory and voluntary traineeships of students, traineeships of graduates). Which of the two arrangements is in place in a given traineeship is not determined by its contractual status, but by its actual implementation.

To distinguish between traineeships implemented as employment contracts and as training relationships, the jurisdiction mentions several criteria. Most importantly, a training relationship is characterised by a lack of obligation to perform work as prescribed by the employer and a lack of embeddedness of the trainee's activities into the normal organisational working process. The training relationship is thus conceptualised as an arrangement focused on an educational objective and disconnected from the work performed by the regular employees of the organisation in which the traineeship takes place. There has been some discussion in the Austrian law literature regarding the exact conceptual boundary between training relationships and traineeships as regular employment contracts and the use of concepts like traineeship or 'Volontariat', while the basic distinction between regular employment and training relationships is largely undisputed.

In the public including the media, some confusion is observable regarding the legal framework for traineeships in Austria, especially concerning practical criteria for distinguishing between the two ways of traineeship organisation and implementation and their respective implications in terms of social security provisions (see below).

3. Availability of and Access to Traineeships

3.1 Statistics/quantitative information about traineeships

Generally, the availability of data on the number of trainees and their characteristics in Austria has to be considered very unsatisfactory. For traineeships of pupils at VET schools and colleges, the only available reference point is the overall number of pupils in these types of school. Excluding the pupils of the VET business schools and colleges, which do not include mandatory professional training, in 2009/10 40,439 pupils of VET schools and 94,172 pupils of VET colleges were in principle subject to mandatory traineeships, though not necessarily during this particular school year. The number of 134,611 (pupils of VET schools and colleges taken together) must thus be considered an upper limit of mandatory pupil traineeships per year rather than an exact figure.

For traineeships during university studies (including universities of applied science), evidence is provided by a study, completed in 2009, on the social situation of students in which respondents (undergraduates) were asked for their experience in either mandatory or voluntary traineeships. Thirty three per cent had already completed at least one voluntary traineeship. An expert interview with an Austrian representative confirmed that the number of traineeships during university studies has been increasing in the last years. Likewise, respondents in a recent tracking study on graduates of Austrian universities called ARUFA were asked for their traineeship experience. The fact that the respondents had already finished their studies when interviewed most likely accounts for the markedly higher percentage of former trainees among them: 62 per cent had completed at least one voluntary or mandatory traineeship during their studies, with mandatory traineeships in this case scoring a little higher than voluntary ones. In both studies, women indicated more traineeship experience than men.

In our recent study on the status quo of traineeships in Austria, we provided a very rough estimate of about 30,000 to 40,000 mandatory student traineeships per year (including medical students). This estimate is based on the number of students per study programme and the estimated percentage of study programmes including mandatory traineeships.

Information on traineeships done after graduation comes from the ad-hoc module of the Austrian Labour Force Survey on young people on the labour market: 13.1 per cent of the university graduates among the respondents indicated that they had done at least one traineeship after graduation (general universities: 15 per cent; universities of applied science: six per cent). These data also allow for an (albeit limited) reconstruction of the recent development of graduate traineeships which shows a slight decline in recent years. In our study, we (once again roughly) estimated the amount of graduate traineeships at about 4,000 per year.

Regarding traineeships in the open market the estimated number is 30-35,000 students in higher education and 60,000 pupils in secondary education doing this type of traineeship.

3.2 Sectors where traineeships are prevalent

As mandatory professional training can be found in schools and study programmes pertaining to a large variety of sectors and voluntary traineeships are also widespread

across sectors, traineeships in Austria are common or at least known of in almost any sector. However, some sectors stand out in that trainees have become an integral part of the workforce and are reckoned with by employers. Examples for such sectors are the health and social sector, the media, PR, architecture, tourism, and cultural services including publishing. Most of these sectors are also notable for traineeships with unfavourable working conditions (see below).

3.3 Profile/Patterns of traineeships

In Austria, types of traineeships can be distinguished alongside different educational trajectories and stages. Vocational education and training schools and colleges play an important role in the Austrian education system. In these, vocational education qualifying for specific occupational fields is combined with general education elements and (unlike apprenticeships) provided in a school setting. VET schools take three years, VET colleges take five years and lead to general qualification for university entrance. With the exception of schools and colleges in the business sector ('Handelsschulen', 'Handelsakademien'), all VET schools and colleges prescribe substantial amounts of mandatory practical training in the respective occupational fields.

Universities of applied science ('Fachhochschulen') were established in Austria in 1994. Ever since, all degree programmes in this substantially growing educational sector have included mandatory practical training in the respective field of study.

Mandatory professional training is also part of some study programmes at general universities, e.g. medicine, psychology, or law (in which a yearlong professional training at a court of justice ('Gerichtsjahr') takes place after graduation). In some study programmes (e.g. communication studies), professional training is obligatory only at some universities. In other studies, traineeships are not obligatory, but students can get credit points if they do professional training.

In some university study programmes without obligatory practical training, voluntary traineeships are widespread, e.g. in business studies, architecture or technical studies. Generally, voluntary student traineeships are quite a common occurrence in Austria.

Voluntary traineeships after graduation are also found in Austria, most frequently after university graduation (see below). As already mentioned, all types of traineeship are subject to the same contract options (see legal framework above).

3.4 Transnational traineeships

In many cases transnational traineeships are identical with other types of traineeships (e.g. traineeships prescribed in study programmes can be completed abroad).

However, there are also specific programmes for transnational traineeships: e.g. the EU-funded Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci programme:

Erasmus student mobility was for Austria in 2009/2010 5112 outgoing students and 4992 incoming students. (<http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc/stat/0910/students.pdf>).

The Erasmus budget for mobility actions in Austria was €6,751,123 in 2007/08, in 2008/09 it was €7,052,783 and in 2009/10 €7,020,000. (http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc/stat/0910/countries/austria_en.pdf)

The number of participants in Leonardo da Vinci mobility projects (number of individuals who went on mobility from Austria to another country) was 1,980 in 2009, 2,561 in 2010 and 2,343 in 2011. In 2009 81 Leonardo da Vinci mobility projects were selected, in 2010 33 projects and in 2011 80 mobility projects. For Leonardo da Vinci mobility projects the

grants in 2009 were €2,374,738 and in 2010 €3,086,000. (http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/statistics_en.htm).

For Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci there are quality documents in place including principles of collaboration and responsibilities of the sending and the host organisations (http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/doc/quality_en.pdf).

3.5 Recruitment process of and equity of access to traineeships

As both quantitative and qualitative data show, social networks play an important role in the recruitment process across all types of traineeship. In a study by the Styrian Chamber of Labour on mandatory traineeships of pupils of VET schools and colleges, 57 per cent indicated that they obtained their last traineeship through contacts of relatives, friends or acquaintances, while a 2010 survey by an opinion research institute yielded exactly the same result for students (both mandatory and voluntary traineeships were included). In both surveys, this was the most frequent way of finding traineeships. This of course implies a certain openness on the side of companies and other organisations to recruit trainees through personal acquaintance and social networks. In this regard, company size could be a relevant factor, with larger organisations more likely to recruit through regular selection procedures, while small and medium enterprises (which present the bulk of the Austrian economy) may be more inclined to use informal means of recruiting trainees. Of course, recruitment through social networks is a likely way for social selectivity to come into play.

Regarding gender differences, unfortunately some of the relevant studies do not include gender-specific results. However, according to a national survey on the social status of students in Austria, of female respondents with traineeship experience only 47 per cent were paid compared to 67 per cent of male trainees. This can be attributed to an overrepresentation of female students in study programmes and occupational fields in which traineeships with unfavourable working conditions are clustered (e.g. the health and social sector, media, NGOs, cultural services).

There is also a marked gender difference with regard to traineeships after graduation. The respondents of the Austrian Labour Force Survey's 2009 ad hoc module (young people between 15 and 34) were asked whether they had taken up traineeships after completing their education. 16.5 per cent of female university graduates, but only 9.1 per cent of male university graduates answered in the affirmative. On average, 13.1 per cent of university graduates (including graduates from universities of applied science) completed at least one traineeship after their graduation. The sample size does not allow for a breakdown according to fields of study. However, our qualitative evidence and an expert interview with an Austrian representative suggest that traineeships after graduation are clustered in social science and humanities fields whereas for graduates of technical courses it is easier to find stable employment. As data from recent university graduates studies indicate, most graduate trainees are able to find more stable employment within two to three years after graduation – longer chains of traineeships after graduation thus seem to occur infrequently.

Young people with a vocational degree (which in Austria can either be a graduation from apprenticeship training or from a VET school or college) are markedly less inclined to take up traineeships after their graduation than university graduates: only two percent of apprenticeship graduates, 4.6 per cent of VET school graduates and 8.1 per cent of VET college graduates completed at least one traineeship after their graduation. There is no evidence available concerning sector differences.

To our knowledge, there are currently no public measures in effect aimed at ensuring greater equity of access to certain types of traineeships or traineeships in general. Schools and universities do have a role in supporting their pupils/students in finding places for their mandatory traineeships. However, as our qualitative interviews showed, even in universities

of applied science this role is frequently restricted to providing a list of potential traineeship companies or an internet platform where traineeship reports are collected.

The inflow of trainees from other member states into Austria is difficult to estimate due to a lack of relevant data. For foreign student trainees, it may be assumed that their number has recently risen, as the percentage of foreign students in Austria has more than doubled during the last 20 years (from 9.6 per cent in 1990/91 to 22.3 per cent in 2010/11) (students at universities of applied science are not included).

3.6 Financing of traineeships

Traineeships in Austria are essentially financed through organisations' own resources – if they are financed at all. According to the national students social survey, 64 per cent of mandatory student traineeships and 32 per cent of voluntary student traineeships are unpaid. Other recent sources indicate that 23 per cent unpaid graduate traineeships and 14 per cent unpaid mandatory pupil traineeships. The striking difference between mandatory and voluntary student traineeships can be attributed to big sectors like the health and social sector where traineeships are almost always unpaid. However, some respondents might also have confused voluntary traineeships with regular work as done by many students during their holidays ('Ferialarbeit').

One of the few opportunities of public funding is a measure by the national employment centre called 'Arbeitstraining' (work training). Work training is aimed at providing participants with an opportunity to acquire practical experience at an organisation, typically but not necessarily during or after an educational programme. It can last from one to twelve weeks, participants receiving a daily allowance by the employment centre. There is no data available on the amount of student or graduate traineeships funded through work training. Some labour market projects co-funded by the ESF include arrangements similar to the work training with participants trying out work at a regular company while receiving an allowance and accompanying counselling through the project. Again, no data on the amount of (mostly young) people supported by such projects is available. Given the prominence of regular traineeships in the Austrian labour market, it can however be assumed that traineeships within work training and similar labour market policy projects don't play a particularly important role quantitatively.

3.7 Public perceptions about traineeships

Despite their relatively infrequent occurrence, of all the traineeship types mentioned above, traineeships after graduation have in recent years attracted most public attention. Several newspaper and internet articles combined case stories with basic information on the duties and rights of trainees (which also apply to the other traineeship types). The catchphrase 'Generation Praktikum' (traineeship generation) which was originally coined in Germany has also been frequently used by Austrian media. Additionally, a platform using the phrase as its title has been established by young graduates aimed at networking of trainees, public relations work, but also research, with an online survey of trainees conducted and published in 2008 (www.generation-praktikum.at). Moreover, demands for minimum standards in the organisation and implementation of traineeships were also published on the platform and were taken up in some of the articles mentioned.

Trainees' needs and interests have so far not been too high on the agenda of Austrian social partner organisations. Apart from some information which the chamber of labour and the media trade union offer on their websites, and a general declaration by the chamber of labour regarding minimum standards for traineeships from spring 2010, there is not much trainee-specific activity to report. Accordingly, social partners' representatives interviewed for our study agreed in finding no need for a legal rearrangement of traineeships, with employee representatives seeing the main problem as trainees being too submissive and

not enforcing their rights against their employers, while classifying the current legal situation as not optimal, but sufficient. They also express concerns that a new definition and regulation of traineeships in Austria would improve the situation for traineeships currently organised as training relationships, but might at the same time worsen things for traineeships currently organised as regular employment contracts (which are already on par with regular employment in terms of protection by employment and social law).

The Green party, particularly one of their current members of parliament, has recently taken a different approach in this regard, demanding a special traineeship which abandons the current legal duality of the traineeship status and increases legal transparency. So far, this initiative has not attracted too much attention from other parties or the public.

In our recent study on the situation of trainees in Austria, we also interviewed selected company representatives. Those coming from larger enterprises see traineeships as a means of detecting and advancing talented juniors even before they finish their studies; thus, traineeships figure prominently in the recruitment strategy of big companies. In smaller organisations, trainees are more likely to play a role in the immediate day-to-day business with less focus on potential future career trajectories. Regardless of company size, the interviewed company representatives see no reason for any changes in the current arrangement of traineeships in Austria, legal or otherwise.

4. Practices and Content of Traineeships

4.1 Traineeships as part of education and/or labour market entry and integration for young people

As already mentioned above, mandatory practical training is included in all the study programmes of Austrian universities of applied science, whereas in studies at general universities the picture is more complicated, with some programmes including mandatory training, others giving credits for traineeships without prescribing them, and still others not including any reference to traineeships at all.

A typical example of mandatory professional training in a university of applied science study is the journalism programme at the FH Vienna which prescribes a fixed amount of aggregate working hours to be completed in traineeships during study time. Students can freely partition this aggregate time into several traineeships in different fields of journalism; they are also free to choose the timing of their traineeships as long as they complete them before their graduation (of course, with the curriculum of studies at universities of applied science typically being very tight, this freedom must be considered quite limited).

Another typical arrangement in universities of applied science is a combination of two mandatory traineeships, e.g. one dedicated to professional training, the other to the writing of the Bachelor's or Master's thesis in a company setting, or in case of a study programme combining two scientific and/or occupational fields one traineeship for each of the two.

A fixed amount of required professional training hours is also found in general university studies, e.g. in psychology, medicine or educational science, and in most VET schools and colleges.

Regarding the contents of traineeships in Austria, our qualitative interviews with (former) trainees indicate that in a typical traineeship (regardless of the occupational field it takes place in), trainees take on qualified duties in the regular organisational working process. Legally, this implies that the traineeship is implemented as a regular employment contract (regardless of how it is organised). It also implies that the transfer of knowledge within the traineeship predominantly takes place as learning-by-doing. Although quantitative data would be required to corroborate these qualitative results, they do invite the conclusion that

the empirical reality of traineeships in Austria across occupational fields and sectors bears very little resemblance with the criteria spelled out for the legal status of the training relationship. As training relationships are quite common as legal status of traineeships in some sectors (e.g. the health and social sector or the media), this means that a discrepancy between the legal status of a traineeship and its implementation is likely to occur in these sectors. In such cases, a regular employment contract could be legally enforced, which however is very rarely done by trainees. Another implication of the learning-by-doing approach that seems to dominate in traineeships in Austria is that the border between traineeships and regular work has to be considered a floating one.

That there is generally little formal agreement regarding learning objectives in Austrian traineeships contributes to this picture. In larger private companies, where traineeships serve as an important recruitment instrument (see above), there is a tendency to implement traineeships in a more institutionalised way that often includes standardised and anonymous feedback at the end of the traineeship. In small and medium organisations, as well as the public sector, traineeships are carried out in less standardised ways with explicit learning plans often completely missing. However, a contact person from the regular staff is available for the trainees in almost every Austrian traineeship.

The main motivation for young people in Austria to enter into traineeships (apart from having to if their school or study programme includes mandatory professional training) is to gain practical experience in the respective occupational field in order to increase their employability after graduation. Frequently, students and young graduates seem to believe that only practical work experience is relevant for their employability, i.e. they don't see a chance to influence their chances on the labour market through their study performance, but only through professional training. This belief leads to a heightened asymmetry between trainees and their employers compared to regular employment, with trainees willing to put up with unfavourable working conditions in hope of a chance to be regularly employed later on or at least benefit from the experience gained.

4.2 Issues about employer practices as regards traineeships

There are several sectors in Austria where traineeships are characterised by a discrepancy between contractual status and actual implementation, i.e., traineeships are organised as training relationships (see legal chapter above) but implemented as a regular employment contract, the main criterion for which is that the trainee performs tasks embedded into the organisational working process in personal dependence on the employer. A discrepancy between the contract and implementation of a traineeship can also be assumed if the traineeship is paid below the marginal earnings threshold and the amount of hours normally worked per week is over 30 hours.

One sector where this is likely to be frequently the case is the health and social sector. Here, traineeships are almost always unpaid (which implies that they are organised as training relationships and not temporary employment contracts, which would entitle trainees to payment). While traineeships of students at the beginning of their studies might meet the criteria of a training relationship, as they are not yet qualified enough to take on demanding tasks in the working process of their traineeship organisation, this is typically not the case for trainees in more advanced stages of their studies.

Other sectors with similar conditions are media, architecture, cultural services/creative industries including publishing and NGOs. All these sectors have in common that there is a large supply of young people who are strongly inclined to work in the field and thus willing to accept unfavourable conditions. Moreover, the mentioned sectors all offer work that is believed to be creative or meaningful or both, while atypical forms of employment are frequent and the level of financial gratification is not too high (which also applies to those regularly employed).

Currently, there are no specific policy measures in place to overcome the described discrepancy between legal status and work performed in a traineeship. Stakeholders like representatives of the social partners tend to see this more as a problem of law enforcement than insufficient regulation, i.e. trainees not being willing to legally enforce their rights.

5. Trainee's Rights and Terms and Conditions

The Austrian duality between traineeships as employment contract or training relationship means that traineeships are partly carried out within the framework of existing types of contract and partly within a specific contractual status. This implies a rather complex picture regarding protection by employment law and social law. For traineeships organised as regular temporary employment contracts, all provisions of employment law are applicable; they are fully covered by social insurance if paid above the marginal earnings threshold. Traineeships as freelance service contracts are excluded from employment law while included into social law, again if paid above the marginal earnings threshold. Trainees in a training relationship are not legally entitled to a remuneration; if they do receive a voluntary allowance (often called pocket money) above the marginal earnings threshold, they are included into social insurance, while employment law is not applicable to training relationships. Regarding the quantitative development of the two basic legal types of traineeships in recent years, no data are available – even their present distribution can only be estimated.

There is no general minimum payment for traineeships. Firstly this is because the legal option of the training relationship does not have to be paid at all. However this is also the case for traineeship as a regular employment contract: there is no general minimum payment as this does not exist in Austrian employment law. Instead, as already mentioned above, payment limits are spelled out in sector-specific collective agreements. Some collective agreements also include traineeships, mostly in sectors where pupils of VET schools and colleges do their traineeships like tourism or agriculture. In most cases, minimum payment of trainees is oriented at the payment for apprentices in the sector.

The level of payment varies considerably between sectors, with the highest remuneration in traineeships in technical and business sectors and the lowest in the already mentioned sectors with frequent discrepancy between legal status and work performed like health and social work, architecture, creative industries, media, NGOs.

Currently, there are no special political measures to strengthen the rights of trainees. However, something might occur in the future, possibly in reaction to our study which was commissioned by the Austrian Ministry for Social Affairs. Most likely seems a bundle of low-threshold measures to ensure better information of trainees about their rights in a traineeship; the duality between traineeships as employment contracts and as training relationships may be tackled in the course of a planned general recodification of Austrian employment law.

6. Quality Assurance of Traineeships

As there are no data on direct indicators of traineeship quality available, the satisfaction of trainees seem a relevant proxy. Here, pupils of VET schools and college reach the highest score: 88 per cent claimed they were satisfied or very satisfied with their last mandatory traineeship. The satisfaction students with mandatory professional training as part of their studies differs between types of university: 80 per cent of students from universities of applied science, 70 per cent of students from general universities and 63 per cent of

students from art universities were at least satisfied with their last traineeship. The satisfaction of young graduates involved in traineeships is markedly lower: only 52 per cent were at least satisfied with their last traineeship.

Apart from trainee satisfaction, the congruence or discrepancy of a traineeship's legal status and the work performed in it can be considered a quality indicator. There are no data available allowing for a precise assessment of the percentage of traineeships in which this discrepancy occurs. However, as already mentioned, based on our qualitative evidence it seems likely that it is quite frequent in certain sectors.

Also worth mentioning with regard to the quality of traineeships are two initiatives aimed at distinguishing organisations which offer high-quality traineeships. The first one is a yearly study assessing the quality of traineeships in the participating companies called 'a place to perform' (www.placetoperform.at). It is carried out by a student consulting company in cooperation with a university institute for economic psychology and mainly attracts bigger private companies (there is an entrance fee for participants who also must have hosted a minimum of four traineeships in the previous year).

The second initiative is a seal of quality for traineeships developed by the Austrian student body in cooperation with the already mentioned platform 'Generation Praktikum'. It was presented in April 2011 and will also be based on an empirical study. Presumably, this study will include more small and medium enterprises as well as organisations in the public sector than the place to perform study. The seal will first be awarded in 2012.

7. Overall Assessment as Regards Traineeships

7.1 Benefits and drawbacks of traineeships

For trainees, the main benefit of traineeships is of course the insight into professional working life that traineeships typically provide. In a typical traineeship in Austria, this insight is gained by doing qualified work that is embedded into the normal working process of the host organisation. In some sectors, this qualified work is performed under unfavourable conditions, i.e. a high volume of work that is sometimes equal to the work performed by regular employees is combined with little or no payment and little or no protection by employment and social law. Some trainees also express the wish to see the learning-by-doing approach as it is common in traineeships in Austria complemented by elements like theoretical modules or the explicit definition of educational goals at the beginning of a traineeship.

Despite the sketched risks of traineeships, both quantitative data and the qualitative interviews for our recent study on the status quo of traineeships in Austria indicate that most trainees are satisfied with their traineeship experience. It also has to be noted that traineeships quite frequently lead to some kind of continuing employment at the host organisation, e.g. freelance and/or part-time work before graduation.

For employers, two main benefits can be distinguished. As mentioned above, larger private companies use traineeships as a recruitment tool enabling them to single out talented juniors before they even finish their studies – traineeships after graduation are not common in such companies. In small and medium-sized organisations, traineeships are more likely to play a more immediate role in complementing the regular workforce.

7.2 Effectiveness of traineeships

The effectiveness of traineeships in Austria is largely dependent on the occupational sector they take place in. In technical or business sectors, it is quite likely that a well-paid traineeship organised as a temporary employment contract and completed before graduation leads to the offering of a regular job after graduation (or at least increases the trainee's attractiveness for other employers). On the other hand, in creative industry sectors like architecture, the media or cultural services traineeships will not only be significantly less well-paid, but also the transition to regular employment after graduation will likely not be quite as smooth (although such transitions do take place in these sectors as well). Traineeships should thus not be viewed as a homogeneous employment status, but as a flexible instrument taking on quite different roles in different contexts.

7.3 Good practice examples and recommendations

As a good practice example at an institutional level, the three-way contract currently in place at some Austrian universities of applied science comes to mind. This type of contract is somewhat similar to the French convention de stage and secures a minimum level of correspondence between the contents of a traineeship and the study programme that the traineeships pertains to while leaving it up to the employer how this correspondence is achieved. Apart from this, good practice in traineeships in Austria largely takes place on organisational level and in organisation-specific ways which would require specific mapping in order to make them transferable.

Regarding recommendations to optimise traineeships in Austria, the central problem to tackle obviously is the frequent discrepancy between legal status and actual implementation of traineeships which are organised as training relationships while their implementation does not meet the criteria of this status. However, any legal approach to this problem is confronted with the 'double standards' the current duality of traineeships in Austria entails: If new legislation defined traineeships as a training relationship status with improved social protection while remaining below the level of protection offered by regular employment contracts, this would imply a decline of standards for those traineeships which are currently organised as regular employment contracts. On the other hand, defining traineeships as employment contracts without further specifying them would amount to a nullification of traineeships as a separate status of employment. An adequate legal framework for traineeships in Austria would therefore have to secure that the standard of protection effective for traineeships currently organised as employment contracts is not undercut by a new legal definition of the traineeship status. At the same time, this definition would have to spell out what a traineeship is in opposition to a regular employment contract so as to render the distinction between one and the other meaningful. Most likely, such a clarification would consist of some reference to the educational content and purpose of a traineeship. This combination of high protection by social and employment law and an educational agenda would place traineeships somewhere in the neighbourhood of apprenticeship contracts. While such a kind of legislation would clearly amount to a raise of minimum standards in traineeships, it could also result in a decline of employers' willingness to offer them.

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National Report on Traineeships Belgium

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1. Traineeships as part of Member State's Youth Policy Measures

In 2007 the OECD described Belgium as poorly performing in terms of youth employment. Specifically, as Table 1.1 shows, its youth unemployment is almost three times higher compared to that for the rest of the working population. Young people have been hit particularly hard by the economic crisis, which is explained by the difficult youth transitions between education and labour market. In general, young people are deemed unprepared for the labour market by employers (OECD, Job for Youth, Belgium).

Even though Belgium is one of the few European countries which has managed to go back to their 2008 employment levels overall, youth unemployment is still above the EU-27 average. This situation is all the more disturbing because of the extent of long-term youth unemployment in Belgium. Specifically, according to Eurostat, in 2010 up to a third of its youth unemployment was long-term.

Given that Belgium is a federal state, competencies are shared between the regions, communities and the federal state. The latter is solely responsible for social security matters (including benefits) and labour law. Regions (i.e. Flanders, Brussels Capital, and Wallonia) are in charge of employment policies (including training and active labour market policies). Finally, communities deal with education matters.

Table 1.1: Unemployment Rates in Belgium in 2007 and 2010 as compared to EU-27 average

	2007 (%)	2010 (%)
BE 15-64	7.5	8.3
EU-27 15-64	7.2	9.7
BE 15-24	18.8	22.4
EU-27 15-24	15.7	21.1

Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Surveys

Belgium regions perform very differently in this respect: youth unemployment is a lot lower in Flanders than it is in the rest of Belgium - respectively 15.7 per cent unemployment rate in Flanders; 31.7 per cent in Wallonie; and 31.5 per cent in Brussels in 2010. In Flanders, the labour market is characterised by a very low senior employment rate and a fairly good youth unemployment rate, whereas the situation is the opposite in Brussels and Walloon region. The economic crisis has reduced those regional discrepancies: young Flemish have been harder hit than the rest of Belgium due to differences in the industrial fabric. Nevertheless, contextual factors explain the fact that youth unemployment is lower in Flanders than in the rest of Belgium: the number of unskilled young workers in both the Walloon region and Brussels is much higher than in Flanders (Plasman, 2010). This is why a concerted effort has been made to provide language skills training in order to improve inter-regional mobility and address the issue of high youth unemployment in Wallonie and Brussels.

As is the case in most other EU countries, young workers in Belgium are significantly over represented among temporary workers, with those under 30 years accounting for 65 per cent of temporary workers. This figure has dropped since the beginning of the economic crisis, which is evidence of the spread of temporary employment to other populations, rather than a reduction in the number of young people on temporary contracts (Eurofound, 2011). According to Quintini and Manfreddi (2009), it usually takes up to three years to gain

access to permanent employment in Belgium. Temporary work is deemed a good way to gain experience in the labour market for workers such as young people who lack work experience. However, it has been argued that the extensive and protracted use of temporary contracts by young people could trap some of them in precarious employment. The lengthy school-to-work transition period in Belgium can be problematic considering the average age of entry on the labour market is 22.8 years old (Robberecht, 2010). The incidence of involuntary part-time employment is also very high among young Belgians according to OECD's report 'Off to a good start'. Under such circumstances there may be a risk that certain forms of traineeships could contribute to the creation of a two-tier labour market, instead of improving job employment prospects for young people.

As is commonly the case, the link between educational attainment and employment is very strong in Belgium: in 2010 about 35 per cent of poorly skilled young workers were unemployed, as opposed to 17.8 per cent of highly skilled according to Eurostat data. Even though the workforce is more qualified in Belgium compared to most other EU countries, school drop-outs and school leavers with no or poor qualifications are a major challenge for Belgian education policies, especially in French and German speaking communities. According to Kis (2010), 12.4 per cent of 18-24 year olds in 2006 left school with no qualifications. To this end, part-time education is being developed nationwide in order to tackle this issue and make the transitions between work and education smoother.

Even though part-time education is fairly uncommon in Belgium (less than three per cent of pupils in secondary education¹), and that working while studying is – wrongly- seen as detrimental to studies, it appears that student work is extremely widespread. According to a survey carried by Randstat, 90 per cent of students declared that they were combining their studies with some work. In most cases work-related activity takes place during summer holidays (only 42 per cent of respondents declare working during the academic year). The main drive is earning money (71 per cent), while gaining professional experience is only quoted in roughly ten per cent of cases. The most common occupations are sales assistants, production executives, bartenders or administrative assistants.

According to the existing literature, (Robberecht, 2010; OECD, 2007) the high levels of youth unemployment in Belgium can be explained by the relatively high labour costs, including non-wage labour costs, and the lack of labour market flexibility. The lack of professional experience acting as an employment deterrent is deemed to be an important issue by a vast majority of employers (ICHEC 2006) especially given the high labour cost of young workers. In spite of the existence of a specific minimum wage for workers between 15 and 21 years old (varying between 70 and 100 per cent of the national minimum wage called RMMMG, and 85 per cent on average), according to the Robberecht, young Belgians have fairly high wages (€1,700 monthly) compared to their European counterparts. It is worth noting that this level of compensation is relatively close to the average wage applicable to the rest of the working population. This is the reason why many policies have been aiming at reducing the labour, including non-wage, costs for employers. Such policies include:

1. Reducing employer national insurance contributions by ten per cent ('win-win scheme' or Rosetta Plan).
2. Awarding a lump-sum to a company when it hires a low-skilled young person (training bonus).
3. Providing total employer exemption from social security contributions – *convention premier emploi*.

On the supply side, a lot has been done to link unemployment benefits with specific activation measures. For example, in the past former students were often entitled to unemployment benefits. Since 2003, many reforms have been introduced aimed at helping

¹ <http://www.statistiques.cfwb.be/index.php?id=510>

young people retain their unemployment benefits for a few months when taking on a job or a traineeship², which is a form of subsidised employment, like the ACTIVA programme.

Finally, the last challenge for the youth labour market in Belgium is the reported existence of a mismatch between skills and employer needs (BUSINESSEUROPE, 2011). In order to tackle this issue, a concerted effort has been made to better involve social partners in training policies at the regional level, eg *competencieagenda* in Flanders, or comprehensive skills forecasting in French speaking regions (Plasman, 2010). Other policies have been implemented to improve the attractiveness of VET – with the active support for the European Social Fund.

Table 1.2: Traineeship arrangements in Belgium

Traineeship programme	Brief description	Web link
Federal Programmes		
<i>Contrat de travail a temps partiel (Part-time employment contract)</i>	This is a regular part-time employment contract and is seen as the most expensive option for employers. The <i>Convention premier emploi applies</i> (Formerly <i>convention emploi formation</i>). The enterprise which recruits a person is entitled to the start-up bonus.	http://www.emploi.belgique.be/defaultTab.aspx?id=22776
<i>Convention d'immersion professionnelle</i>	This contract only applies to traineeships in the open market. In reality, this contract is mainly used for secondary education in Flemish region (DBSO) which involves 'alternance' training arrangements, ie combination of school/college-based theoretical education with practical work-based training. This programme receives ESF a funding in order to subsidise participating companies. Trainees are entitled to compensation (between €461 and €720 monthly), and participating companies also receive the start-up bonus.	http://www.emploi.belgique.be/defaultTab.aspx?id=23878
Traineeship arrangements in French speaking Wallonia and the French speaking community in Brussels:		
<i>La convention de stage dans le cadre de la formation permanente pour les Classes moyennes et les PME</i>	This contract targets young people over 18 years who wish to complete a traineeship in a SME. A compensation of €406-687 is given to the trainee, while the <i>convention premier employ</i> applies if the trainee is a student.	http://www.emploi.belgique.be/defaultTab.aspx?id=23878

² http://www.rva.be/frames/Frameset.aspx?Path=D_opdracht_Beroepsopleiding/Regl/Werknemers/&Language=FR&Items=1/1/2

Traineeship programme	Brief description	Web link
<i>La convention de formation dans le cadre du 'dispositif intégré d'insertion socioprofessionnelle' (DIISP) dans les OISP et les EFT</i>	This contract includes a work placement in an enterprise as well as social support for registered unskilled job seekers. This traineeship is unpaid, but trainees remain entitled to their unemployment allowances.	http://www.emploi.eutrio.be/defaultTab.aspx?id=23636
<i>Plan formation insertion</i>	PFI targets young skilled job seekers registered at FOREM. No remuneration is offered, but trainees are entitled to their unemployment benefits during the traineeship. Upon the completion of the traineeship, the company has to hire the former trainee for at least as long as the duration of the placement, ie from 4 to 28 weeks.	http://www.leforem.be/entreprises/aides/formation/pfi.html

Traineeship arrangements in the Flemish Community

The higher reliance on apprenticeship may give a false impression of a lesser involvement.

<i>La convention de stage - formation d'entrepreneurs Syntra</i>	This traineeship is aimed at young students over 18 year olds enrolled in Syntra training centres (secondary VET) who wish to complete a traineeship. This includes trainee compensation (€676 – €922), and the provisions of the <i>convention premier emploi</i> apply.	http://www.emploi.belgique.be/defaultTab.aspx?id=24916
<i>La convention de formation professionnelle individuelle en entreprise FPI</i>	This traineeship is aimed at registered job seekers of any age or students in part-time VET. In contrast to other types of traineeship contracts, this contract stipulates that former trainees enjoy a hiring priority if the host organisation starts recruiting. The compensation is €9.6 daily, and trainees are also entitled to keep their benefits. This contract can only last up to 12 months.	http://www.emploi.belgique.be/defaultTab.aspx?id=25238
<i>Convention ABO dans la forme 3 de l'enseignement secondaire special</i>	For recent VET graduates and involves a compulsory traineeship agreement between the training provider, the enterprise and the trainee. This contract involves no remuneration, except for a €500 lump sum, and has to last between 3 and 12 months.	http://www.emploi.eutrio.be/defaultTab.aspx?id=29480

2. Legislative Framework for Traineeships

2.1 Legal framework for and governance of traineeships

In Belgium, in line with its federated structure, traineeship-related policies are multi-layered and involve the federal state, communities and regions. Social security provisions, labour law, collective bargaining and fiscal provisions are the prerogative of the federal state, whereas employment services, training programmes for the unemployed and skills forecasting are the responsibility of regions and communities (ie Walloon region, Flanders and Brussels capital and Flanders, French and German speaking communities). This partly explains the very high number of schemes and contracts applicable for traineeships. The main ones are listed in Table 1.2 of this report, while here we present the most relevant information.

The major part of traineeship regulation is included in education regulation³. Education policies are not a federal competence, however, a co-ordination method called 'Education and Training 2010'⁴ has been set up, which affects traineeships and/or work placements. Among other things, this programme aims at promoting VET as well as the harmonisation and the development of part-time secondary education in all regions. The aim of such policies is to combat early school leaving and to ensure that all pupils are active 28 hours per week – as this is already the case for three quarters of students in Flanders. At the federal level, a new skills framework – based on the European one – is being developed, as well as a comprehensive database on training opportunities in order to address potential skills mismatch issues. The Walloon region has carried out a comprehensive analysis of skills shortages in order to provide better guidance for potential traineeships.

Since 2003, Belgium has initiated a reform to activate its unemployment protection. Among the measures implemented was the creation of a variety of training contracts. A new labour contract called *stage insertion professionnelle* (integration training course) has been established in 2008 by regional employment services which organises traineeships for job-seekers at reduced cost. These traineeships are expected to lead to an open-ended contract lasting at least two months. The ACTIVA Start programme⁵ is dedicated to young people (under 26 years) and stipulates that unemployment benefits can be combined with traineeships. This reform is all the more important that young graduates are entitled to unemployment benefits after a waiting period of 1 year, even though they did not actually work.

In 2008, a start-up bonus was introduced for students in compulsory education who are below 18 years old and wish to complete a traineeship, sandwich placement or training course. The bonus is worth €500 or €750 depending on the year the traineeship is

³ Royal decree of 21st September 2004 with regard to the protection of interns:

<http://www.meta.fgov.be/WorkArea/showcontent.aspx?id=2106>

Resolution of the Flemish government (24/10/2004) with regard to the organisation of the grades in secondary education: <http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/edulex/database/document/document.asp?docid=13164>

Decree of 24th July 1997 describing the priority missions of primary education and of secondary education and organising the appropriate structures to achieve them: :

<http://www.cdadoc.cfwb.be/rechdoc/docForm.asp?docid=899&docname=19971103s21666>

Resolution of the government of the French community (21/05/1999) laying down the types of conventions of internships in organisations, by means of article 53, 3th paragraph of the decree of 24th July 1997 describing the priority missions of primary education and of secondary education and organising the appropriate structures to achieve them: : <http://www.cdadoc.cfwb.be/rechdoc/docForm.asp?docid=1609&docname=19990521s23480>

Decree of 19th March 2004 with regard to the regulation of the legal position of the student, the student participation in tertiary education, the integration of specific departments of Higher Social Advancement Education in University Colleges (Hogescholen) and the support of the reorganisation of tertiary education in Flanders. Chapter 4 – Internship: <http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/edulex/database/document/document.asp?docid=13487#193289>

⁴ <http://www.education2010.be/>

⁵ <http://www.leforem.be/particuliers/aides/emploi/activa-start.html>

undertaken, and is only given if the traineeship lasts at least four months. A training course bonus is given to employers under the same conditions. Finally, all registered young job seekers in Wallonia are automatically listed among traineeship applicants⁶.

Overall, a great variety of actors are involved in traineeship-related policies in Belgium, ranging from federal authorities, to regions and communities as well as training providers and employment services (FOREM⁷ in the Walloon region, ACTIRIS⁸ in Brussels and *Arbeitsamt*⁹ in German speaking communities). ONEM¹⁰, the federal public employment service is in charge of benefits. In spite of many attempts to involve sectoral organisations, there seems to be little concrete results in that regard.

There is a great variety of programmes organising international traineeships work placements. 'TransEurope', a European programme funded by the Leonardo da Vinci programme offers traineeships to young job seekers with little work experience. These traineeships cannot last for more than three months, but trainees benefit from some funding and social insurance coverage as well as from receiving job seeker allowance for the duration of the traineeship.

Brussels Export and Cefora ASBL organise another programme called 'Brussels Young Exporters Programme' for young people living in Wallonia and Brussels. This programme was created for students who wish to receive training in international trade. This programme includes a three-month traineeship/work placement abroad.

Eurodyssée, another European programme, provides young people from certain regions with the opportunity to complete a traineeship in another European region. The duration of this traineeship ranges from three to seven months. Babel export is a Walloon programme which provides young people with the opportunity to undertake a traineeship/work placement in international trade.

2.2 Definition of traineeships and trainees

In contrast to apprentices, trainees are not considered to be employees. The apprentice is deemed to be a worker, which is not the case of a trainee. The latter remains a 'student', and as such, has the status of 'non-contractual worker'. This, in turn, implies that trainees are not entitled to a wage, only expenses. Nevertheless a variety of schemes include a more substantive trainee compensation (see Table 1.2 above). For traineeships which form part of a formal education curriculum, most training providers strongly recommend that the student demands a traineeship agreement be signed between the three parties. However, this is not compulsory. If there is a written traineeship agreement, which is not compulsory, this is not legally an employment contract.

Except for compensation-related issues, the rest of employment regulations apply to trainees like they would to any young worker – depending on their specific age. This includes working hours, holidays, sick leave, health and safety. Before a trainee joins a company, a risk assessment has to be carried out, while the prospective trainee is also subjected to a medical examination.

Since traineeships outside labour market policies are explicitly reserved to registered students, and trainees keep a student status, foreign students can sign up for a traineeship in Belgium providing they can prove that they are covered by a student accident insurance in their home country, which is the case for most European countries.

⁶ http://www.rva.be/D_opdracht_Bonus/Regl/Werkgevers/InfoFR.pdf

⁷ <http://www.leforem.be/>

⁸ <http://www.actiris.be/>

⁹ <http://www.adg.be/desktopdefault.aspx>

¹⁰ <http://www.rva.be/home/menufr.htm>

2.3 Legal provisions about aspects of traineeships

The regulation on traineeship is highly dependent on the type of traineeship. A more comprehensive listing with details is available in Table 1.2 above.

Since trainees are considered to be both students and 'non-contractual workers', they remain covered by regulations applicable to students, notably as regards social security. All other employment regulations regarding, working hours, sick leave, health and safety apply as they would for any young worker. The applicable regulations can be found in *Law on work (1971)*, *Law on holidays (1974)*, *Law on work regulations (1965)*, *Law on social documents (1978)*, *Law on collective agreements and bipartite commissions (1968)* and *Law on welfare (1996)*. These laws broadly state that some physically exhausting tasks cannot be carried out by young people (for our purposes trainees); work is restricted to 40 hours a week or eight hours a day; work on a Sunday or at night is forbidden based on the specific age of the young person. Provisions agreed as part of collective bargaining agreements apply to trainees where relevant, but not in relation to compensation issues. A comprehensive overview of traineeship regulations is available here: <http://www.emploi.belgique.be/defaultTab.aspx?id=400>

Health and safety regulations are generally stricter for trainees than for the rest of the working population, and a risk evaluation has to be carried out before a trainee starts working; as well as a medical examination.

Trainees enrolled as part of an active labour market measure benefit from different conditions. Depending on the scheme, they can receive a salary, or maintain their job seeker's allowance. Still, receiving a higher compensation (than the job seeker's allowance) does not mean that this makes them legally employees.

As is the case elsewhere, certain professions include an element of mandatory professional training in the form of a compulsory traineeship before one is allowed to practice. For example, this is the case for health care professionals (between four and eight years in order to become a practitioner; 18 months to become a nurse). Architects, judges and lawyers also have to complete a two-year traineeship before they are allowed to practice.

3. Availability of and Access to Traineeships

3.1 Statistics/quantitative information about traineeships

There is no comprehensive data on traineeship at the moment. According to the Belgian *National Office of Social Security (ONSS)* there are no aggregate data for traineeships which form part of a formal education programme because these are unpaid and, therefore, not counted by social security institutions¹¹. Data could have been gathered as regards employers enjoying social security exemptions for all traineeships belonging to the range of '*convention premier emploi*'. However, such exemptions are no longer broken down by type of convention, which, in turn, prevents one from separating regular employment contracts from training ones.

Data on international mobility programmes have been much easier to find. As Table 3.1 shows, Belgium appears to be one of the European countries with the highest level of international mobility, both incoming and outgoing.

¹¹ http://www.onss.fgov.be/binaries/assets/statistics/students/students_text_fr_20102.pdf

Table 3.1: Statistics on transnational mobility in LLP countries (mostly LdV 2007-2009 and Erasmus 2008-2009)

LLP country	Incoming trainees/apprentices	Outgoing trainees/apprentices	Most common sending countries	Most common host countries
Belgium (NL)	Erasmus: 1,563 (total for BE)	LdV: 1,264** (total for BE, 2008) Erasmus: 504 (2008-2009)	NL, FR, DE, ES, IT (Erasmus)	NL, FR, ES, IT, DK, NO, SE, FI (LdV)
Belgium (FR)	LdV: 1,180 (2008) Erasmus: 1,563 (total for BE)	LdV: 419 (2008) Erasmus: 392	NL (279), TR (233), DE (143), UK (98), ES (92), IT (73) (LdV)	FR (184), ES (63), UK (45), IT (34), PT (33), DE (12) (LdV)
Belgium (DE)	Erasmus: 1563 (total for BE)	LdV: 219 (2000 - 2006) Erasmus: 8	DE, FR, AT, FI, IE (LdV)	DE, FR, AT, FI, IE (LdV)

Source: GHK, (2011). Study on a possible framework to facilitate transnational mobility for placements at enterprises, European Commission, DG Education and Culture, http://ec.europa.eu/education/more-information/doc/2011/placements_en.pdf

3.2 Sectors where traineeships are prevalent

A detailed analysis of future skills shortage is regularly carried out in each region in order to promote a smoother school-to-work transition and address skills and labour market mismatch issues. Nevertheless, because of the lack of relevant data, it has not been possible to find hard evidence about sectors where traineeships are prevalent. According to SYSDM TABLE, traineeships are widespread in the medical, legal, and social care sectors, as well as in banking and the media sector. The medical sector appears to have a particularly bad reputation for traineeships, as trainees complain that they are overworked, work extremely long hours and do not receive sufficient compensation.

3.3 Profile/patterns of traineeships

Work placements/traineeships are prevalent in VET and, because of its relatively poor image, are (wrongly) associated with low educational achievement. In 2011 a debate started in Belgium on whether alternance-based university education should be promoted more widely. Such programmes could help make higher education more affordable for students from poorer backgrounds. Student representatives – notably French speaking student union FEF – fear this ‘co-diplomation’ system could lead to a two-tier system, where ‘private degrees’ (of mediocre quality) would be reserved for the poorest students. It is, therefore, argued that it is very important to extend work placements/traineeships to all qualification levels, since work-based learning/training and VET remain extremely unpopular and associated with low education achievement (Plasman, 2010).

As the Youth on the Move report shows, Belgium has the lowest share of unpaid trainees – 59 per cent. In spite of methodological limitations, including the small sample size, this figure provides a picture of traineeship patterns in Belgium.

3.4 Recruitment process of and equity of access to traineeships

Employers are responsible for recruiting trainees. There is no specific regulation or soft law to influence employer choices in that regard. That said, many initiatives have been implemented in order to promote traineeships, including recruitment and information websites dedicated to facilitate trainee recruitment¹².

Policies have been focused on facilitating trainee recruitment, to a lesser extent, on providing incentives for students to complete a traineeship. As mentioned earlier, in 2008 a start-up bonus was introduced for students in compulsory education who are below 18 years old and wish to complete a traineeship, sandwich placement or training course. The bonus is worth €500 or €750 depending on the year the traineeship is undertaken, and is only given if the traineeship lasts at least four months. A training course bonus is given to employers under the same conditions. Finally, employers which hire trainees as part of *convention premier emploi*, enjoy significant reductions and/or exemptions from national insurance contributions¹³.

3.5 Evolution of traineeships over time and impact of recent economic crisis on traineeships

According to a 2011 Eurofound report, although youth unemployment and the related skills deficit have been on the Belgium political agenda even before the crisis, youth training policies have now attracted increased attention (Eurofound, 2011). That said, it has been hard to verify this assertion with hard data on the impact of the crisis on the actual number of traineeships and work placements.

It is highly likely that the current economic climate has increased traineeship supply (ie students or young job seekers seeking professional experience) and decreased traineeship demand (ie recruiting companies). It has been shown that in countries with a relatively similar policy/institutional context, traineeships have been extensively used as adjustment mechanisms, as has been the case in France with the proliferation of the *Professionalization* contracts.

3.6 Financing of traineeships

Traineeships in the open market or as part of a formal education programme are unpaid, or privately funded, ie through parental financial support or self-financing.

Special contracts for traineeships apply to certain forms of VET (see Table 1.2). In some cases compensation is paid by the enterprise. This ranges between €400 and €800 monthly, depending on the trainee's age, qualification, and other aspects; and is usually paid by the employer. For certain contracts other labour market subsidies can still be received, such as a start-up bonus, *convention premier emploi*, or even subsidies co-funded by the European Structural Fund (ESF). For traineeships, which form part of an active labour market policy, trainees are allowed to retain their unemployment benefits while completing their traineeship, which is an indirect form of providing funding for traineeships.

Social security exemptions are not broken down by type of contract (regular employment contract for young people, or training contract, or apprenticeship), so it is impossible at this stage to evaluate the extent of such funding.

¹² <http://www.stageforum.be>

¹³ http://www.emploi.belgique.be/detailA_Z.aspx?id=1020

3.7 Public perceptions about traineeships

There is a general consensus in the Belgium society about the positive role that traineeships can play in school-to-work transitions (System expert, 2008). According to the ICHEC survey (ICHEC 2006), 38.6 per cent of students wish to gain professional experience through traineeships; while traineeships are regarded as very useful by 75 per cent of employers. It is commonly accepted that traineeships are a good way to acquire work related experience, which is crucial to enhancing a young person's employability. This is all the more critical since 80 per cent of employers in Belgium do not think students are well prepared for the labour market by the education system. There have been attempts to involve social partners in the design and implementation of traineeship schemes. Although these attempts have been positively welcomed by employers, they have not, to date, produced any specific schemes.

Trainees are represented by student unions, due to their status of students. However, major student unions hardly mention traineeships in their websites, which should indicate a very low level of mobilisation on this issue. The FEF¹⁴, one of the two biggest French speaking student unions does not mention traineeships anywhere in its ten main demands for the year, apart from the co-diplomation process – ie alternance-based higher education programmes in which the company and the training provider both award the degree (See infra). For UNECOF¹⁵, there is no mention of traineeships at all in their website. This clearly indicates the issue is not deemed so far a priority for students.

It is worth noting that there seems to be a glaring divergence of views as regards young people's soft skills, with only 30 per cent employers surveyed by ICHEC as opposed to 80 per cent of students thinking that students are well prepared for a job. Further development of traineeships could help address this mismatch of employer and student views.

Finally, it is important to also add that at present it appears that the extension of working lives and the increased participation of older workers is of slightly higher priority than youth unemployment in Belgium.

4. Practices and Content of Traineeships

Social partners are currently working to establish a unified status for part-time students among regions and communities. Even though this measure aims primarily at tackling early school leaving, which is quite high especially in French speaking Belgium, it is also likely to have substantive effects on traineeships/work placements. Although Flemish students are generally active at least 28 hours per week (76 per cent of them) this pattern remains highly variable in the rest of Belgium (Kis 2010).

In Flanders, part-time vocational education can start as early as 16 years old (two streams, DBSO 6935 pupils and apprentices, *leertijd* 4957 in 2008/2009 versus 275,000 students for full-time education according to the 2010 *Statistics Yearbook of Flemish Ministry of Education and Training*, quoted by Kis). Nevertheless, alternance-based education focuses mainly on apprenticeships rather than traineeships. That said, even full-time students are encouraged to complete a traineeship, generally lasting between two and eight weeks during their secondary education. According to the Flemish Ministry of Education, one third of them do so (50,000 in 2007/2008). Those traineeships appear to be easily accessible, but their quality is often disappointing (Kis 2010).

¹⁴ <http://www.fef.be/>

¹⁵ <http://www.unecof.be/>

Based on the same source, most professional bachelor's degree programmes require the completion of a traineeship of at least six weeks. This is decided at the university department level, so no comprehensive aggregate data can be gathered.

In spite of Flemish good practices, sandwich courses remain associated with low educational achievement (Plasman, 2010). It can be argued that it is crucial to expand this model to all degrees in order to ensure better traineeship recognition.

Very strong incentives to increase the offer and take-up of traineeships have been introduced. In 2008, a quota system has been implemented in Wallonia, which sought to ensure that large enterprises (over 250 staff) hire at least four per cent of their workforce as trainees or apprentices. A bonus of €400 is given for outperforming companies, whereas enterprises not complying with this provision are fined. In June 2011, the Ministry in charge of training for the region of Brussels proposed to implement a similar policy, which would generate 5,200 extra traineeship offers. This proposal is expected to be reviewed by the Parliament in Spring 2012¹⁶.

It is worth noting that similar policies have been on the agenda in other countries – notably in France – but such policies usually aim at controlling for excesses about and abuse of traineeships.

4.1 Issues about employer practices as regards traineeships

There are no reliable data on employer practices. Nevertheless, employers are mainly responsible in shaping traineeship arrangements. ICHEC 2006, revealed that 90 per cent of employers claimed they are primarily responsible for changing the image of VET and traineeships/work placements. Policy makers and public employment services share this view. Many attempts have been made to better involve employers in traineeship-related policies. In Flanders, industry specialists have been hired to provide advice on how to better involve enterprises in traineeships, or with the Marshall Plan in Wallonia.

In general, the lack of formal control mechanisms does not allow one to be certain that employers do not use traineeships as a highly subsidised screening period for new workers, or as an adjustment mechanism in case of economic instability. As a result, it has been argued that, unless such mechanisms are implemented, there is a risk that traineeships are used by some enterprises as a source for cheap or free labour.

The medical sector has a highly negative reputation in that respect as students have to complete very long compulsory traineeships to obtain their degrees. These traineeships generally involve excessive workloads, very long working hours and not sufficient remuneration for the trainees. Similar concerns have been expressed for legal traineeships.

¹⁶ <http://www.lesoir.be/regions/bruxelles/2011-12-10/obliger-les-entreprises-a-former-des-stagiaires-882925.php>

5. Trainee's Rights and Terms and Conditions

The labour law does not apply to trainees, as they are not legally considered to be workers. They remain protected by social security provisions insofar as they are students; otherwise the job seeker's status applies. Foreign students have to present evidence of their social protection coverage in their home country, if they are not registered with a training provider in Belgium.

Special contracts may apply for trainees who are VET students or registered job seekers (see Table 1.2).

Trainees have to respect their host organisation's regulations, particularly as regards health and safety, working hours, etc. They have to comply with the hierarchical lines of authority. With the notable exception of pay, other arrangements agreed as part of collective bargaining apply to trainees, where relevant.

Regulations on working hours, holiday entitlement, and sick leave also apply, including laws on younger workers (under 18 years old). These laws specify certain limitations in terms of tasks and working hours. The only special provision applying to trainees is the need for a trainee medical examination and a risk assessment prior to any recruitment.

These provisions do not feature highly on the political agenda, except for the trainees' medical examination: employers complain they should not bear the financial burden of this examination.

6. Quality Assurance of Traineeships

Apart from the EU wide quality assessment framework for LLP placements, there is no formal provision to ensure the quality of a traineeship, especially since these are not formally evaluated. This framework encompasses duties for the host organisation and the trainee to make sure the traineeship is useful to both parties (see http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/doc/quality_en.pdf). That said, universities are now increasingly seeking to organise a feedback mechanism on traineeships, especially if the traineeship is evaluated. In Flanders schools are in charge of ensuring the quality of traineeships.

Significantly, the Flemish government has launched an awareness raising campaign on the importance of high quality traineeships as illustrated by the recent Green Paper '*Quality and Opportunities for every Pupil*', the '*Competence Agenda*' and the '*Pact 2020*' agreement concluded between the government and social partners. Nevertheless, Kis (2010) reports that the effectiveness of the quality assurance mechanism varies depending on the specific programme.

7. Overall Assessment as Regards Traineeships

7.1 Benefits and drawbacks of traineeships

Traineeships are an extremely efficient way to make the transition between education and the labour market smoother. Students completing a traineeship can gather professional experience and knowledge, develop soft skills and start building a professional network. Given that employers consistently report that young Belgians do not have sufficient labour market experience, traineeships could be a very effective policy in that regard. This is particularly true for unskilled young people, or early school leavers. In this regard, traineeships could arguably help reduce social inequalities in education.

Traineeship policies can also be an excellent way to address mismatching issues for job seekers.

On the other hand, according to trade unions in particular, the risk persists that traineeships substitute regular employment, and as such, are associated with less or no social security protection, no or very little pay and no or few career prospects. To this end, the balance between skills acquisition, and the potential for exploitation must be found, all the more so because early professional experience has lasting effects on the rest of one's career. This could lead to the creation of long spells of unstable employment, and paradoxically be detrimental to a young person's employability. This is of particular significance in a country marked by a high level of temporary work among younger workers.

7.2 Effectiveness of traineeships

According to the Youth on the Move report, between 13 and 15 per cent of trainees in Belgium were hired by their host organisation. This figure is in line with the rest of Europe, and shows a relatively low level of job retention, one a young person has completed a traineeship.

It has been proven in many countries that traineeships have a demonstrated short-term effect. However, there has been a debate about the longer-term effects on one's employability as a result of traineeships. According to 2010 ETUC report:

'... the measures affect only jobs with a limited duration (12 to 24 months). Granted, they allow young people to get their first job and therefore some experience that they can capitalise on, but they do not meet the young people's need for stability: they expect their job to allow them to progress with the way they want to live their lives (buying a property), something that contracts funded by aid from employers, by their very nature and the conditions they entail (short-term contracts) do not always allow.'

Under such circumstances, there is a risk that extensive use of traineeships might fuel youth employment instability that which already appears to be high in Belgium. This is why one could argue that all traineeships entail the obligation to hire the trainee after successful completion of the placement. Indeed, this is the case for certain programmes ('*Formation Professionnelle individuelle en entreprise*' in Brussels, '*Individuele beroepsopleiding in deonderneming*' in Flandres and '*Plan formation insertion*' in Wallonie) (suggested in the CES report).

The official policy evaluation body, *Cour des Comptes*, has twice made serious criticisms at traineeship schemes, for deadweight effects, which have, in turn, seriously challenged the effectiveness of traineeship policies, (OECD, 2007). It is reported that for certain schemes,

namely the *plan formation insertion* 50 per cent of the funding was given for people that would have been hired anyway (ie high deadweight effect). This explains why an important recommendation of OECD was to better monitor existing schemes, and to focus more on young people most at risk of exclusion.

7.3 Good practice examples and recommendations

Stronger employer involvement could help strengthen traineeship arrangements in Belgium. Kis (2010) recommends stronger employer engagement in the definition of curriculum and better and increased workplace training. Attempts have been made in this direction - including *Competencieagenda*- and should continue in that direction. Flemish industries have been very keen to develop their involvement in traineeship programme, and this partnership is an excellent policy example.

The extension of alternance-based education to all levels of qualifications could also be a good practice in order to obtain better recognition of work-based training, and make smoother the school-to-work transition in Belgium. This could be achieved by providing diplomas or validation of workplace learning, or continuing to develop bridges between professional education and the rest of education, as recommended by CSE in 2003, and implemented since then.

It is crucial that a systematic evaluation of traineeships is conducted in order to ensure the high quality of their learning content. Unfortunately, to date no systematic information is easily accessible for evaluation purposes.

Finally, a simplification of existing programmes could help enhance the visibility of traineeship programmes in Belgium. The existence, practicalities, and sometimes purpose, of schemes are sometimes difficult to understand given the profusion of contracts.

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National Report on Traineeships Bulgaria

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1. Traineeships as part of Member State's Youth Policy Measures

1.1 Overview of current situation of young people and traineeships as part of youth policy measures

Although the Bulgarian employment rate (59.7 per cent) is under the EU-27 average (64.1 per cent), the country reached noteworthy achievements in improving its position in the last ten years compared to the other post-socialist countries of the region. While the Bulgarian employment rate was lowest in 2001 (50.7 per cent) it increased to 64.0 per cent in 2008 and fell back to 59.7 per cent due to the global economic crisis. Now, this percentage is the fourth highest among the ten Central and Eastern European post-socialist countries behind Slovenia, the Czech Republic and Estonia. In parallel to these trends, the unemployment rate has been dramatically decreasing during this period. In 2001, the unemployment rate in Bulgaria was the highest in the region and steadily decreased until 2008 (5.7 per cent). The crisis had a negative effect on unemployment too between 2008 and 2010, and consequently, it has increased again up to 10.3 per cent which is the fifth lowest in the region. As a recently published ILO study pointed out:

'Most of the increase in employment during that period has come from the sharp drop in unemployment since labour force participation rates have been rather stable (i.e. few inactive people have entered the labour force).'

(ILO, p. 13.)

If we examine the composition of the unemployed by their highest level of education, one can say that high unemployment and low activity rates characterise people with lower levels of education. For example, the activity rate of those with a higher education level was 88 per cent in 2009 and 75 per cent for those with upper secondary level education, while the same ratio for people having lower secondary level was only around 40 per cent and was even lower for people with only primary or a lower level of education. Similarly, the unemployment rate of people with a higher education level was 4.4 per cent in 2009 and 9.2 per cent for those with upper secondary level education, while it reached 20 and 40 per cent for people with lower secondary or primary or a lower level of education. This indicates that demand for highly skilled workers remained relatively strong even in the context of the global economic crisis.

As in the majority of the countries, employment and unemployment rates vary according to different age groups and younger age groups show significantly worse rates. The youth employment rate (the employment rate for those aged 15-24) was 21.1 per cent in 2001 and had increased by five per cent up to 2006 (26.3 per cent), while it decreased again to 22.2 per cent in 2010 due to the global economic crisis. It is striking to see that in 2001 almost 40 per cent of this age group was unemployed. The number of unemployed has significantly decreased during the last ten years to 12.6 per cent in 2008 and to 23.2 per cent in 2010. However, as the number of young employed people has not increased to the same extent, one can presume that not only unemployment but the rate of inactivity has also increased significantly for this age group. Another characteristic of the employment trends is the increasing rate of long-term unemployment. For example, in 2009 more than 30 per cent of young unemployed people had been unemployed for more than a year (ILO, p. 15.).

All these data and trends suggest that one of the main reasons for the relatively low Bulgarian youth employment rate is the asymmetry of the demand and supply side of knowledge development:

'Coinciding vacancies and low employment and activity rate suggest that there are skill mismatches – an excess supply of low-skilled workers in the face of an excess demand for high-skilled workers. This suggests that Bulgaria has large underutilized pools of labour among the youth, and the challenge is to find ways to activate and ready them to fill the vacancies.'

(ILO, p. 14.)

The Bulgarian government has launched a number of different anti-crisis programmes aimed at increasing younger generations' participation in the labour market. These programmes have mainly been financed by the European Social Fund (under the Human Resources Development Operational Programme, HRD OP) and supplemented from the state budget. Among these schemes, the following may have particular interest from our point of view:

1. A new apprenticeship programme where people with low levels of education and entry school leavers receive an allowance, as well as the companies who employ them, to cover their salaries and contributions for a maximum of 12 months.
2. A new work placement programme through which job opportunities are open for fresh university graduates.
3. In parallel, a programme 'Creation of employment for youth through provision of opportunities for internships' has been also launched. This programme is aimed to facilitate the transition from education to employment by providing job opportunities for young people under 29 years of age who have graduated from secondary school or hold a university degree but lack professional experience.
4. Special funding was made available for training young employees. The expected number of employees to be trained was over 62,000.
5. Encouraging part-time work by revising the rules regulating this type of atypical work.

Lacking the necessary time, it is hard to evaluate the effectiveness of these programmes but the ILO document cited above argues that:

'Activation strategies for example, become less effective when labour demand is weak and less vacancies are available. It may even, in a context of shortage of jobs and still persisting skill mismatches, have limited effect on reducing unemployment and inactivity but rather contribute to a further increase of poverty. The collapse of job openings and hiring is a substantial challenge and longer term driver of unemployment. In recognition of this situation, the OECD has recently recommended to shift some of the focus on the "work-first" approach to activation to "training-first strategy", particularly for those at risk of long-term unemployment.'

(ILO, 2011, p. 47.)

Table 1.1: Summary table of main ALMP traineeship programmes in Bulgaria

Main traineeship programmes & initiatives, including, ALMPs, educational VET & university traineeships as well as mandatory professional training	Brief description
Anti-crisis programme (mainly financed from the European Social Fund under the 'Human Resources Development' operational programme and supplemented from the State Budget)	Among others this programme included a new apprenticeship programme and a new workplace development programme.
Career Start	The primary aim of the programme is to help in the employment of young professionals in public administration. Recently, a new component was added for higher education graduates who can be employed for nine months by public authorities and another component for six months employment provided by private employers for secondary education graduates
Apprenticeships and traineeships for drop-outs	This programme provides six month subsidised apprenticeships or traineeships for young unemployed people.

2. Legislative Framework for Traineeships

2.1 Legal framework for and governance of traineeships

The laws on secondary vocational and higher education distinguish three types of traineeship:

1. Practice: production internship in secondary vocational education. The term 'praktika' (practice) used in the secondary vocational education system (from 9th to 12th grade or to the 13th grade) means a 'production' traineeship. It offers access to a real production process and on-the-job training. The Professional Education and Training Law (PETL), in force since 1999, regulates the production traineeship as experience which is acquired in real working environments: production units, enterprises, companies, banks, etc., depending on the nature of the profession being mastered, as well as the specific needs for training in that profession. The practical (and if necessary the theoretical) training during the production traineeship is regulated by the curriculum for the respective profession.
2. Curricular internships (stages) in higher education: the curricular internships (stages) are elements of the academic curriculum of students in higher education. In compliance with Art. 20 of the Higher Education Law (HEL, in force since 01.01.1996) higher educational establishments enjoy academic freedom to determine the curriculum, as well as to organise the process for training and traineeship.
3. Traineeship as initial or additional vocational training or as a part of an apprenticeship: adults can complete a production traineeship, organised through the Labour offices, which is carried out either after or during:
 - initial or additional vocational training (could be combined with literacy courses)

- apprenticeship (on-the job-training).

Traineeships and apprenticeships of adults are also regulated by the Employment Law (being in force since 01.01.2001) as elements within the programmes and measures applied to the labour market. The law on work health and safety conditions has to be followed during the course of traineeships, as well as the obligatory health insurance. However, there is no a specific law or other separate legislative act on traineeships. In Bulgaria there is no overall regulation for students' traineeships and these can be, for the time being, quite varied in their form, organisation and content. However, the state administration, the judicial authorities and higher education laws, as well as the Labour Code and other normative documents, contain legal articles about the status of the trainee. For example, there is a difference between compulsory traineeships and voluntary traineeships (in the case of the latter the motivating factor is the initiative and desire of the student) and between traineeships offered by the state administration, business enterprises and by non-profit organisations. Differences are also found between compulsory internships connected to education and those offered by companies before they employ an individual. The latter are outside the system of education, but in the majority of the cases they are indicative of employers' needs, as well as of how education has not answered these needs.

An agreement/contract between the educational organisation and employer is agreed for students in secondary and higher education and the employer has to agree to provide appropriate health conditions and resources. In secondary education the traineeship contract is concluded between an employer and the principal of the educational establishment.

In higher education institutions, the most frequent practice applied at present is the conclusion of framework agreements with employers for holding summer traineeships for students. These summer traineeships are recognised by academic credits, where a credit system has been introduced, and the summer traineeship is entered in the student's diploma as an additional qualification. For the time being, the acts regulating these relations are internal to universities themselves and are adopted on the basis of the legal principle of academic autonomy of higher educational establishments.

- The legal relation between the employer and a trainee is a basic one. Usually a contract is concluded between them under which the main obligation of the employer is to provide the trainee with suitable and safe conditions and resources.
- The legal relationship between universities and employers has not been explicitly settled in Bulgarian legislation. It is regulated mainly on an individual contractual basis in compliance with the law for obligations and agreements. The taxation laws are relevant too, as far as they regulate the tax concessions in favour of employers who are investing funds in encouraging education.

Health insurance for school students is only compulsory if they carry out traineeships outside of a residential area.

2.2 Definition of traineeships and trainees

Traineeships/stages are defined by legislative acts and carried out on the basis of contractual relations between the educational institution and the employer. Compulsory internships in higher education are defined in the curricula and voluntary internships are not longer than three months

Traineeship/stage is a stage of education or training which is defined by normative acts and which is carried out in an organised way for a group of students, or individually, in compliance with the curriculum or the academic programme. The traineeship/stage is carried out on the basis of a contract between the educational establishment and establishments in need of staff. In the course of the traineeship/stage, the acquired knowledge and competence are applied in a real working environment and new skills are

obtained which are necessary for successfully joining the profession after finishing education/training. A traineeship in secondary education complies with the specific requirements related to the age and health of the students.

In higher education *compulsory internships* are provided for the majority of subjects. They are part of the academic programme of the students.

Voluntary student internships can be carried out when students are free from studies. These last for periods of not longer than three calendar months and are completed under the guidance and control of an employer. The aim is to acquire practical skills and experience in a professional area which, in most of cases, is related to the subject of the student at university.

Students and postgraduate students have the right to take part in the research activities of higher education institutions as a means of raising their qualifications and undertaking an 'apprenticeship' in research.

2.3 Legal provisions about aspects of traineeships

There are two main aspects of traineeship which are regulated by law: the duration and the remuneration.

2.3.1 Duration of traineeship

The duration of the production traineeship in the secondary vocational education and training system is determined by the *Law for Vocational Education and Training*. It has been laid down in the curricula as compulsory vocational training with a specified volume of hours in the last stage of the training.

For secondary vocational education, after finishing 11th grade, the traineeship lasts two weeks (60 hours) while in the 12th and 13th grades it lasts for 124 hours, that is 184 hours in total over the course of an ISCED II and III level professional qualification.

For higher education, the duration of the traineeships (stages) is determined by the State Educational Standards and they are specified by the curriculum for the subject. The duration of traineeships is different for different stages of higher education:

- For a Bachelor's degree: after finishing the second year of studies a traineeship lasts for two weeks; after the third year it lasts for two weeks and after the fourth year the traineeship is for three months. The traineeship is assessed and a positive mark brings a respective number of credits.
- For a Master's degree: the traineeship is regulated in the curriculum and lasts for the following periods of time: after the second year of studies it lasts for two weeks; after the third year it lasts for two weeks and after the fourth year it lasts for two months.

2.3.2 Remuneration

There is no specific law or other separate legislative act that deals with remuneration for traineeships. Young people aged 16 years old or above, who have signed an employment or civil contract can receive payment. A trainee hired by a company concludes contracts for the period of the traineeship (according the Labour code) and receives small payments. Furthermore, there are provisions for travel, food and overnight expenses for school students if the traineeship is held at a different location to the student's school. Special health insurance is also included in the terms.

Students and postgraduate students taking part in research at the higher educational establishments which they study at are guaranteed their author's, inventor's and other related rights and remuneration in compliance with the *Higher Education Law*.

The unemployed who are included in literacy courses, or are trained to acquire a professional qualification or a key competence, receive paid scholarships as well as transport and accommodation expenses during their training. Transport and accommodation expenses are provided for those participating in motivation training.

As we said earlier, for every job opened by an employer where an unemployed person has been employed through an apprenticeship (which the person has been directed to by the Labour Office), the employer is allotted funds for expenses for the time which the apprentice works. This cannot be for longer than 12 months.

3. Availability of and Access to Traineeships

3.1 Statistics/Quantitative Information about traineeships

Monthly information exists about the number of people in apprenticeships under the stipulations of the Employment Act. Special research is organised by companies which deal with recruitment. In addition, in March 2008 the Minister for Education and Science approved assessment reports to give gratuitous financial aid within the frameworks of the priority axes 3 and 4 of the Operative Programme 'Development of Human Resources' under Programme BG051PO001/07/3.3-01 'Elaboration of a mechanism for school and student internships'. Thirty seven projects involving 37 vocational secondary schools and employers have been approved on Component 1; while 25 other projects have been approved under Component 2 'Higher education'.

As for international student mobility, according to the available statistics¹, the number of Bulgarian students studying abroad under the framework of the Erasmus programme has increased significantly in the last ten years. While in 2000/01 only 398 Erasmus students were registered, the number reached 1,687 in 2009/10. This represented 0.62 per cent of the total student population. The overwhelming majority of them (1,451) were studying, while 236 students undertook a company placement abroad. The average duration of student mobility was five months for studies and 4.1 months for work placements. The average EU monthly grant was €549 for studies and €477 for company placements. In total €5,702,000 was spent on Erasmus placements in 2009/10. For the most recent trends on the share of outgoing Erasmus students as a percentage of the total student population between 2007 and 2010, see Table A 4 in the Annex. Sixty seven projects under the framework of the Leonardo da Vinci programme were chosen in 2010 and received grants of €2,597,274.

3.2 Sectors where traineeships are prevalent

Student traineeships have increasingly been offered both in the central state administration and in local administration. This process has expanded as traineeships are perceived in firm's personnel policies as the right way to attract and select young specialists. Private firms increasingly use traineeships as well for exactly the same reasons. Overall, it seems that it is not the sector but the size of the firm that has an impact on the traineeship. There are examples of medium-sized and large firms paying specialised companies to organise the selection of suitable trainees. A trial period is offered during the course of which the trainees

¹ For this analysis we used the official statistics of Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci student mobility programmes: http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc920_en.htm and http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/doc/stat/slovenia_en.pdf

receive payment. During the traineeship additional tests are completed so that out of the 150 trainees initially accepted five to seven people are eventually selected. There are companies (mainly small ones) which employ trainees because they can give them low pay, without offering them appointments. In this case the trainees, after finishing a certain level of education, do need special protection (especially when signing respective contracts).

Large multinational companies like Globul, Mobiltel, Nestle, Craft Suchards and others organise special programmes for trainees.

3.3 Profile/Patterns of traineeships

As we mentioned earlier, there are three main types of traineeships in Bulgaria:

1. Practice: production traineeship in secondary vocational education. The term 'praktika' (practice) used in the secondary vocational education system (from 9th to 12th grade or to the 13th grade) means a 'production' traineeship. It offers access to a real production process and on-the-job training. The Professional Education and Training Law (PETL), in force since 1999, regulates the production traineeship as experience which is acquired in real working environments: production units, enterprises, companies, banks, etc., depending on the nature of the profession being mastered, as well as the specific needs for training in that profession. The practical (and if necessary the theoretical) training during the production traineeship is regulated by the curriculum for the respective profession.
2. Curricular traineeships (stages) in higher education: the curricular traineeships (stages) are elements of the academic curriculum of students in higher education. In compliance with Art. 20 of the Higher Education Law (HEL, being in force since 01.01.1996) the higher educational establishments enjoy academic freedom to determine the curriculum, as well as organise the processes for training and traineeship.
3. Traineeship as initial or additional vocational training or as a part of an apprenticeship: adults can complete a production traineeship, organised through the Labour offices, which is carried out either after or during:
 - initial or additional vocational training (could be combined with literacy courses)
 - apprenticeship (on-the job-training).

3.4 Recruitment process of and equity of access to traineeships

Official statistical data are not available about the employment of trainees, but it can definitely be said that there is a practice in the private and public sectors to appoint young specialists after their traineeship. Those having proved their loyalty to the firm, their professional competence and their personal qualities are given work appointments after finishing their traineeship.

There are examples of medium-sized and large firms paying specialised firms to organise the selection of suitable trainees. A trial period is offered during the course of which the trainees receive payment. During the traineeship additional tests are completed so that out of the 150 trainees initially accepted five to seven people are eventually selected.

There are companies (mainly small ones) which employ trainees because they can give them low pay, without offering them appointments. In this case the trainees, after finishing a certain level of education, do need special protection (especially when signing respective contracts).

Companies like Globul, Mobiltel, Nestle, Craft Suchards and others organise special programmes for trainees.

3.5 Evolution of traineeships over time and impact of recent economic crisis on traineeships

No information was available.

3.6 Financing of traineeships

Bulgaria spends about four per cent of its GDP on education, while the share of private funding is about one per cent. In 2005, enterprises allocated about 0.7 per cent of their labour costs for CVT.²

The remuneration and costs of traineeship are regulated by the individual contracts concluded between the company, educational institution and/or trainees. However, in recent years the Bulgarian government has given subsidies for employers taking on trainees (usually those with lower levels of education) covering their salaries and contributions. It also encourages the trainees themselves by giving them an allowance for a maximum of 12 months. The aim of these programmes is to balance skill mismatches between the demand and supply side of knowledge development.

As we said earlier, €5,702,000 was spent on international student mobility projects under the framework of the Erasmus programme, and further €2,597,274 under the framework of the Leonardo da Vinci programme.

3.7 Public perceptions about traineeships

Traineeship has recently been given more and more importance as youth unemployment and inactivity, especially in the case of people with lower levels of education, became one of the most important social problems in Bulgaria. This is well reflected by the vast range of anti-crisis programmes the Bulgarian government has launched since 2009. In addition, opinions, proposals and positions about student traineeships are presented on the web page of the National Programme for Student Internships, the National Student's Association for Internships Abroad, etc. The main subject of the discussions is traineeship after graduation and before hiring. The low remuneration is often cited by those on the side of the trainees as a violation of traineeships' purposes.

The positions and opinions of the state and the social partners are unilateral. Both recognise the benefits of traineeships as well as the necessity of their further development. Most frequently differences in opinions are related to the method of contracting, the acceptance of responsibilities by both parties and, in some cases, to payment for the labour of the trainees.

4. Practices and Content of Traineeships

4.1 Traineeships as part of education and/or labour market entry and integration for young people

In Bulgaria, the vocational education and training system comprises more than 400 vocational high schools, secondary schools and colleges in which about 180,000 students are trained.

² Source: Daskalova, 2009, p.2.

4.1.1 Secondary education

In vocational education *the traineeship is an ingredient of the obligatory vocational training*. It is carried out during the last two years of the education period, and the number of hours is included in the compulsory employment of teachers. The traineeship is controlled by a teacher and a specialist from the production unit and it ends with an assessment which is entered in the secondary education diploma, as well as in the certificate for the vocational qualification.

4.1.2 Higher education

Traineeships are an obligatory element of the curriculum and the academic plan in subjects in higher education institutions. The extent to which a traineeship features in certain subject programmes depends on the specific requirements of the subject and traineeships can be organised by the Universities or by the students themselves. Credits can also be given for participating in a traineeship when it is part of the academic plan.

4.2 Issues about employer practices as regards traineeships

On the basis of a mutual agreement employers appoint young specialists who have already achieved their diplomas in the capacity of trainees. During a specified period of time they master specific technology or another activity in the firm/enterprise with the assistance of a mentor who receives additional payment. The trainees receive remuneration during their traineeship under established contractual relations. The practice that young people holding university degrees do internships is also applied for the ones having finished higher or secondary education. The employer specifies the terms and conditions of the traineeship before the employment start. The trainee's pay is low and it is agreed upon in advance. Firms usually apply careers-based incentives to retain trainees who meet their requirements.

5. Trainee's Rights and Terms and Conditions

5.1 Contract between student and employer

In compliance with the Labour Code the employer can conclude a contract with a person who is entering or has entered an educational establishment to acquire a qualification. By virtue of the contract the employer is obliged to provide maintenance for the student as well as other conditions in relation to the training. After the student finishes their training the employer is obliged to receive them for a placement to put in practice the acquired qualification for a period of time contracted by both parties. This time period cannot be longer than six years. By virtue of the contract the person being trained is obliged to finish his education on time, and, following the agreed qualification, to work for the employer for the time period agreed. The result of the training in the case of school students is ascertained by means of a theoretical-practical exam.

5.2 Contract between employee and employer for vocational training

The parties in a legal labour relationship can conclude a contract for increasing the qualification of a worker/employee by supporting them to acquire a qualification for another

profession or subject (re-qualification). After finishing the training on the basis of a contract the labour relations between the parties have to be settled by new labour contract or by a modified contract that takes into account the improved qualifications of the employee.

6. Quality Assurance of Traineeships

We have no information about the system of quality assurance of traineeships as such, however, social partners are actively involved in it at different levels. Representative employer and trade union organisations take part in shaping the national policies of the CVT system as well as its legislation. The most important tripartite bodies dealing with CVT are: the managing board of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training (NAVET) which has 16 expert occupational commissions and the National Advisory Council for Vocational Qualification (NCVQ). Participating in the former (managing board of NAVET) is even more important as it is directly related to the accreditation and licensing procedures for different occupations, thus affecting the quality of CVT provision.

Furthermore, as a study dealing with the role of collective bargaining in the CVT system notes:

'In the last years the role of social partners in the formulation of active labour market policy increased through: the contributions to the national council for employment promotion dealing with the development of the employment policy and development of National Action Plans; Council at the EA Executive directorate; District employment commissions and Partnership councils at Employment Agency branches dealing with monitoring and control of employment policy and programmes implemented in municipalities.'

(Daskalova, 2009, p.3.)

In the case of international student mobility programmes, for example Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci, the responsibilities are clearly defined.³ According to the quality assurance policy of these programmes, the sending organisation is responsible for the definition of the placement objectives (skills and competencies to be developed), the choice of host organisation, the duration of the project and the content of the placement. It is also the responsibility of the sending organisation to select the participants, to establish a contract, to manage transport, accommodation, visa/work permit arrangements and social security cover and insurance, as well as to evaluate the personal and professional achievements of the participants. The host organisation is responsible for assigning tasks and responsibilities to participants, identifying a tutor to monitor the training progress of the participants, and for providing practical support if required. The sending and hosting organisations are jointly responsible for negotiating a tailor-made training programme together with appropriate mentoring and monitoring arrangements. They also jointly establish validation procedures to ensure recognition of skills and competencies acquired, as well as establishing communication channels and evaluation of the progress of the project on an ongoing basis. The participant is responsible for doing his/her best to make the placement a success, to abide the rules and regulations of the host organisation, to inform the sending organisation about any problems or changes occurring in relation to the placement and to submit a report in a specified format, together with requested supporting documentation in respect of costs, at the end of the placement.

³ http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/doc/quality_en.pdf

7. Overall Assessment as Regards Traineeships

7.1 Benefits and drawbacks of traineeships

In the years the Bulgarian government has recognised the importance of traineeship as a primary tool to promote the transition of young unemployed people without working experience to the labour market. This has gained even more importance as the global economic crisis has had a negative impact on the employment opportunities of young people, especially those with lower levels of education. This is well reflected by the fact that youth employment rate showed a four per cent decrease from 2008 to 2010 as well as by an even more dramatic increase (seven per cent) in the youth unemployment rate. In spite of the significant government efforts to increase the labour market activity of the younger generations, the situation seems to be getting worse. In times of such fundamental changes which the current recession has induced, evaluating these government programmes aimed at improving transition from education to labour market is even more difficult.

7.2 Effectiveness of traineeships

The same is true when we come to evaluate the effectiveness of the current practices of traineeship. We have some descriptive statements about the existing system of traineeship at the level of both vocational and higher education but we lack findings allowing us to conclude a normative assessment and to make policy recommendations. During the current economic crisis Bulgaria has experienced difficulties in dealing with youth unemployment, in opening new opportunities for young people to move into employment, as well as in improving their learning and labour mobility. Even if the government has made significant efforts in this direction by giving priority to young people in active labour market policy measures and initiatives, the results remain quite modest so far. As a national expert noted:

'The strategic importance of youth employment, education and vocational training points to the need for reforms in these fields, despite the scarcity of financial resources. The reform has started with the adoption of the Youth Strategy 2010 – 2020 and with some amendments in legislation in conformity with the Europe 2020 programme. Their success will depend not only on long-lasting stable financing and good organisation of implementation, including monitoring and control, but also on strong political consensus and well operated people's support.'

(Loukanova, 2010, p. 8.)

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Annex

Table A 1: Youth employment rates (in the age 15-24) in some post-socialist countries

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
EU-27	37.3	36.7	36.0	35.7	36.1	36.5	37.3	37.4	35.0	34.0
Bulgaria	21.1	20.5	21.3	22.3	21.6	23.2	24.5	26.3	24.8	22.2
Czech Republic	34.4	32.4	29.8	27.7	27.5	27.7	28.5	28.1	26.5	25.2
Estonia	26.8	25.4	27.5	27.9	29.1	31.6	34.5	36.4	28.9	25.7
Latvia	29.0	28.8	32.7	29.7	32.6	35.9	38.4	37.2	27.7	26.4
Lithuania	22.6	25.2	23.6	20.6	21.2	23.7	25.2	26.7	21.5	19.2
Hungary	30.4	28.6	26.7	23.3	21.8	21.7	21.0	20.0	18.1	18.3
Poland	24.2	22.0	21.2	21.1	22.5	24.0	25.8	27.3	26.8	26.3
Romania	32.7	29.1	27.3	28.0	24.9	24.0	24.4	24.8	24.5	24.3
Slovenia	30.3	31.1	28.6	33.8	34.1	35.0	37.6	38.4	35.3	34.1
Slovakia	27.7	26.7	27.3	26.3	25.6	25.9	27.6	26.2	22.8	20.6

Source: Eurostat Data Explorer

Table A 2: Youth unemployment rate (in the age 15-24) in some post-socialist countries

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
EU-27	17.3	17.9	18.1	18.6	18.6	17.3	15.5	15.6	19.9	20.9
Bulgaria	39.3	35.6	27.1	24.5	22.3	19.5	15.1	12.7	16.2	23.2
Czech Republic	16.3	15.4	16.8	19.9	19.2	17.5	10.7	9.9	16.6	18.3
Estonia	24.5	17.3	24.2	23.5	15.9	12.0	10.0	12.0	27.5	32.9
Latvia	22.9	25.6	17.5	19.3	13.6	12.2	10.7	13.1	33.6	34.5
Lithuania	31.6	20.4	26.9	21.2	15.7	9.8	8.2	13.4	29.2	35.1
Hungary	10.7	11.4	12.9	14.4	19.4	19.1	18.0	19.9	26.5	26.6
Poland	39.2	41.6	41.4	40.1	36.9	29.8	21.7	17.3	20.6	23.7
Romania	17.6	22.2	19.5	22.3	20.2	21.4	20.1	18.6	20.8	22.1
Slovenia	15.7	14.8	15.3	14.0	15.9	13.9	10.1	10.4	13.6	14.7
Slovakia	38.9	37.7	32.9	32.8	30.1	26.6	20.3	19.0	27.3	33.6

Source: Eurostat Data Explorer

Table A 3: Labour market statistics by level of education

	2003			2009		
	Activity rates	Employment rates	Unemployment rates	Activity rates	Employment rates	Unemployment rates
Higher	75.2	68.5	6.7	88.1	85.5	4.4
Upper secondary	68.4	56.5	11.9	74.6	70.0	9.2
<i>of which secondary vocational</i>	56.9	45.0	11.9	79.3	74.4	9.2
Lower secondary	43.6	24.2	19.4	39.7	34.2	20.1
Primary or lower	42.2	11.8	30.4	31.4	22.5	40.5

Source: ILO, 2011, p. 47.

Table A 4: Share of outgoing Erasmus students as a percentage of the total student population between 2007 and 2010 in some New Member States

	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010
Bulgaria	0.44	0.54	0.62
Czech Republic	1.54	1.54	1.43
Hungary	0.87	0.98	1.04
Poland	2.41	2.40	2.44
Romania	1.64	1.20	1.28
Slovenia	1.03	1.13	1.20
Slovakia	0.78	0.88	0.92

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc920_en.htm

National Report on Traineeships Cyprus

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1. Traineeships as part of Member State's Youth Policy Measures

1.1 Overview of current situation of young people in Cyprus

As with the rest of EU, Cyprus was hit hard by the recent crisis and its youth unemployment rose from nine per cent in 2008, to 13.8 per cent in 2009, and 16.7 per cent in 2010 (Eurostat, LFS data). Compared with the EU-27 average, this represented a steeper increase for Cyprus. Apart from the adverse impact of the crisis, the relatively high youth unemployment, especially among graduates, is attributed to the rather weak links between the education system with the world of work in order to better meet employer needs (Cyprus Planning Bureau, 2007; Soumeli, 2011). In addition, the period between the time when a young person starts looking for a job and the time when he/she secures such a job is quite lengthy (Soumeli, 2011). Indeed, one of the main youth-related priorities of the Cypriot Government is to facilitate young people's transition from education to employment, so that it is both shorter and smoother.

Like other Mediterranean countries, Cyprus is characterised by an over-supply of graduates which, compared to its economy size, is another reason for high graduate unemployment or under-employment/under-utilisation. For example, Cyprus is the third country in the world in terms of tertiary education graduates relative to its population, while it has the second best most highly qualified labour force among the EU-27, with 34.5 per cent having tertiary education. Yet, the size and structure of the Cypriot economy is such that it cannot generate sufficient high-skilled jobs for university graduates, while at the same time the island suffers from brain-drain (at an estimated rate of 20 per cent) (Cyprus NRP 2011).

Crucially for the purposes of this study, both the *Cyprus Employers and Industrialists Federation* (OEB) and the two main trade unions, ie the *Pancyprian Federation of Labour* (PEO) and the *Cyprus Workers' Confederation* (SEK), agree that one of the main factors for high levels of youth unemployment is the lack of work experience which is cited by employers as a key impediment to hiring young people. As a result, there has been a major policy push to create closer links between education and employment, through the promotion of more vocational type training in companies (including apprenticeships) (Soumeli, 2011).

The above discussion notwithstanding, it should also be noted that, on the whole, youth unemployment levels in Cyprus, although higher than that for the adult population, have historically been among the lowest in the EU (Katsikides, 2009; Christofides, 2010). However, the recent crisis did lead to a rise in youth unemployment, in particular among graduates which registered the highest rise in unemployment levels (Katsikides, 2009; Christofides, 2010). Indeed, according to Cyprus's *Human Resource Development Authority* (HRDA), due to the impact of the recent economic crisis, young graduates are increasingly emerging as a key target group requiring help with labour market transitions.¹

1.2 Traineeships as part of youth policy measures

In response to this rise in youth unemployment, in particular graduate unemployment, the government re-launched initially in January 2009 and then in January 2011 a programme aimed at promoting the acquisition of six or 12-month practical work experience in companies for graduates (Christofides, 2010; Cyprus NRP 2011). This, well-publicised

¹ That said, HRDA also stresses that young people without basic qualifications and long-term unemployed still remain a top priority.

programme which has recently been the subject of a Peer Review (as part of the EU's Mutual Learning Programme)², is the *Plan for Graduate Company Recruitment* ('Σχέδιο Στελεχωσης Επιχειρησεων με Αποφοιτους Τριτοβαθμιας Εκπαιδευσης') which, *inter alia*, aims to help graduates acquire practical work experience in an organised and structured manner within an actual work setting, and under the guidance of an assigned trainer. The overall aim is to help graduates adapt their knowledge, skills and competences to actual employer requirements and thus facilitate their transition to employment (HRDA, 2009). The initial Plan was launched on 1st September 2009 and, once its subsidy regime was revised, started to operate on 1st October 2009. The current Plan was launched in 1st January 2011 and is expected to be in operation until 31st December 2014.

In Cyprus a number of other programmes which support traineeships either during or after studies are also in operation. For example, the Cyprus's Plan for Accelerated Company-based Initial Vocational and Education Training programmes ('Σχέδιο Πολυεπιχειρησιακά Προγράμματα Αρχικής Κατάρτισης - Ταχύρρυθμα') is targeted at new labour market entrants and/or unemployed young people. This was launched on 1st April 2009 and was revised in March 2011. One critical element of this plan is the combination of theoretical, school/college-based education and training with the acquisition of practical work experience through a traineeship in a company (HRDA, 2011). This Plan is expected to be in operation until 31st December 2014.

In addition, Cyprus is implementing three plans/programmes aimed at subsidising the acquisition of practical work experience and skills through traineeships (at both secondary and tertiary levels) in specific sectors which are of highly strategic importance for the Cypriot economy, most notably the tourism and hospitality industry and ICTs. These plans are aimed at students of Cyprus's Higher Hotel Institute (HHIC)³ and Higher Technological Institute (HTI).⁴ For example, students of the HHIC have to undertake 4-month traineeships for which they are entitled to €8.54/day. The explicit aim of these programmes is, *inter alia*, to better prepare students for smooth labour market entry by familiarising them with a real work environment under controlled training conditions.

The current policy focus on promoting the acquisition of practical work experience through various forms of traineeship-type placements as an effective way of facilitating youth labour market transitions has also been highlighted in the current, ESF co-funded, Cyprus's *Operational Programme Employment, Human Capital and Social Cohesion 2007-2013* (Cyprus Planning Bureau, 2007). Specifically, under Priority Axis 1 (Development of Human Capital and Adaptability), there is the Specific Objective B aimed at adapting enterprises and employees to the needs of the market and the productive/economic environment, and linking them to tertiary education. One for the five actions foreseen under this Objective is to create linkages between universities and the business environment through, *inter alia*, the setting up of career guidance offices and offices tasked with forging closer ties with enterprises (Enterprise Liaison Offices) and, crucially, the promotion of short-term student placements in companies (called 'internships' or 'placements').

Indeed, with considerable ESF support, since June 2009 there has been a concerted effort, co-ordinated by the University of Cyprus⁵, to set up Enterprise Liaison Offices ('Γραφεία Diasyndesis me Biomihania') in each of the following six universities:

1. University of Cyprus (beneficiary of this ESF co-funded action)
2. Cyprus University of Technology
3. Open University of Cyprus

² http://www.mutual-learning-employment.net/index.php?mact=PeerReviews.cntnt01_detail,0&cntnt01options=28&cntnt01orderby=start_date%20DESC&cntnt01returnid=59&cntnt01item_id=92&cntnt01returnid=59

³ www.hhic.ac.cy/

⁴ www.hti.ac.cy

⁵ <http://www.ucy.ac.cy/default.aspx?w=reinrese&l=el-GR&p=LinkswithIndustryOffice>

4. European University Cyprus
5. University of Nicosia
6. Frederick University (European Office Cyprus, 2010).

Among the key aims of these offices is to forge closer ties between universities and industry through, *inter alia*, the development and implementation of a comprehensive/integrated framework for student placements in companies. As stated, it is hoped that by bringing students and graduates closer to the world of work (through company placements), their employability, employment and career prospects will be enhanced (University of Cyprus, 2010).

In addition, under Priority Axis 2 (Expansion of Labour Market and Social Cohesion) of the *OP Employment, Human Capital and Social Cohesion 2007-2013*, there is the Specific Objective B aimed at improving youth labour market transitions and increasing youth employment levels. This is expected to be achieved through, *inter alia*, training programmes aimed at developing the knowledge and skills of those aged 18-30 in close alignment with labour market needs and their placement in enterprises in order to acquire the necessary work experience.

The need to strengthen the link between the education and training systems with labour market needs has also been reiterated in the current *National Reform Programme*, published in April 2011 (Cyprus Planning Bureau, 2011). One action foreseen in this programme is the scheme for the facilitation of employment and training of young graduates through company-based traineeships.

To the above one should add the traineeships associated with the secondary technical and vocational education (STVE) targeted at 15-18 year olds at Secondary Technical and Vocational Schools. Students (of the vocational stream) in their third and final year of studies have the opportunity to undertake a two-day per week work placement which constitutes one of the main links between industry and education (European Commission, 2010). Although not part of this study, one should also mention the major policy push for the ESF co-financed *New Apprenticeship Scheme (Neo Systima Mathiteias)* which also includes company placements.

It is worth, however, noting that vocational training is not particularly popular among young Cypriot students in upper secondary education, 87.4 per cent of whom opted in 2008 for general (as opposed to vocational) courses (Eurostat, 2010).

The Table below provides an overview of the range of traineeships which can be found in Cyprus.

Table 1.1: Summary of main Traineeship Programmes in Cyprus

Traineeship Programme	Brief Description
Work experience traineeships as part aimed at improving youth labour market transitions and increasing youth employment levels (OP Employment, Human Capital and Social Cohesion 2007-2013)	Specific Objective B (under Priority Axis 2: Expansion of Labour Market and Social Cohesion) aims at improving youth labour market transitions and increasing youth employment levels, through, <i>inter alia</i> , training programmes aimed at developing the knowledge and skills of those aged 18-30 in close alignment with labour market needs and their placement in enterprises in order to acquire the necessary work experience.

Traineeship Programme

Brief Description

Traineeships associated with secondary technical and vocational education (STVE)

These are targeted at 15-18 year olds at Secondary Technical and Vocational Schools. Students (of the Vocational stream) in their third and final year of studies have the opportunity to undertake a two-day per week work placement which constitutes one of the main links between industry and education

Practical work experience through a company-based traineeship (Plan for Accelerated Company-based Initial Vocational and Education Training programmes)

Launched in 2009, revised in March 2011 and will be in operation until 2014. Targeted at new labour market entrants and/or unemployed young people. One critical element of this plan is the combination of theoretical, school/college-based education and training with the acquisition of practical work experience through a traineeship in a company

Cyprus's Higher Hotel Institute (HHIC) and Higher Technological Institute (HTI) Traineeships

These subsidised traineeships (at both secondary and tertiary levels) promote the acquisition of practical work experience and skills in specific strategically important sectors, eg tourism and hospitality industry; ICTs; etc. For example, students of the HHIC have to undertake 4-month traineeships as part of their studies.

Work experience placements for graduates – Graduate traineeships (Plan for Graduate Company Recruitment)

Launched in 2009 and will be in operation until 2014. The aim of these traineeships is to introduce graduates into the world of work, whereby they are subject to organised and structured training and practical work experience, so that they become familiar with actual work settings and adapt their knowledge and skills to employer requirements. The target group for this plan are graduates with no work experience, or with work experience of less than 12 months and who have completed their studies in the last three years (but not more than three years).

Short-term student placements in companies (called 'internships' or 'placements') (OP Employment, Human Capital and Social Cohesion 2007-2013)

One for the five actions foreseen under Specific Objective B (Priority Axis 1: Development of Human Capital and Adaptability), is to create linkages between universities and the business environment through, *inter alia*, the setting up of career guidance offices and offices tasked with forging closer ties with enterprises (Enterprise Liaison Offices) and, crucially, the promotion of short-term student placements in companies (called 'internships' or 'placements').

Traineeships linked to mandatory professional training, eg education/teaching, law, accounting

eg Traineeships as part of the Pedagogical Training Programme of Prospective Secondary and Technical Education Teachers.

2. Legislative Framework for Traineeships

2.1 Legal framework for and governance of traineeships

There is no overarching traineeship-related legal framework. This can, arguably, be linked to the fact that, while in most countries initial vocational training is legally defined, in Cyprus (and Greece) no such definition exists. Rather, some types of traineeships are tightly regulated, while others, especially those in the open market are not. For example, there is a clear legal framework concerning the mandatory professional training associated with teacher training. According to Articles 28Γ and 32(4) of the *Public Education Office Acts*, in order to be appointed as a secondary or technical education teacher, one should have successfully completed the *Pedagogical Training Programme of Prospective Secondary and Technical Education Teachers*. The programme includes a compulsory traineeship before one is allowed to teach at a school which involves the acquisition of practical work and teaching experience. Since 2007, Law N.52(I)/2007 and relevant Implementation Regulations (ΚΔΠ 236/2007) which amended the *Public Education Office (Amendment) (No. 2) Act*, the organisation of the mandatory professional training associated with teacher training was awarded to the Education Department of the University of Cyprus which is responsible for running the entire programme.⁶

A number of traineeship-related programmes run by Cyprus's *Human Resource Development Authority* (HRDA) come under the so-called 'HRDA Law' which consolidated all laws relating to human resource development between 1999 and 2007. For example, the *Plan for Graduate Company Recruitment* which involves company-based traineeships should be seen within the context of Cyprus's 1999 *Human Resource Development Law No 125(I)* (Article 21) as it was revised by 2007 Law No 21(I). Similarly, the legal base for the *Plan for Accelerated Company-based Initial Vocational and Education Training programmes* is the 1999 *Law No 125(I)* (Articles 5f and 5p).

In relation to the existence of soft law, in some cases collective agreements may include some provision about trainees (SYSDERM expert, 2008). In addition, in Cyprus trade unions have campaigned, and negotiated with employers and government, for a more extensive use of apprenticeship and training positions as part of youth-related active labour market policies (Eurofound, 2011).

2.2 Definition of traineeships and trainees

There does not seem to be a legal definition of traineeship and/or trainee. Depending of the type of traineeship, the following terms are used:

1. *'Internship'* for short-term placements in companies as part of either university study curricula or those available in the open market.
2. *Practical Experience placement* ('Πρακτική Πείρα') for those traineeships associated with mandatory professional training, eg trainee teacher, trainee accountants, etc.
3. *Work Experience placement* ('Απόκτηση Εργασιακής Πείρας') for those traineeships linked to programmes targeted at facilitating youth labour market transitions.

Although outside the scope of this study, one should mention the terms 'matheteia' (for Apprenticeship) and 'mathitevomenos' (for apprentice). This latter term can be used for trainees undertaking other forms of traineeships, eg those linked to STVE. The term 'intern' is used for trainees undertaking traineeships as part of either university study curricula or

⁶ <http://www.ucy.ac.cy/goto/proypiresiaki1/el-GR/WelcomeMessage.aspx>

those available in the open market. Neither the definitions relating to traineeships nor those concerning trainees are legal definitions.

2.3 Legal provisions about aspects of traineeships

Depending on the type of traineeship, the (legal) provisions of traineeships vary. Such provisions are more clearly defined in the traineeship-related programmes run by *Human Resource Development Authority* (HRDA) as well as for certain types of mandatory professional training, notably the *Pedagogical Training Programme of Prospective Secondary and Technical Education Teachers*. For example, the *Guide of Policies and Procedures* in relation to the *Plan for Graduate Company Recruitment* specifies in great detail the provisions concerning the relevant traineeship (please see Section 5 for more details).

Another HRDA programme with well-specified provisions is the *Plan for Accelerated Company-based Initial Vocational and Education Training programmes* which are also aimed at new labour market entrants and/or unemployed young people and which involve a company-based trainee placement. Although the duration and focus of such placements vary (and is defined by HRDA) depending on the knowledge and skills requirements associated with particular specialisms, a number of general provisions apply across the board, notably trainee compensation, social security and insurance coverage, reimbursement of travel expenses (under certain conditions), etc. Specifically, for the duration of their training trainees are entitled to a weekly allowance of €200 and to the reimbursement of travel expenses under certain conditions. The HRDA is responsible both for paying to Cyprus's Social Insurance Organisation the employer social security contribution for the duration of the placement (as well as the theoretical training) and for covering the trainee insurance costs (HRDA, 2011).

3. Availability of and Access to Traineeships

3.1 Statistics/quantitative information about traineeships

There has been a dearth of aggregate data as regards traineeship-related information, although this varies between different types of traineeships.

According to the 2011 Cyprus NRP, the 2011 quantitative target for the Plan for Graduate Company Recruitment is 600 new graduates, while that for the Plan for Accelerated Company-based Initial Vocational and Education Training programmes is 400 young people. In addition, the quantitative target for the period 2010-2014 of the HRDA ESF co-funded scheme aimed at improving the employability of the unemployed, including unemployed youth, through, *inter alia*, eight to ten week company-based traineeships is 2,200 (Cyprus Planning Bureau, 2011).

According to Cyprus's *Operational Programme Employment, Human Capital and Social Cohesion 2007-2013*, by 2015 the total number of young people aged 18-30 expected to benefit by all training and work experience actions (as outlined in Objective B of Axis 2) is 750.

According to the Annual Report 2010 published by the *Educational Service Commission* in March 2011, the number of trainee teachers who take part in the *Pedagogical Training Programme of Prospective Secondary and Technical Education Teachers* which involves a compulsory traineeship over the last decade is as follows:

Table 3.1: Number of Trainee Teachers - Secondary & Technical Education 1999-2010

Year	Participants at start of programme	Dropped out	Failed	Successfully completed the programme
1999-2000	45	10	2	33
2000-2001	95	23	1	71
2001-2002	247	11	8	228
2002-2003	420	36	4	380
2003-2004	454	69	2	383
2004-2005	698	133	4	561
2005-2006 (summer)	647	116	2	529
2005-2006 (winter)	361	67	6	288
2006-2007	403	63	3	337
2007-2008	384	80	22	282
2008-2009	537	85	40	412
2009-2010	659	70	104	485

Source: Educational Service Commission, (2011). Annual Report 2010, March, <http://91.184.206.201/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=outUa5PijPI%3D&tabid=64&mid=419>

In total, since the beginning of this Programme in 1999 and up to 2010, 4,950 trainee teachers were admitted to it; 763 dropped out or failed; and 3,989 successfully completed it. In the period 2010-2011, 384 trainees are on the programme (Educational Service Commission, 2011).

3.2 Transnational mobility

Transnational mobility is promoted through European programmes, such as Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci. As of the academic year 2011-2012, 20 Cypriot public and private Universities and Higher Education Institutions have the right to participate in the Erasmus Programme. As far as Erasmus student mobility placements are concerned, one can apply for such a placement in an organisation in another Member State and the placement, which can be taken up after the first year of studies, can last three to twelve months. In addition, students on one or two-year study programmes can take up such a placement lasting two to twelve months from the first year of their studies. Significantly, in the academic year 2011-2012 the promotion of student mobility placements in companies is one of the main Cypriot policy priorities (IDEP, 2010b).

Table 3.2 presents the number of both Cypriot outgoing and other incoming Erasmus students who opt to undertake a company placement abroad (European Commission, 2011a).

Table 3.2: No of Erasmus Students doing Company Placements abroad (Cyprus)

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	TOTAL
Outgoing	4	13	17	34
Incoming	86	160	155	401

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc/stat/0910/countries/cyprus_en.pdf

Table 3.3 shows both the average duration and average grant of the Erasmus company placements abroad. Specifically, in 2009/10 the average duration of such placements was 3.1 months, while the average monthly grant was €837.

Table 3.3: Average duration and grant for Erasmus Students doing Company Placements abroad (Cyprus)

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Average duration (months)	2.8	3	3.1
Average monthly grant (€)	714	1,215	837

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc/stat/0910/countries/cyprus_en.pdf

Crucially, in Cyprus's most recent National Reform Programme, published in April 2011, one key government priority is increased participation in EU programmes such as the Lifelong Learning Programme (and its component programmes, eg Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci, etc.) which have a strong element of geographical mobility. To this end, one explicit target is the need to encourage all Technical and Vocational Schools and adults to actively participate in Leonardo da Vinci mobility actions for initial and continued training and placements in enterprises abroad. As stated, at present only 50 per cent of the technical schools participate in such actions. Similarly, the NRP 2011 actively seeks the promotion of transnational mobility of students, educators, staff, apprentices and researchers. The 2011 estimated budget for actions related to mobility is €200,000 (Cyprus Planning Bureau, 2011).

Table 3.4 shows both the planned and the realised (up to 1.1.2011) the number of Cypriot Leonardo da Vinci participants in both IVET and labour market actions in another country (European Commission, 2011b).

Table 3.4: Leonardo da Vinci Participants in Mobility Projects (Cyprus)

Call	Target Group	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Participants	Initial vocational training	188	148	28	93	37
(Planned)	People on the labour market	61	75	147	124	221
<i>Total</i>		<i>249</i>	<i>223</i>	<i>175</i>	<i>217</i>	<i>258</i>
Participants	Initial vocational training	185	130	35	n/a	n/a
(Realised up to 1.1.2011)	People on the labour market	54	51	107	n/a	n/a
<i>Total</i>		<i>239</i>	<i>181</i>	<i>142</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/doc/stat/cyprus_en.pdf

Apart from promoting the transnational mobility among young Cypriots, Cyprus is also actively seeking to attract foreign students as well and is currently one of the three EU countries⁷ where the proportion of such students in their total student population is 15 per cent (ETUC, 2010).

Overall, in relation to transnational mobility, the following 2010 numbers were identified (IDEP, 2010a). Although the numbers are low, there is a clear trend of increased levels of transnational mobility.

Table 3.5: Transnational mobility among young Cypriots

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11*
Erasmus study placements	145	199	225
Erasmus work placements	13	17	34
Leonardo da Vinci	33	33	

Source: Foundation for the Management of European Lifelong Learning Programmes/IDEP, (2010a). Lifelong Learning Programme 2010

* These figures are estimates/forecasts

Existing evaluation data show that those who have taken part in the Erasmus programme, including the take-up of a company placement report high levels of satisfaction in terms of the programme helping them acquire knowledge of and become familiar with the work environment, norms and routines as well as working conditions in another country. Similarly, they report that the experience has definitely enhanced their language skills and their inter-cultural awareness and understanding. At a personal level, it also helped them become more autonomous, confident and self-reliant, while it improved their interpersonal and social skills. On the other hand, they are less positive about the extent to which this experience will result in better employment prospects, or will enable them to work more easily in another country in the future (CYMAR, 2010).

At the same time, Erasmus co-ordinators based in Cypriot educational institutions report the following issues around transnational mobility:

1. Accommodation issues for mobile students.
2. Insufficient information and guidance provided to students by host organisations.
3. Practical issues such as the need for an EU-wide health insurance card for all students (it is recommended that the Foundation for the Management of European Lifelong Learning Programmes/IDEP should support such an initiative) (CYMAR, 2010).

3.3 Sectors where traineeships are prevalent

As mentioned earlier, traineeships have to date been prevalent in certain types of training, notably technical vocational training. Similarly, they are prevalent as part of mandatory professional training programmes in certain sectors, notably education, accounting, law, etc. That said, with regards to recognising the benefits of traineeships, there has been a concerted effort to expand the concept of traineeships in both educational study curricula across a wide range of disciplines and after graduation. Moreover, there has also been an explicit policy focus in promoting traineeships (in the form of work experience placements) as an effective means of facilitating youth labour market transitions.

⁷ The other two are Austria and the UK.

According to available evidence both private and public sectors offer short-term traineeship opportunities (SYSDM expert, 2008).

3.4 Recruitment process of and equity of access to traineeships

The recruitment process varies between the various forms of traineeships. For example, the opportunity offered to young people to take part in Cyprus's Plan for Accelerated company-based Initial Vocational and Education Training programmes is widely publicised in educational establishments, job centres, employer associations, trade unions, youth organisations, media and government websites. The educational establishment must set up a two-member panel in order to select the most suitable candidates for this programme who have to go through an interview. A member of Cyprus's Human Resource Development Authority (HRDA) can also be present at that interview. Because this Plan aims to help new labour market entrants, the selection of trainees is based on the use of criteria which explicitly awards a higher weight to unemployment status. In particular, out of a maximum 100 points, up to 40 are related to unemployment⁸, up to 35 to education/training⁹ and up to 25 to personal/family circumstances.¹⁰ Those who, according to the HRDA, get maximum points have priority in taking part in this programme (HRDA, 2011).

Recruitment for the Plan for Graduate Company Recruitment is effected through HRDA where companies interested in taking part submit an application, once they have concluded an employment contract with a graduate. The HRDA examines the application in order to check that it meets the programme's aims, objectives and criteria. During this stage, HRDA staff may either require further information in writing, or visit the company itself for an in situ inspection. The main company-related selection criteria used at this stage include, *inter alia*, the opportunity to place and train the graduate in a position where he/she can be involved in meaningful work activities and the assignment to that graduate of the most relevant trainer/mentor who will support and oversee the graduate's acquisition of practical and theoretical knowledge and experience at work.

An interesting aspect of this programme is its recognition of the inherent difficulties that SMEs face in getting involved with the early labour market entry of young people, including graduates. This is exemplified by the fact that it involves a sliding company subsidy scale which offers a stronger financial incentive to SMEs. Specifically, this scale is as follows: (i) 60 per cent for large organisations; (ii) 70 per cent for medium-sized organisations; and (iii) 80 per cent for small enterprises (HRDA, 2010).

The recruitment process for those interested in taking part in the Pedagogical Training Programme of Prospective Secondary and Technical Education Teachers is monitored by Cyprus's Educational Service Commission.¹¹ The latter issues an invitation for applications in the press and on the Internet in the first half of April to all those who are interested in participating in the programme.

⁸ These points are distributed as follows: (i) long-term (ie over 12 months) unemployed young people: 40 (maximum points); (ii) long-term (ie over 6 but less than 12 months) unemployed young people: 30; (iii) unemployed young people for 6 months or less: 20; (iv) economically inactive: 20; (v) having been employed for up to 12 months: 10; and (vi) having been employed for less than 12 months: 5

⁹ These points are distributed as follows: A. *Education (maximum 20 points)*: (i) upper secondary education graduate: 10-20; (ii) Technical School graduate: 5-15; (iii) Apprenticeship graduate: 5-15. B. *Professional Training*: (i) young person not having attended any other training programme: 15; (ii) young person having attended another training programme completed two or more years ago: 10; (iii) young person having attended another training programme of short duration within the last two years: 5.

¹⁰ These points are distributed as follows: (i) someone with an overwhelming need for help, including being a young person aged 25 or below: 25 (maximum points); (ii) someone with a major need for help, including being unemployed aged 30-50: 20; (iii) someone with a significant need for help, including being economically inactive, a migrant, unemployed aged over 50: 15; (iv) other need: 5

¹¹ <http://www.eey.gov.cy/>

3.5 Evolution of traineeships over time and impact of recent economic crisis on traineeships

In general, with the exception of traineeships linked to technical and vocational training as well as to certain professions, eg education/teaching, accounting, law, etc., the concept of traineeship as such as is not widely used (SYSDM expert, 2008). However, in the recent years and as a result of both ESF-supported actions aimed at improving the links between education and industry and programmes targeted at improving the employment prospects of young people (either before or in response to the recent crisis), the concept of traineeships (usually called 'internships' or 'placements') has become more widely applied. For example, ESF is co-funding the creation of Enterprise Liaison Offices in each of six universities which are, *inter alia*, tasked with promoting student and graduate company-based traineeships (linked to study curricula). Similarly, a number of programmes run by the HRDA, eg the Plan for Graduate Company Recruitment, are explicitly promoting (and funding) company based traineeships aimed at equipping young people with practical work-related experience.

3.6 Financing of traineeships

According to the 2011 Cyprus NRP, the foreseen budget for the Plan for Graduate Company Recruitment is €5,100,000 for 2011, while the budget for the Plan for Accelerated Company-based Initial Vocational and Education Training Programmes is €1,000,000 for 2011.

As far as ESF is concerned, this provides 70 per cent of the total cost (€8,000,000) of the programme aimed at improving the employability of the unemployed, including unemployed youth, through offering opportunities for participation in training activities and work experience in enterprises of eight to ten weeks duration (Cyprus Planning Bureau, 2011).

The Financial Framework of the Operational Programme Employment, Human Capital and Social Cohesion 2007-2013 which shows the financial allocation by source and Axis is presented in Table 3.6. Actions related to traineeships, which are co-funded by ESF, are included in Specific Objective B of Priority Axis 1 and Specific Objective B of Priority Axis 2.

Table 3.6: Financial Framework of Operational Programme Employment, Human Capital and Social Cohesion 2007-2013

Priority Axis	ESF Contribution	National Contribution	Total Contribution	% of ESF Co-financing
Development of Human Capital & Adaptability (Axis 1)	81,443,025	14,372,299	95,815,324	85%
Expansion of Labour Market & Social Cohesion (Axis 2)	34,928,419	14,970,394	49,898,813	70%
Technical Assistance (Axis 3)	3,397,710	599,596	3,997,306	85%
Total	119,769,154	29,942,289	149,711,443	80%

Source: <http://www.structuralfunds.org.cy/>

It has not been possible to identify the ESF contribution for all the traineeship-related actions. However, below we present the relevant information collected to date.

From Table 3.6 above, under Axis 1 (Development of Human Capital & Adaptability), €44,893,025 has been earmarked for actions aimed at enhancing access and quality of training provision at all levels, including higher education, including actions relating to the setting up of Enterprise Liaison Offices in universities. These offices are, *inter alia*, tasked with the promotion of company-based traineeships for students and graduates.

The Pedagogical Training Programme of Prospective Secondary and Technical Education Teachers, which involves a 13-week compulsory school-based traineeship, is supported by the ESF. It is foreseen that €15,114,549¹² will be invested in this intervention (Cyprus Managing Authority, 2011).

In response to the need to forge closer ties with enterprises through the setting up of offices tasked with bringing the world of education closer to that of work, eg through short-term traineeships (called 'internships') it was foreseen that the University of Cyprus would receive €3,500,787 in total for this intervention (Cyprus Managing Authority, 2011).

Data from Cyprus Managing Authority show a long list of organisations which have received ESF co-funding as part of programmes aimed at providing incentives for the employment of young people, some of which involve traineeships. However, the available data do not differentiate between employment incentives/wage subsidies and incentives for the offer of traineeships.

Table 3.7 and Table 3.8 show the Erasmus budget and Leonardo da Vinci grants for mobility actions in Cyprus since 2007.

Table 3.7: Erasmus Budget for Mobility Actions in Cyprus (€)

2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
1,112,919	1,235,000	1,265,000

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc/stat/0910/countries/cyprus_en.pdf

Table 3.8: Leonardo Da Vinci Grants for Mobility Actions in Cyprus (€)

2007	2008	2009	2010
339,516	627,018	565,535	853,125

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/doc/stat/cyprus_en.pdf

3.7 Public perceptions about traineeships

The recent crisis has thrown up the issue of high graduate unemployment which has been the subject of lively public debate. This has, in turn, shed light on the various programmes, including the Plan for Graduate Company Recruitment which promotes the acquisition of practical work experience for six or 12 months by new graduates in companies (Christofides, 2010). That said, historically traineeships have not been the subject of public debate (SYSDEM expert, 2008).

¹² http://www.structuralfunds.org.cy/uploadfiles/BeneficiariesLIST_July2011EMPL.pdf

4. Practices and Content of Traineeships

4.1 Traineeships as part of education and/or labour market entry and integration for young people

As mentioned earlier, in recognition of the need to create better links between the spheres of education and employment, there is currently a strong policy focus on promoting a wide range of traineeship-type placements, both for students/graduates and unemployed/low skilled young people. To this end, the current Operational Programme Employment, Human Capital and Social Cohesion 2007-2013 foresees specific ESF co-funded actions in creating closer ties between universities and employers. As a result, a number of universities have included student traineeships (called 'internships') in their programmes, eg University of Cyprus¹³, University of Nicosia, European University of Cyprus, Cyprus University of Technology¹⁴, etc. These are usually organised through the University's Careers Service or an Office specifically created for forging closer links with employers ('Enterprise Liaison Office' or 'Grafeio Syndesis me Epiheiriseis').

For example, as stated, one of the key priorities of the Career Office at the University of Nicosia is to secure traineeships in companies for students as required by their study programme. The minimum duration of such company-based traineeships, which seek to enable students gain practical insight in a selected field, is two weeks.¹⁵ Similarly, the Employment and Career Office of the European University of Cyprus, set up in 1989, runs an 'internship programme' aimed at enabling students and graduates to acquire valuable work experience in order to strengthen their career prospects immediately after graduation.¹⁶

The above discussion notwithstanding, it has not been possible to validate in practice the extent to which such traineeships undertaken as part of university study programmes are actually prevalent across the board, or tend to be concentrated in certain study areas. In general, the combination of theoretical and practical knowledge through traineeships is embedded in some study curricula, notably those of Technical Colleges and certain fields of study such as education and professional accounting programmes (SYSDERM expert, 2008). Traineeships as part of mandatory professional training can also be found in law, medicine, architecture, and engineering.

Indeed, the most prominent and well-established professional programmes with strong built-in work experience through structured traineeships are those linked to education and professional accounting. For example, in order to obtain the chartered accountant qualification, one should:

1. Successfully pass the professional exams set by The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW) and/or The Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA).
2. Undertake a three-year traineeship under the supervision of a person who has been granted a registration certificate by the Institute of Certified Public Accountants of Cyprus (ICPAC) (Avramides, 2010). According to IPCAC, the exercise of the profession and the right of signature as a Chartered Accountant requires at least two years of practical experience acquired a) after obtaining a professional title acceptable by ICPAC, or b) after the successful professional aptitude test and the completion of three years of practical experience. The two-year practical experience can be achieved by working at a

¹³ <http://www.ucy.ac.cy/goto/acafsw/el-GR/FAQ.aspx>

¹⁴ <http://www.cut.ac.cy/mga/praktiki/?languageId=1>

¹⁵ http://www.unic.ac.cy/nqcontent.cfm?a_id=5382&tt=graphic&lang=11

¹⁶ <http://www.euc.ac.cy/easyconsole.cfm/id/584>

certified accountant's office or a certified accounting firm or at the office of a person authorised to exercise the profession.¹⁷

In addition, as mentioned earlier, another well-established programme which involves a compulsory traineeship is the ESF-supported *Pedagogical Training Programme of Prospective Secondary and Technical Education Teachers*. This programme, which was first introduced in 1999 and is, since 2007, run by the University of Cyprus (in collaboration with the Cypriot Ministry of Education and Culture) combines theoretical knowledge with compulsory practical school-related experience.¹⁸ Successful completion of this programme and the award by the University of Cyprus of an accredited Pre-Service Teaching Certificate is a requirement prior to any kind of appointment on probation or permanent basis at the secondary education level.

The aim of the programme is twofold: first, to induct trainee teachers in the school system theoretically (through courses) and practically via school experience and actual teaching; and second, to develop and enhance teachers' pedagogical ability. Its total duration is eight months (corresponding to 540 hours or 13 weeks) and is realised in two academic semesters. The duration of the traineeship-type work-experience placement at a public school is 40 per cent of the total and is broken down as follows: trainee teachers should attend/follow/shadow 24 teaching sessions (each lasting 45-60 minutes) and themselves share or teach at a further 36. The first phase of this school placement takes place towards the end of the winter semester, while the second phase occurs in the spring semester.

During the school experience trainee teachers are attached to experienced and trained teachers who act as mentors, by advising and supporting their lesson preparation and teaching.¹⁹ As far as the content of the practical school-based experience is concerned, apart from a strong teaching element, the programme is explicit about the need for trainee teacher to be exposed to and become familiar with all aspects of school operations, management and administration. To this end, the trainee teacher has to be actively involved in all activities and aspects of school life, including meetings, participation in co-ordinating committees and/or working groups, shadowing the Deputy Head, developing lesson plans with the help of their mentor and/or other relevant teachers, etc. Interestingly, they also have to record their reflections about their own teaching as well as about some of the teaching of their mentor (time allotted for this task corresponds to 14 sessions). Crucially, they also have to compile a portfolio of achievement, including their reflections, lesson plans, etc., during the length of the school-based experience which is then used to assess their progress.

Apart from teachers, as in other countries, law graduates also have to undertake a compulsory traineeship before they are allowed to practice the profession of law. According to the Cyprus Bar Association, law graduates have to undertake a 12-month traineeship with a recognised law firm in Cyprus, or with the office of Cyprus's General Attorney and to pass the Law Council exams.²⁰

A number of other traineeship-related programmes are also currently in operation in Cyprus. The Plan for Graduate Company Recruitment aims to introduce graduates into the world of work, whereby they are subject to organised and structured training and practical work experience, so that they become familiar with actual work settings and adapt their knowledge and skills to employer requirements. The target group for this plan are graduates with no work experience, or with work experience of less than 12 months and who have completed their studies in the last three years (but not more than three years).

The duration for the acquisition of practical work experience (through a traineeship) can last either six months (if the graduate is kept on by the company as a regular employee) or 12

¹⁷ <http://www.icpac.org.cy/icpac.nsf/All/C45CA0152553A06BC2256EBB0026F292?OpenDocument>

¹⁸ <http://www.ucy.ac.cy/goto/proypiresiaki1/el-GR/GeneralInformation.aspx>

¹⁹ <http://www.test.ucy.ac.cy/goto/proypiresiaki1/el-GR/SchoolExperience.aspx>

²⁰ http://www.cyprusbarassociation.org/cms_detail.php?page_id=92&PHPSESSID=4127fe223af082512c6b58a95854c8de

months if the graduate is not kept on. In addition to the acquisition of practical work experience, graduates who take part in this scheme have also to attend a number of training seminars related to their work. These can be offered either by the employing organisation or by other entities, either in Cyprus or abroad. For those graduates whose placement is for six months, the minimum time allotted for such seminar participation is 20 hours, while for 12-month placements is 40 hours. Crucially, the graduate is assigned a dedicated trainer who has to spend at least 40 per cent of his/her time addressing training issues pertinent to that particular graduate.

4.2 Issues about employer practices as regards traineeships

The discussion above has highlighted the role that traineeships are increasingly expected to play in enhancing young people's employability through the creation of closer links between education and employment. However, this focus on forging closer ties between the world of education and that of work is relatively recent within the Cypriot context. No reports about questionable employer practices have been identified.

5. Trainee's Rights and Terms and Conditions

Depending on the type of traineeship, the trainee's terms and conditions vary. For example, the rights and responsibilities of both the graduate and the employing organisation are clearly spelled out in the Guide of Policies and Procedures in relation to the Plan for Graduate Company Recruitment (HRDA, 2009). These are agreed with the Human Resource Development Authority (HRDA).

The employer needs:

1. to deploy the graduate in tasks which will allow him/her acquire necessary and relevant practical work experience in line with the learning plan produced at the beginning of the placement;
2. to assign a trainer/mentor to the graduate who will oversee, support and guide the graduate for the entire duration of the traineeship. As mentioned earlier, this trainer/mentor has to devote at least 40 per cent of his/her time for the graduate's training needs. The same trainer/mentor cannot oversee more than two graduate trainees at any time;
3. to ensure that the graduate receives the training and experience as specified in the learning plan, as well as participates in seminars/ programmes deemed necessary for the acquisition of additional/supplementary knowledge and skills;
4. to offer the graduate employment terms and conditions similar to those applicable to the rest of the staff, eg working hours;
5. to offer monthly compensation to the graduate, whose minimum level is €1,100/month (gross earnings) at the beginning and €1,150/month (gross earnings) after six months (for the 12-month placement);
6. to pay the necessary social coverage and health insurance contributions to the Cypriot Social Insurance Scheme (TKA), the Human Resource Development Authority (HRDA), and other relevant bodies;
7. to work closely with HRDA during the company's participation in this programme.

The graduate trainee needs:

1. to work closely with the trainer/mentor assigned to him/her in order to fulfil the aims of the learning plan;
2. to effectively undertake the tasks and activities allocated to him/her as part of the placement;
3. to take part successfully in the seminars/programmes which are included in the learning plan.

As mentioned earlier, the graduate trainee is entitled to monthly compensation (€1,100/month gross at the beginning and €1,150/month gross earnings after six months) (for the 12-month placement) and to receive full social coverage and health insurance coverage. He/she should also enjoy employment terms and conditions similar to those applicable to the rest of the staff, eg working hours.

Similar detailed provisions exist as regards the trainees who take part in the HRDA's Plan for Accelerated Company-based Initial Vocational and Education Training programmes. Specifically, trainees are entitled to a weekly allowance of €200 and to the reimbursement of travel expenses if they have to travel for more than 40 km, or to travel to a county other than that of their permanent residence. Crucially, HRDA pays to the Social Security Organisation ('Tameio Koinonikon Asfaliseon' and 'Tameio Koinonikis Sinochis') the employer social security contribution for the duration of the placement (as well as the theoretical training). Similarly, HRDA covers the trainee insurance costs (in line with the 1996 Law for Compulsory Employer Liability Insurance) (HRDA, 2011).

Trainees on schemes linked to university study curricula do not receive any compensation, while those at Technical Schools do.

Concerning traineeships associated with mandatory professional training, terms and conditions vary. The professional chartered accountant traineeship is accompanied with reasonable terms and conditions, including trainee compensation (SYSDEM expert, 2008; Avramides, 2010). On the other hand, the one associated with teacher training does not offer any compensation (SYSDEM expert, 2008).

6. Quality Assurance of Traineeships

Not surprisingly, traineeships which form part of structured programmes such as those run by the Human Resource Development Authority (HRDA), are accompanied with rigorous quality assurance procedures. All such programmes are subject to close monitoring and oversight by the Authority itself which also conducts regular in situ visits to ensure that both employers and graduates fulfil the programme requirements (Katsikides, 2009).

For example, as regards the Plan for Graduate Company Recruitment, in addition to these in situ inspection visits, quality assurance is realised through the production and close monitoring of the learning/training plan which is jointly compiled by the graduate and his/her trainee/mentor and reviewed regularly by the Authority's inspectors.²¹ In Section A of this learning/training plan, the graduate trainee has to record on a monthly basis the tasks he/she has been assigned, the learning content of these tasks and any other training he/she received. These entries are signed at the end of each month by both the graduate trainee and trainee/mentor and are also reviewed by the Authority's inspectors. In Section B, the graduate has to provide detailed information about specific training seminars/programmes he/she has taken part in the course of the placement. Moreover, the employing organisation has to complete every two months a report which assesses the

²¹ <http://www.hrdauth.org.cy/Ipiresies/Arxiki/Stelexwsi/Stelexwsi.htm>

graduate's progress in relation to his/her training performance and acquisition of practical work experience.

The *Plan for Accelerated Company-based Initial Vocational and Education Training Programmes*, also run by the Authority, has similar tightly prescribed quality assurance procedures. In this case, the company inspector comes from the educational establishment where the trainee is a student. This inspector has to regularly visit the host organisation in order to ensure that the learning content of the trainee's work assignments is in line with his/her training and work experience needs. The trainee needs to keep a 'Learning/Training Diary', which is also reviewed by the inspector.²² The 'Learning/Training Diary' is issued to the trainee at the start of the company placement and includes a detailed learning plan. It also includes a template where the trainee has to record on a daily basis the tasks and activities he/she has been involved in and where the trainer/mentor assigned to that trainee adds his/her comments.

When the trainee completes the traineeship, he/she has to submit it (completed) to the Authority. In addition, upon completion of the traineeship, both the company inspector and the host organisation have to complete and submit to the Authority a report assessing the trainee's performance.

Similarly, the traineeships associated with the Pedagogical Training Programme of Prospective Secondary and Technical Education Teachers has a robust quality assurance procedure, mainly realised through the Commission for School-Based Work Experience ('Epitropi Scholikis Empeirias')²³, the co-ordinator of the trainee teacher mentors and the mentors themselves based in each school. The Commission for School-Based Work Experience comprises four officials from the Ministry of Education and one representative from the University of Cyprus.

In addition, the rules, regulations and procedures outlined in the Programme's own Statute of Operations specify in detailed and prescriptive manner all aspects of the way it should be implemented, including the school-based work experience.²⁴

The quality assurance of STVE is also robust. The entire STVE training programme is prepared in close cooperation with the Industrial Training Authority and is coordinated by Instructors/Counsellors, who on a regular basis visit the students undertaking the work experience placements in order to ensure that they receive proper training according to the specifications and the prescribed programme of training.

According to the University of Cyprus which is the co-ordinator for the ESF co-funded action concerning the setting up of enterprise liaison offices at universities tasked with, *inter alia*, the promotion of student placements (traineeships) in companies, there are (or will be) Quality Assurance Committees which will oversee all the activities foreseen in this action (University of Cyprus, 2010).

7. Overall Assessment as Regards Traineeships

7.1 Benefits and drawbacks of traineeships

According to the policy documents reviewed, eg in relation to the Plan for Graduate Company Recruitment, the benefits for the employing/host organisation include:

²² <http://www.hrdauth.org.cy/Ipiresies/Arxiki/Taxiri8ma/Taxiri8ma.htm>

²³ <http://www.test.ucy.ac.cy/goto/proypiresiaki1/el-GR/DepartmentalBoard.aspx>

²⁴ <http://www.test.ucy.ac.cy/goto/proypiresiaki1/el-GR/DepartmentalBoard.aspx>

1. the ability to attract high calibre graduates at a reduced cost (thanks to the offered subsidies) who can contribute to the better organisation/operation of the business;
2. the more rational and cost-effective allocation of tasks which frees up time for senior management staff to focus on more strategic aspects of the company;
3. the more systematic and structured practical training of graduates in close co-operation with the Human Resource Development Authority (HRDA), so that they best meet the actual business requirements.

For graduates, the benefits include:

1. their smoother labour market transition;
2. their familiarisation with the actual work environment and its norms and routines;
3. the opportunity to take part in training seminars in order to acquire additional knowledge and skills;
4. the chance to gain practical work experience, thus addressing one of the main employer objections for employing young people;
5. the opportunity to apply their theoretical knowledge and skills in real work settings which can lead to an effective start of career and fast career progression.

Employers seem to use traineeships as:

1. an effective screening device and talent management tool in order to identify the best candidates for recruitment;
2. a source for new and creative ideas;
3. an element of their corporate social responsibility policy (SYSDEM expert, 2008).

7.2 Effectiveness of traineeships

According to the Cyprus's Human Resource Development Authority (HRDA), the Plan for Graduate Company Recruitment which is a consolidated programme focused on the integration of highly qualified young people into the labour market by providing practical on-the-job experience in a company for a maximum period of 12 months has proved quite effective in allowing young people to obtain their first contact with the labour market and thus enhancing their employability. Indeed, the success of this programme has led to its inclusion as an active labour market policy in the Special Prevention-Action Plan which was introduced by HRDA in close cooperation with the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance in 2009, for combating youth unemployment.

Factors which contribute to the effectiveness of this programme include the following:

1. the combination of 'real' work experience with training which can effectively ensure a smooth transition into the labour market;
2. the opportunity it provides to adapt the knowledge and skills of graduates to actual employer requirements;
3. the provision of a well-organised and structured company placement which combines an individualised action plan and on the job training and is accompanied by the heavy involvement of a mentor/trainer assigned to the graduate trainee;
4. the effective combination of different interventions (training and wage subsidies);
5. the cost-sharing arrangements which ensure better employer commitment²⁵;

²⁵ To this end, the Cypriot levy model was highlighted as an effective practice in pulling resources together to deliver wider benefits and ensuring sustainability of this type of scheme

6. the differentiation of funding levels with higher incentives to smaller enterprises which, in turn, acts as an incentive for their participation²⁶;
7. the simplification of procedures and flexibility which are important to cut bureaucracy and secure employer engagement.

The simplicity allows the scheme to cover all sectors, all company sizes and all occupations. The flexibility allows the learning content of the placement to be tailored to individual and company needs.

²⁶ According to this programme, depending on company size there is a sliding subsidy scale: (i) 60% for large organisations; (ii) 70% for medium-sized organisations; and (iii) 80% for small enterprises.

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National Report on Traineeships The Czech Republic

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1. Traineeships as part of Member State's Youth Policy Measures

1.1 Overview of current situation of young people and traineeships as part of youth policy measures

The employment rate for the age group 15-64 years old in the Czech Republic was 65.0 per cent in 2010, which was the second highest rate in the post-socialist new Member States after Slovenia (66.2 per cent). This rate was slightly above the EU-27 average (64.1 per cent). The global economic crisis had a negative impact on the employment rate which dropped by 1.6 per cent from 2008 to 2010. The same was true for the unemployment rate, it increased significantly from 2008 (4.4 per cent) to 2010 (7.4 per cent), which is still lower than the EU-27 average (9.7 per cent) as well as the other post-socialist countries of the region (it is the lowest rate together with the Slovenian one). The situation is a bit different in the case of youth employment. The employment rate for the age group 15-24 years old is 25.2 per cent which is significantly lower than the EU-27 average (34.0 per cent) and is in line with the average employment rate for the post-socialist countries of the region (see Table A 1 in the Annex). It is interesting to note that although the youth employment rate is lower than it was before the global economic crisis (it was 28.1 per cent in 2008), an almost continuous decrease can be detected already from 2001 when it was 34.4 per cent. In contrast, the crisis significantly affected the youth unemployment rate (see also Table A 2 in the Annex) which almost doubled from 2008 (9.9 per cent) to 2010 (18.1 per cent), which is still lower compared to 2004 (19.9 per cent). The youth unemployment rate is the second lowest in the region behind Slovenia (14.7 per cent) and is below the EU-27 average.

In response to The EU 2020 Strategy, the Czech government set out a framework position, in which youth unemployment is one of the primary objectives. This national strategy aims to decrease the youth unemployment rate by one third, that is to approximately 11 per cent.

If we examine the rate of young people's unemployment by their schooling, we can say that a significant decrease is detected in all categories between 2000 and 2008 (unfortunately we have no data for the last three years). The lowest level of unemployment characterises the higher education graduates (2.4 per cent) and the general secondary school graduates (2.5 per cent). They are followed by tertiary professional school graduates and secondary technical school graduates (4.8 per cent and 6.5 per cent, respectively). The highest share of unemployment was measured among the secondary vocational school graduates (8.9 per cent). However, compared to the level measured in 2000 (26.4 per cent), a significant decrease can be detected (see also Table A 3 in the Annex).

Expert analysis (Simberova, 2008) shows that increasing the employability of fresh graduates and introducing practice and profession-oriented training programmes, especially at higher education level, together with a clearer distinction among research universities, universities providing Bachelor's and Master's programmes and higher institutions providing practice-oriented programmes, is of crucial importance. This is even more needed as the share of unemployed fresh graduates at tertiary education level was expected to grow before the crisis. This would also involve the re-evaluation of apprenticeship practices. However, as the author noted: 'the discussion has just started and the future development of tertiary education is uncertain' (Simberova, 2008, p. 5.).

Another policy initiative aimed at decreasing unemployment is a project 'Forecasting the Skills Needs of the Labour Market' (See: <http://www.budoucnostprofesi.cz/cs/aktualne/2.html>) which aims to develop a system of continuing labour market forecasting by building a coordinated holistic system, mostly based on medium-term macro-

level quantitative forecasting, incorporating the qualitative elements of different projections. There are visible efforts to develop a more systematic, complementary and holistic approach.

Table 1.1: Summary of main ALMP traineeship programmes in the Czech Republic

Main traineeship programmes & initiatives, including, ALMPs, educational VET & university traineeships as well as mandatory professional training	Brief description	Web link (if available)
Forecasting the Skills Needs of the Labour Market	It aims to develop a system of continuing labour market forecasting by building a coordinated holistic system, mostly based on medium-term macro-level quantitative forecasting, incorporating the qualitative elements of different projections.	
Job subsidy programme for youth	The project should provide internships for people up to 29 years of age who have been registered at the Labour Offices for more than five months and do not have any professional experience. The selection of trainees should be done by individual labour offices from among interested (self-motivated) unemployed young people. The duration of the individual work contract subsidisation under this programme will be up to 12 months and would mainly target private employers. The programme should involve 5,000 currently unemployed participants.	
Fight the rising youth unemployment in the region of Ústí nad Labem	The goal of the project is to help low-skilled young people establish work habits and to find suitable employment for about 1,300 young people. The programme provides subsidies to employers who employ a recent school graduate and it also offers language and IT courses and other types of retraining.	http://www.mpsv.cz/cs/9361

2. Legislative Framework for Traineeships

2.1 Legal framework for and governance of traineeships

The Education Act (No. 561/2004 Coll.), which came into force in 2005, defines levels of education according to the types of educational programmes offered and their length:

1. Secondary education (1-2 years) (ISCED 2C).
2. Secondary education completed by attaining an apprenticeship certificate – two to three years (ISCED 3C) – traditionally organised by secondary vocational schools.
3. Secondary education completed by a school-leaving examination (ISCED 3A) – mostly provided by secondary technical schools (střední odborné školy) and secondary general schools.

Apprenticeship concerns the secondary vocational schools (ISCED 3C and 4C levels) leading to an apprenticeship certificate.

However, we did not find any further analyses on the legislative framework regulating traineeship in the Czech Republic neither on the definition nor on the legal provisions about aspects of traineeships.

2.2 Definition of traineeships and trainees

The results of the country stakeholders report call attention to the fact that in public debate there is a plethora of definitions of traineeship. For example, the most frequently used Czech term for traineeship is 'praxe' which has no foundation in legislation. In addition, meanings of terms in legal and common language sometimes overlap.

2.3 Legal provisions about aspects of traineeships

The legal framework differs for each traineeship type:

1. Retraining ('rekvalifikace') is regulated by the law on Employment No. 435/2004 Coll. and ordinance on Retraining courses 519/2004. Educational courses in which retraining takes place must be accredited by the Ministry of Education. Conditions for accreditation are defined by ordinance 176/2009.
2. Organisations mediating international traineeships ('stáže') of foreign students in the Czech Republic need to be accredited by the Ministry of Education according to the Education Act No. 561/2004 Coll. and the conditions of stay and working conditions are further regulated by the Act on the Residence of Foreign Nationals in the Territory of the Czech Republic (No. 326/1999 Coll.) and Labour Code (No. 262/2006 Coll.).
3. Apprenticeship programmes ('odborný výcvik') at secondary education level are regulated by the Education Act (No. 561/2004 Coll). This law establishes National Qualification Frameworks further detailed in individual School Qualification Frameworks. The Czech School Inspectorate (Česká školní inspekce) controls the quality of education and practical training provided in schools and school workshops, but not in companies.
4. Part of volunteer traineeships in the non-profit sector is regulated by the Volunteer Services Act (no. 198/2002 Coll.). It requires accreditation from the Ministry of Interior for organisations offering volunteer positions eligible for state support.
5. General conditions for paid labour are defined by the Labour Code (No. 262/2006 Coll.) and further regulation frameworks (for instance the Act on Wages, Remuneration for

Stand-bys, and Average Earnings No. 1/1992 Coll., Governmental Decree on Minimum Wages No. 303/1995 Coll., etc.). Their observance is controlled by the State Office of Labour Inspection (Státní úřad inspekce práce).

3. Availability of and Access to Traineeships

3.1 Statistics/quantitative information about traineeships

In this section we will first give a short overview of the Czech educational system in order to better understand the institutional framework in which the practice of traineeship is located¹:

- Pre-primary education (ages 3-6): it has a long tradition in the Czech Republic and although it is not compulsory, almost 85 per cent of the total age group attend such education. This ratio reaches 91 per cent in the pre-school year as children have to attend it free of charge.
- Basic education: compulsory school attendance starts at the age of six. The first stage is provided by single structures of primary education institutions (ages 6-11) provided by basic schools. At the age of 11, the children can choose whether to continue their studies in the same single structure of the lower secondary education level (age 11-15) or to go to general lower level secondary institutions (age 11-13 or 11-15, so called *Gymnázium* in Czech) or to go to conservatoires (age 11-15).
- The requirements for participating in upper secondary education (ages 15-19) are to have completed compulsory education and met the entrance requirements. As we saw earlier there three possibilities at this level:
 - secondary education of 1-2 years in upper secondary general and vocational education at secondary schools, provided by either by the so-called Practical Schools (Praktická škola – ISCED 2C) or vocational schools (Odborné učiliště – ISCED 3C)
 - secondary education attaining an apprenticeship certificate – two to three years (ISCED 3C) – traditionally organised by secondary vocational schools
 - general education (four years) provided by upper secondary general schools (*Gymnázium*) or by upper secondary vocational schools or by conservatoires (for art education).
- Post-secondary non-tertiary education leading to either a general school-leaving examination (*maturitní zkouška*) at ISCED 4A level or to an apprenticeship certificates at ISCED 4C level. The length of these courses is one or two years.
- Tertiary education: there are three types of tertiary education institutions:
 - university and non-university type higher education institutions providing Bachelor's and Master's studies (ISCED 5A)
 - tertiary professional schools offering three-year studies at ISCED 5B level
 - art education of two years in length at ISCED 5B level.

In contrast to other European countries, the educational structure of the Czech adult population can be characterised by a relatively high participation in secondary education (more than 90 per cent of people between 25-64 years have at least secondary education level²) while the participation of the Czech population in tertiary education is among the

¹ This section is based on Eurydice (2011).

² Simberova, 2008, p. 1.

lowest in European Union. This phenomena is even more interesting as the number of students participating in tertiary education has doubled in the last 15 years.

As regards secondary education, one of the most important structural changes is that a significantly higher proportion of pupils choose upper secondary schools leading to the general school leaving examination (*maturitní zkouška*) compared to upper secondary schools without this kind of exam. In 1989 the ratio of pupils choosing schools offering the exam needed for entry into tertiary education compared to those choosing schools without this exam was 40:60. This changed to 64:36 in 2004. This reflects the growing importance of tertiary education. However, technical and vocational schools are still very popular as four fifths of the population who attend upper secondary education choose these kind of schools.

Unfortunately there are no available statistical data on measuring traineeships in the Czech Republic.

3.2 International student mobility

As for international student mobility, according to the available statistics³, the number of Czech students studying abroad under the framework of the Erasmus programme has increased significantly in the last ten years. While in 2000/01 only 2001 Erasmus students were registered, the number reached 5,975 in 2009/10. This represented a share 1.43 per cent of the total student population. The overwhelming majority of them (5,338) were studying, while 637 students completed a company placement abroad. The average duration of student mobility was 5.9 months for studies, while the duration for company placements was 4.6 months. The average EU monthly grant was €197 for studies and €320 for company placements. In total €9,016,000 was spent on Erasmus mobility actions in 2009/10. For the most recent trends in the evolution of the share of students studying abroad, see Table A 4 in the Annex. Under the framework of the Leonardo da Vinci programme 147 projects were selected in 2010 receiving grants of €3,792,739.

3.3 Sectors where traineeships are prevalent

Most of the stakeholders interviewed were not able to identify specific sectors with problematic traineeship practices. According to representatives of state education institutions practices rather depend on the situation of the regional labour market.

3.4 Profile/patterns of traineeships

During 2000-2001 large surveys were carried out to map the situation at secondary vocational training/education level.⁴ Although these surveys were done in 2000-2001, findings are probably still valid.

The key findings were the following: only 35 per cent of pupils participating in an apprenticeship programme (lasting three to four years) had experience of a traineeship and only 20-30 per cent had the opportunity to participate in an traineeship longer than ten weeks. The average duration of an traineeship organised by vocational schools (who provide studies for four years and provide the maturity exam) is 4.5 weeks. More than 90 per cent of their students experience some form of traineeship but about 30 per cent of them

³ For this analysis we used the official statistics of Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci student mobility programmes: http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc920_en.htm and http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/doc/stat/slovenia_en.pdf

⁴ Kofroňová, O. – Vojtěch, J.: Šetření k realizaci odborného výcviku ve 3letých učebních a 4letých studijních oborech SOU. Praha, NÚOV 2000. Kofroňová, O. – Vojtěch, J.: Šetření k realizaci praxe žáků studijních oborů SOŠ v reálném pracovním prostředí. Praha, NÚOV 2001.

participate in an traineeship which lasts less than three weeks. A greater proportion of traineeships happen during the third year of studies.

3.5 Recruitment process of and equity of access to traineeships

Traineeship is compulsory for all students of VET. It is detailed in individual School qualification frameworks. In many cases however apprenticeship programmes ('odborný výcvik') take place in the establishments of the secondary schools and not at work places. Traineeship in some disciplines (in medicine, for lawyers) is an obligatory part of university education. Representatives of student and youth organisations have complained that there is no transparent and centralised source of information on traineeship opportunities. Regarding retraining ('rekvalifikace') courses are offered by the regional Labour Offices to those registered unemployed, according to local and individual conditions.

3.6 Evolution of traineeships over time and impact of recent economic crisis on traineeships

No information was available.

3.7 Financing of traineeships

Retraining programmes ('rekvalifikace') are funded by the government. Until last year some of the traineeships for school-leavers and graduates were financed through a programme of Society useful working places ('Společensky účelná pracovní místa') of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. A programme subsidised by the European Social Fund, it helped thousands of participants from various socially handicapped groups to get training for jobs in the state sector and non-profit sector. Education at secondary schools including apprenticeship programmes ('odborný výcvik') is funded by the state through the regional governments. A limited number of short term international traineeships are funded through European mobility programmes like 'Leonardo da Vinci'. International traineeships in the commercial sector ('stáže') are usually financed by employers. Students however need to cover their travel costs. The Ministry of Education also operates a transformation and development programme called 'Free Mover' that provides some university students with smaller grants for further education abroad. Volunteer traineeships are financed by non-profit organisations themselves, in some cases also through the university stipends schemes. Often however financial contributions from the trainee or his/her parents are necessary. As we said earlier, €9,016,000 was spent on Erasmus mobility actions in 2009/10 and €3,792,739 was spent on grants of the Leonardo da Vinci programme.

3.8 Public perceptions about traineeships

No specific information on public debates about traineeship was available.

4. Practices and Content of Traineeships

4.1 Traineeships as part of education and/or labour market entry and integration for young people

As we said above a general educational reform has recently been launched in the Czech Republic with the aim to better adjust the demand and supply side of skill development. However, we did not find explicit content about the changes affecting the system of traineeship.

4.2 Issues about employer practices as regards traineeships

Practices and content of traineeships vary according to their type. Besides compulsory traineeships in secondary and tertiary educations (see above), systematic practice of traineeship can only be found in some of the major and international companies in the private sector. Among companies with defined systems of education that include traineeship are engineering plant complex Slovácké strojírna, the semi-state energy giant ČEZ and automotive company Škoda. Representatives of employers and state education organisations mutually cooperated in setting up Qualification Standards Frameworks for secondary education that includes traineeship. Stakeholder interviews also called attention to the unsystematic practice of traineeship at individual universities. These, in many cases, do not provide guidance for the traineeship of their students and are not very supportive in creating opportunities for students wanting to get international traineeship experience.

5. Trainee's Rights and Terms and Conditions

Trainees in secondary education are considered as students and do not have an employment status (ie they do not sign contract with employer). The conditions of traineeship are negotiated between the individual school/institution and employers. Students are not remunerated and their health insurance is covered by the state. International trainees have a 'dual status'. They are also considered students but they sign contract first with the intermediary student organisation and then with their employer abroad. The student organisation also negotiates its own contract with the student's employer, establishing responsibilities and conditions of cooperation. Students can also negotiate their traineeship contract directly with their employers. Conditions of these contracts usually contain health and social insurance, plus a minimum wage or per diem. Terms and rights of trainees in volunteer organisations are sometimes also established in written contracts but not exclusively. Trainees in non-profit organisations are not paid. Usually the receiving institution covers education costs and sometimes also some other expenses of the trainee. Representatives of youth organisations have complained about legislative obstacles in refunding travel and some other expenses, as well as the general lack of funding.

6. Quality Assurance of Traineeships

In secondary education the quality of traineeship is supported through the methodological guidance of the National Institution of Technical and Vocational Education (Národní ústav pro vzdělávání – NUOV) and the establishment of National Qualification Frameworks and School qualification Frameworks. The quality of education is controlled by the Czech School

Inspectorate and also by founders which are often regional governments. The Inspectorate however does not control the quality of traineeship carried out in private sector companies. Quality of traineeships in the case of international student organisations is assured through the internal rules of work and methodology of the international organisation and the accreditation system of the Ministry of Education. A similar accreditation process applies for organisations offering retraining courses. The quality of retraining ('rekvalifikace') can be also controlled by Labour Office. The quality of traineeships in the non-profit sector is established through a process of mentoring and the education system, based on a definition of 12 basic positions in the organisation and related competencies, qualifications and responsibilities.

In the case of such international student mobility programmes as Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci, their responsibilities are clearly defined.⁵ According to the quality assurance policies of these programmes, the sending organisation is responsible for the definition of the placement objectives (skills and competencies to be developed), the choice of the host organisation, the duration of the project and the content of the placement. It is also the responsibility of the sending organisation to select the participants, to establish a contract, to manage transport, accommodation, visa/work permit arrangements and social security cover and insurance, and to evaluate the personal and professional achievements of participants. The host organisation is responsible for assigning tasks and responsibilities to participants, identifying a tutor to monitor participants' training progress, and for providing practical support if required. The sending and hosting organisations are jointly responsible for negotiating a tailor-made training programme together with appropriate mentoring and monitoring arrangements. They also jointly establish validation procedures to ensure recognition of skills and competencies acquired, as well as establishing communication channels and evaluating the progress of the project on an on-going basis. The participant is responsible for doing his/her best to make the placement a success, abiding by the rules and regulations of the host organisation, informing the sending organisation of any problems or changes occurring in relation to the placement and for submitting a report in the specified format, together with requested supporting documentation in respect of costs, at the end of the placement.

7. Overall Assessment as Regards Traineeships

7.1 Benefits and drawbacks of traineeships

Due to the lack of any systematic evaluation of traineeship practices in the Czech Republic, it is impossible to assess the benefits and drawbacks of existing traineeship practices.

7.2 Effectiveness of traineeships

Although the global economic crisis affected the Czech Republic, the overall employment situation is slightly better than the EU-27 average. In contrast, the youth employment rate (25.2 per cent) is significantly lower than the EU-27 average (34.0 per cent) and is in line with the average employment rate of the post-socialist countries of the region. Youth unemployment affects secondary vocational school graduates most (8.9 per cent) followed by tertiary professional school graduates and secondary technical school graduates (4.8 per cent and 6.5 per cent, respectively). Youth unemployment has less effect on the higher education graduates (2.4 per cent) and the general secondary schools graduates (2.5 per cent). It is of crucial importance for the government to increase the employability of fresh

⁵ http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/doc/quality_en.pdf

graduates and introduce practice and profession-orientated training programmes. However, we are only at the beginning of this process and therefore it is hard to evaluate the attempts made to improve matching the skill needs and skill supply and estimate the effectiveness of these programmes.

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Annex

Table A 1: Youth employment rates (in the age 15-24) in some post-socialist countries

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
EU-27	37.3	36.7	36.0	35.7	36.1	36.5	37.3	37.4	35.0	34.0
Bulgaria	21.1	20.5	21.3	22.3	21.6	23.2	24.5	26.3	24.8	22.2
Czech Republic	34.4	32.4	29.8	27.7	27.5	27.7	28.5	28.1	26.5	25.2
Estonia	26.8	25.4	27.5	27.9	29.1	31.6	34.5	36.4	28.9	25.7
Latvia	29.0	28.8	32.7	29.7	32.6	35.9	38.4	37.2	27.7	26.4
Lithuania	22.6	25.2	23.6	20.6	21.2	23.7	25.2	26.7	21.5	19.2
Hungary	30.4	28.6	26.7	23.3	21.8	21.7	21.0	20.0	18.1	18.3
Poland	24.2	22.0	21.2	21.1	22.5	24.0	25.8	27.3	26.8	26.3
Romania	32.7	29.1	27.3	28.0	24.9	24.0	24.4	24.8	24.5	24.3
Slovenia	30.3	31.1	28.6	33.8	34.1	35.0	37.6	38.4	35.3	34.1
Slovakia	27.7	26.7	27.3	26.3	25.6	25.9	27.6	26.2	22.8	20.6

Source: Eurostat Data Explorer

Table A 2: Youth unemployment rate (in the age 15-24) in some post-socialist countries

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
EU-27	17.3	17.9	18.1	18.6	18.6	17.3	15.5	15.6	19.9	20.9
Bulgaria	39.3	35.6	27.1	24.5	22.3	19.5	15.1	12.7	16.2	23.2
Czech Republic	16.3	15.4	16.8	19.9	19.2	17.5	10.7	9.9	16.6	18.3
Estonia	24.5	17.3	24.2	23.5	15.9	12.0	10.0	12.0	27.5	32.9
Latvia	22.9	25.6	17.5	19.3	13.6	12.2	10.7	13.1	33.6	34.5
Lithuania	31.6	20.4	26.9	21.2	15.7	9.8	8.2	13.4	29.2	35.1
Hungary	10.7	11.4	12.9	14.4	19.4	19.1	18.0	19.9	26.5	26.6
Poland	39.2	41.6	41.4	40.1	36.9	29.8	21.7	17.3	20.6	23.7
Romania	17.6	22.2	19.5	22.3	20.2	21.4	20.1	18.6	20.8	22.1
Slovenia	15.7	14.8	15.3	14.0	15.9	13.9	10.1	10.4	13.6	14.7
Slovakia	38.9	37.7	32.9	32.8	30.1	26.6	20.3	19.0	27.3	33.6

Source: Eurostat Data Explorer

Table A 3: Unemployment rate of graduates according to the type of the school

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Secondary vocational school	26.4	32.7	23.8	22.7	20.9	15.7	13.6	8.9
Secondary technical school	16.1	15.9	20.8	14.9	13.3	10.1	9.1	6.5
General secondary school	10.5	8.9	9.6	6.3	5.3	3.9	3.4	2.5
Tertiary professional school	12.0	8.0	9.9	10.6	9.7	8.2	6.4	4.8
Higher education institutions	5.4	5.1	6.3	6.7	5.7	3.8	3.3	2.4

Source: Úlovcová et al., 2008, p. 62. quoted by Simberová, 2008, p. 4.

Table A 4: Share of outgoing Erasmus students as a percentage of the total student population between 2007 and 2010 in some New Member States

	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010
Bulgaria	0.44	0.54	0.62
Czech Republic	1.54	1.54	1.43
Hungary	0.87	0.98	1.04
Poland	2.41	2.40	2.44
Romania	1.64	1.20	1.28
Slovenia	1.03	1.13	1.20
Slovakia	0.78	0.88	0.92

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc920_en.htm

National Report on Traineeships Germany

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1. Traineeships as part of Member State's Youth Policy Measures

1.1 Overview of current situation of young people and traineeships as part of youth policy measures

In comparison to other European countries, youth unemployment in Germany is relatively low. However, labour market data reveal a significant difference between the overall unemployment rate (6.1 per cent in June 2011) and youth unemployment, which was 9.1 per cent at the same time.¹ The term youth unemployment refers to all people under 25 years of age without employment.

In Germany, there is no general minimum wage, except for some specific sectors. Consequently, there is no minimum wage for trainees either. However, the Law on Vocational Training (BBiG) rules that trainees have to be compensated with appropriate remuneration. The question on what is appropriate will be discussed in a later chapter.

The main challenge for young people in Germany today is to get into regular employment that is long-term and decently paid. Though, difficulties in finding a job differ tremendously between fields of specialisation, for example engineers find it far less challenging to get into employment than social scientists, bringing young people into employment can be seen as a challenge for the society as a whole. Many young people are confronted with job risks which prevent them making long-term life plans. This in turn can have fundamental impact on the demographic development of society.

Traineeships play a very important role in ensuring a smooth transition both between school and professional training or university and between graduation from university or training and employment. They offer an essential opportunity for young people to acquire practical skills that prepare them for their professional career. For example, trainees get the chance to implement theoretical skills in practice. Furthermore, trainees can find out how far these theoretical skills are feasible in practice. Finally, trainees are able to find out more about their personal skills. In this sense, traineeships also contribute to the professional orientation of young people.

Concerning measures to promote job mobility of young people, we have to differentiate between European, national and state level mobility. On European level, there are different initiatives either for university students (Erasmus) or people in vocational trainings (Leonardo da Vinci) that encourage getting international experience. On national level, there is Bafög (Bundesausbildungsförderungsgesetz). Bafög is a grant given to students at certain kind of secondary schools and universities. Besides the social aspect, it encourages mobility, as the monthly payment includes housing cost.

On state level, there are some state initiatives that promote young people to leave the region for education purposes. Grants are given and do not have to be refunded, as long as the beneficiary returns after graduation. These offers are found in regions with high youth unemployment and a lack of vocational training supply.

With regard to the goal of traineeships to facilitate practical skills, traineeships are of special importance for university students and graduates. Due to the practical focus of the German vocational training system, traineeships play a less important role in this sector. In Germany, the most common kind of vocational training is the so called 'Duale Berufsausbildung', which consists of theoretical training at a school as well as practical

¹ Statistisches Bundesamt

training in a company or organisation. Within this dual training system, the apprentice is employed in a company to gain practical skills. Therefore, there is no need for traineeship for those participating in this system. However, traineeships can smooth the transition from school into a dual training programme, especially for those with a low level of formal education, but with practical talent. A traineeship can offer the opportunity for those trainees to show their practical skills. Furthermore, traineeships can be a substitute for the practical part of a vocational training. In areas with few businesses, supply for dual training can be very low. In this case, school graduates can carry out their traineeship in secondary schools that offer a vocational certificate.

Practical phases are increasingly built into Higher education curricula. In some cases there are strong links between specific companies and HE-Providers, namely the Fachhochschulen. Arrangements span from short-term traineeships and project-based long term internships to the integration of HE-Study and Apprenticeship.

Table 1.1: Summary Table of main Traineeship Types in Germany

Traineeship Types/Programme	Brief Description
Short-term traineeships with a professional orientation purpose	Short-term trainees stay in a company for just one or a few weeks for professional orientation purposes. These traineeships are integrated in schooling and are compulsory in most cases. They usually target 14-18 year old school students.
Traineeships as a mandatory part of a school-based vocational training	Traineeships as a mandatory part of a school-based vocational training course are long-term (several months). This type of traineeship can be interpreted as a substitute for the practical part of a dual VET course within a particular company, which is characteristic for the German vocational system.
Voluntary traineeships as opportunity to gain a position in the dual VET system	Voluntary traineeships can be an opportunity for those that have finished their school career and are looking for a dual VET position. Passing a voluntary traineeship can be an important strategy for school graduates with a relatively low level of formal education, but good practical skills.
Mandatory or voluntary traineeships of students at universities and polytechnics	Traineeships of students at universities and polytechnics can either be mandatory or voluntary, depending on study regulations. Usually all students in Germany complete one or more traineeship to be prepared for the labour market, even though it is not compulsory.
Voluntary traineeships of graduates of vocational training, polytechnics or universities	Voluntary traineeships of graduates of vocational training, polytechnics or universities are usually designed to give graduates practical skills and experience, assist in their resume building and put them in touch with prospective employers. This type of traineeship is the most criticised, as there are cases of voluntary graduate trainees being exploited as cheap labour.
'Referendariat'	The Referendariat is compulsory for law school graduates who want to work as a lawyer, judge etc. Teachers as well as graduates of technical subjects like architecture, construction engineering or environmental science who are aiming towards employment as civil servants also have to pass a Referendariat. This kind of traineeship is subject to

Traineeship Types/Programme

Brief Description

	detailed regulation by federal or state law (duration of 24 months, remuneration etc.)
'Praktisches Jahr' (Practical Year)	The 'Praktisches Jahr' is mandatory for all medical students. It is regulated in the Approbationsordnung (Act on licensure of medics) and is required for medical practitioners.
'Volontariat'	The 'Volontariat' is a type of traineeship for university graduates in the fields of media, publishing and advertising. Within a time period of one to two years, depending on experience, the trainee gains skills that are required for professional practice in these sectors. In contrast to, for example the Referendariat, there is no federal or state regulation, but there are collective labour agreements (at least for some sectors), that rule on content, duration and remuneration.
'Trainee-Programm'	The so called 'Trainee-Programm' is a type of traineeship that aims to prepare university graduates for expert and executive positions. This kind of traineeship is very similar to a regular employment, though remuneration is lower. The trainee has a limited contract with an employer for one to two years. During that time, trainees work in different sections of the company.
Transnational Traineeships (Leonardo da Vinci Program, Carlo-Schmid-Programm)	In many cases transnational traineeships are identical to other types of traineeships (e.g. parts of a 'Referendariat' take place abroad). However, there are also specific programmes for transnational traineeships: e.g. the EU-funded Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci programme or the German Carlo-Schmid-programme, that offers traineeships in international institutions like EU, UN, OECD etc. to students and university graduates.

2. Legislative Framework for Traineeships

2.1 Legal framework for and governance of traineeships

Although in Germany there is no explicit law on traineeships, trainees are not unprotected. They are subject to different kinds of laws that apply specifically to young employees, to apprentices or to all employees. As trainees are subject to diverse legislation, there is no central institution that oversees the implementation and monitoring this legislation. For most aspects, though, the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the ministries of education at federal and state level are responsible.

Regarding the legislation which applies to trainees we first have to distinguish between two types of traineeships: compulsory and voluntary traineeship. Furthermore, there is some specific regulation in place for certain professions.

Both kinds of traineeships are subject to the Arbeitszeitgesetz (ArbZG, Law on working hours) and Jugendarbeitsschutzgesetz (JArbSchG, Law for the protection of adolescents at work). They rule, that teenagers under 15 years old are not allowed to work for more than

seven hours per day and 35 hours per week. For those from aged 15 to 18 the limit is the same on schooldays. During vacations this can be extended to eight hours daily, or 40 hours weekly. Furthermore, working hours are limited to day time, as night shifts are prohibited.²

Mandatory internships, irrespective of whether they are vocational or academic, are controlled by Schulordnungen (school regulations) and Studien- und Prüfungsordnungen (study and examination regulations of colleges and universities). They define the duration of traineeships and oblige employers to issue detailed certificates on the activities of the trainee and the experience he or she acquired. Besides that, there is no further specific ruling. Contracts can be concluded either orally or in writing, remuneration is voluntary and there is no entitlement to holidays.

Voluntary trainees are subject to the regulations described above. However, concerning their rights they are in a stronger position than those in a compulsory traineeship. Firstly, according to § 17 Law on vocational training (BBiG) they are entitled to appropriate remuneration. In addition, payment continues during times of illness and the employer has to concede holidays, according to the regulations of the Bundesurlaubsgesetz (BUrlG, Federal law on holidays).³

So far, there is no common definition of 'appropriate' remuneration. According to the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS), whether compensation is appropriate or not depends on the quality of the traineeship. The higher the qualification of a trainee and benefit for the company the higher the remuneration has to be. If a trainee has few qualifications and is the main beneficiary in the trainee-employer relationship, an appropriate payment can also be quite low. For example, a trainee in IT service who has completed a degree in this field should get about the same remuneration as a regular employee fulfilling the same tasks. Referring to BMAS, the main criterion for appropriate remuneration is the contribution of the trainee to the work process and not the question of whether the remuneration covers the trainee's living expenses. BMAS offers a monthly payment of €300 for all trainees and endorses a directive that suggests all Federal Ministries and Agencies should award the same amount. This directive would apply to voluntary as well as mandatory traineeships, though it has to be emphasised, there is no legislation that guarantees any compensation to those completing a compulsory traineeship.

Courts also deal with the traineeship jurisdiction. However, so far there have only been a few cases, which might be due to the fact that trainees usually do not have sufficient funds available to sue their employer. Furthermore, they might be content to take a poor traineeship instead of being unemployed. Two cases refer to the question of appropriate remuneration. First, it had to be determined whether the Law on Vocational Training (BBiG) applies not only to apprentices but also to trainees. The courts argued, that BBiG also addresses trainees, as § 26 BBiG rules that §§ 10 to 23 and 25 BBiG applies to all people that are 'employed to gain knowledge, practice and professional experience'. Accordingly, (voluntary) trainees can also refer to § 17 BBiG and claim appropriate payment.⁴ The Arbeitsgericht Berlin (Labour Court) also tries to answer the question of what is 'appropriate'. The judges argue that, although it is not clearly defined what a 'noticeable disproportion' between work and compensation is, a salary which is less than one third of the wage determined by collective labour agreements is unethical and, as a result, illegal. Furthermore, according to the Arbeitsgericht Berlin, the prohibition on paying unethical wages cannot be avoided by calling the employment 'traineeship'. Consequently, the 'appropriate' salary of trainees has to be at least one third of the collective labour agreements' wages.⁵ Although this is a promising jurisdiction from trainees' viewpoint, it has

² BMAS/BMBF: Praktika – Nutzen für Praktikanten und Unternehmen, Bonn 2011.

³ BMAS/BMBF: Praktika – Nutzen für Praktikanten und Unternehmen, Bonn 2011

⁴ Landesarbeitsgericht Düsseldorf, Aktenzeichen: 3 SA 877/5, 08.11.2005.

⁵ Arbeitsgericht Berlin, Aktenzeichen: 28 Ca 6934/07, 10.08.2007

to be kept in mind that these ideas do not apply to compulsory traineeships and that these possible rights have to be claimed judicially by trainees.

The issue of remuneration remains without a definite answer. However, it has to be questioned whether a clearly defined compensation would satisfy the trainees' interests. Of course, a guaranteed monthly payment of €300 might rule out some misconduct, but probably not all. When trainees are in a situation in which they are mainly fulfilling routine tasks and are substituting regular jobs, €300 is not an adequate payment and the misconduct remains. Conversely, if we have traineeship positions that are highly beneficial to the trainee, but there is no or little advantage for the company or organisation, this might lead to abolition of such offers. As there are very different kinds of traineeships, flexible regulation can be advantageous for all parties.

Besides general regulation mentioned above, there are specific rules in place for certain kinds of university graduates. These are medical science and law graduates, teachers and also architects and engineers aiming a career in public service, e.g. with focus on city planning, construction work, environmental protection, etc.

Medical students are required to pass two practical sections of practical training, Formulator and Praktisches Jahr (Practical Year). These follow two theoretical parts of studies (one is general, the other one more specific) and are ruled in the Approbationsordnung (Act on licensure of medics). There is no regulation on remuneration. Therefore, Famulatur is usually unpaid; the Practical Year is often compensated with a few hundred Euros.

Law students complete practical training for two years after they first graduate. The period of practical training ends with a second examination that entitles them to work as an attorney or judge. The practical training period, the so called Referendariat, is divided into stages of three months that have to be completed at different places (e.g. work for a judge, state attorney, attorney, public administration). The trainee's legal status during this time differs between German states; in some states, the Referendariat is organised as an apprenticeship, in others the status is 'Beamter auf Probe' (civil servant in probation). Remuneration is defined by regulation in both cases and is about €1,000 gross monthly. The Referendariat of teachers, as well as architects and engineers in public service, is similarly regulated.

Either in addition or as a substitute for government regulation, traineeships are often subject to employment agreements at firm level which are negotiated between an employer and work council. One group subject to such agreements are trainees in newspaper and magazine companies. In Germany, journalists usually pass a so called 'Voluntariat', which lasts from one to two years, depending on experience. For those young journalists covered by these agreements, conditions on the length and content of the practical training as well as payment are defined. However, this only applies to the sectors above. All others can only refer to the regulations applicable for voluntary trainees.

2.2 Definition of traineeships and trainees

There is no explicit formulation in German laws defining a trainee. However, since according to courts § 26 BBiG not only covers apprentices but also voluntary trainees, we find an implicit definition: § 26 BBiG applies to all people that are 'employed to gain knowledge, practice and professional experience'. Thus, being a trainee always implies a learning outcome. According with this definition, the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS) emphasises the 'element of qualification'. This means, a traineeship is a kind of employment which is related to an increase in practical skills of the trainee. This 'element of qualification' enables trainees to transfer their theoretical knowledge and skills into practice. If this aspect is missing, we cannot define a work placement as a traineeship, even if labelled this way in a contract. As soon as the relationship has the character of regular employment, it is subject to common labour law and rules of remuneration. If the

relationship between an employer and an employee is just labelled as traineeship, BMAS speaks of an 'apparent traineeship'.

In addition to drawing a line between traineeships and regular employment, we can also distinguish between traineeships and visitations. This differentiation basically refers to short-term traineeships (usually 1-3 weeks) with a professional orientation purpose for school students. For example, a trainee in a car service business is a trainee in reference to the definition above, when he or she is involved in the work process (e.g. customer reception). If a traineeship is only characterised by an observation role, it can be defined as visitation. This latter differentiation, though, is not very important, as there is no difference in respect to legal status.

The legal status in comparison with regular employment and apprenticeship only differs between compulsory and voluntary traineeships. Whereas those completing a mandatory traineeship are only protected by school regulations and study and by the examination regulations of schools universities, voluntary trainees, as described at the beginning of this chapter, are subject to the same laws as respectively apprentices (Law on vocational training BBiG, Law for the protection of adolescents at work JArbSchG) and regular employees (Law on working hours ArbZG, Federal law on holidays BUrlG). However, the most important differences to regular employment are the 'element of qualification' of a traineeship and its duration. Whereas a traineeship is limited in time, regular employment aims, at least in most cases, at a long-term employer-employee relationship.

2.3 Legal provisions about aspects of traineeships

Since in Germany the legal framework and legal provisions are difficult to separate, all information concerning this part of the study is included in the first part of this chapter.

3. Availability of and Access to Traineeships

3.1 Statistics/Quantitative Information about traineeships

3.1.1 Overview

A large number of studies use statistical data on traineeships. Most of the available statistics concerning traineeships refer to university or college graduates. This is due to the fact, that the situation of this group has been part of the political debate in recent years. For instance, critics pointed out that there is a high number of young people with an academic degree that only hold traineeship positions. Accordingly, their remuneration is very low and they are not able to cover minimal living expenses. As a result, according to critics this situation imposes costs on society, as this group then depends on welfare benefits.

Another focal point among university and college graduates have been Bachelor's graduates. The German university system traditionally did not have a distinction between Bachelor's and Master's degrees. All degrees, Diploma and Magister as well as state examinations, were Master's-equivalents. Since the Bologna process and the introduction of Bachelor's and Master's Degrees, relevance of Bachelor's graduates for the labour market has been unclear. For example, it is not yet defined which functions could be taken by Bachelor's graduates. Additionally, 62 per cent businesses have observed a lack of skills amongst graduates at Bachelor's level.⁶

⁶ Marc Glasl et al.: Road Map Praktikum – Studie 2010, Esslingen 2010.

3.1.2 Trainees by demographic characteristics and degree

A study on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS) of 2008 shows demographic characteristics of trainees after graduation. This included both graduates of school-based and dual VET and university graduates. The overall data set revealed that 20 per cent of graduates had completed a traineeship. The average number of traineeships completed was 1.9.⁷ Regarding gender, the data showed no significant difference between men and women; 19 per cent of men participated in an average of 1.8 traineeships after graduation, 20 per cent of women completed an average of 2.0 traineeships. However, when we take a closer look at the different kinds of degrees we find a more detailed picture. In dual VET 19 per cent of men and 18 per cent of women completed a post-graduate traineeship. In school-based vocational training though 38 per cent of men and only 27 per cent of women were employed as trainees. Among university graduates, results were reversed; 30 per cent of women, but only 19 per cent of men completed a traineeship.⁸ Another study indicated similar differences between men and women, though at a lower level. According to the study of the Institute for Research on the University System (HIS: Institut für Hochschulforschung) 17 per cent of the female university graduates were trainees but only 11 per cent of the male graduates were.⁹ Although the proportions differed between the studies, the share of women doing a post-graduate traineeship after university was considerably higher than among men. Looking for a reason, a comparison between the proportion of graduates with an electrical engineering and those with a Magister degree (e.g. Social Sciences) in traineeship positions indicates, that this can possibly be attributed to subject choice. Whereas the engineering field is strongly dominated by male students, Magister studies (Master's equivalent), which cover social and cultural subjects as well as linguistics, are more often chosen by female students. As only 2 per cent of electrical engineering graduates take up a traineeship position, but 40 per cent of Magister students we might have found the main reason for the gender differences¹⁰

Comparing different age groups, we observe the general trend that as age increased the proportion of trainees decreased. Whereas 25 per cent of the 18 to 24 year olds were post-graduate trainees, in age groups 25 to 29 and 30 to 34 only 20 per cent and 17 per cent respectively were trainees.¹¹ With regard to the type of degree we find some significant differences. Whereas only 19 per cent of the graduates of a dual VET completed an average of 1.9 traineeships, among those with school-based training 31 per cent completed an average of 2.2 traineeships. Twenty four per cent of university graduates took an average of 1.6 traineeship positions. These findings indicate that the practically oriented dual VET programmes improve young people's adjustment to a new workplace and, therefore, increases the likelihood of getting into a regular job right after graduation. These differences also explain regional variations between the Western part of Germany (18 per cent) and Eastern Germany (26 per cent).¹² In Eastern Germany there are fewer businesses than in the Western part, especially in rural areas. Thus, the VET system often relies on school-based training, which seems to be related to lower competitiveness on the labour market.

3.1.3 Number and duration of traineeships

Regarding graduates, data reveal differences between the numbers of completed traineeships. Graduates of a school-based vocational training complete an average of 2.2 traineeships, whereas graduates of a dual VET or those with a university degree only

⁷ Tatjana Fuchs / Andreas Ebert: Was ist gute Arbeit? Anforderungen an den Beruf aus Sicht der jungen Generation, BMAS, Stadtbergen 2008.

⁸ Tatjana Fuchs / Andreas Ebert, Stadtbergen 2008.

⁹ Kolja Briedis / Karl-Heinz Minks: Generation Praktikum – Mythos oder Massenphänomen, HIS-Institut für Hochschulforschung, Hannover 2005.

¹⁰ Kolja Briedis / Karl-Heinz Minks: Generation Praktikum, Hannover 2005.

¹¹ Tatjana Fuchs / Andreas Ebert: Was ist gute Arbeit?, Stadtbergen 2008.

¹² Tatjana Fuchs / Andreas Ebert: Was ist gute Arbeit?, Stadtbergen 2008.

complete respectively 1.9 and 1.6 traineeships on average.¹³ Yet, it has to be pointed out that students often do traineeships *during* their studies. A huge majority of university graduates who are not obliged to undertake a traineeship due to curricular regulation, complete one or more traineeships voluntarily (85 per cent). Fifty two per cent have held at least one trainee position, 23 per cent have been employed as trainee in two different places, 8 per cent in three and 2 per cent even in four companies or organisations.¹⁴

Concerning the duration of traineeships there are only data available for university students and graduates. For graduates, we find that the average duration is six months for paid and five months for unpaid traineeships.¹⁵ Regarding the duration of traineeships during university studies, 50 per cent do not stay longer than three months in the same organisation. As it is a common rule of thumb, that traineeships up to three months are useful for trainees, whereas everything beyond that is primarily valuable for the employer, this number is positive from the trainees' viewpoint. However, 33 per cent of traineeships last three to six months, and we still have a relatively high proportion of people staying for more than six months as a trainee at a single employer (17 per cent).¹⁶

3.1.4 Transnational Traineeships

Regarding the number of Germans participating in transnational traineeships, there are no general data available. However, there are data published by the European Commission showing the number of participants of the Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci programmes. In Germany, more than 4,800 students took part in a transnational traineeship that included placement and funding through the Erasmus programme (academic year 2009/2010). Only France exceeded this number.¹⁷ Regarding Leonardo da Vinci, an increasing number of Germans use this programme. Between 2007 and 2011 the number of participants has risen from 12,573 to 14,817.¹⁸ In Germany, 68.4 per cent of those who stayed abroad for education or training purposes stayed for less than three weeks, only 15.3 per cent stayed for three months or more.¹⁹

3.1.5 Transition from Traineeship to employment

With regard to the transition from traineeship to employment, the results indicate some difficulties for young people in getting into regular employment. Fifty per cent of all trainees get into a regular job within the first 12 months after graduation. For 15 per cent the traineeship is a direct path into employment. Only 4 per cent continue doing traineeships for more than 12 months.²⁰

Results of BMAS differentiated between two groups of trainees; those doing one traineeship and those completing two or more traineeship positions. Thirty six per cent of all trainees stay in one such position for up to three months, 10 per cent up to six months and 15 per cent stay longer than six months. Still, a relatively large number of 15 per cent complete two or more traineeships with a total duration of more than one year.²¹ As a result, we can conclude that getting into an endless cycle of traineeship positions is an issue to some and

¹³ Tatjana Fuchs / Andreas Ebert: Was ist gute Arbeit?, Stadtbergen 2008.

¹⁴ Marc Glasl et al.: Road Map Praktikum – Studie 2010.

¹⁵ Dieter Grün / Heidemarie Hecht: Generation Praktikum? Prekäre Beschäftigungsformen von Hochschulabsolventinnen und -absolventen, Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund, Berlin 2010.

¹⁶ Kolja Briedis: Übergänge und Erfahrungen nach dem Hochschulabschluss; Ergebnisse der HIS-Absolventenbefragung 2005, HIS-Institut für Hochschulforschung, Hannover 2005.

¹⁷ European Commission, http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc920_en.htm.

¹⁸ European Commission, http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/statistics_en.htm.

¹⁹ Flash Eurobarometer (2011) 319b: Education and Training, Mobility, Employment And Entrepreneurship. Youth on the Move. Available online: [fl_319b_sum_en](http://ec.europa.eu/education/fl_319b_sum_en).

²⁰ Kolja Briedis: Übergänge und Erfahrungen nach dem Hochschulabschluss, Hannover 2005.

²¹ Tatjana Fuchs / Andreas Ebert, Stadtbergen 2008.

transition from traineeship to regular employment does not work smoothly for all graduated interns.

3.1.6 Remuneration of traineeships

Concerning remuneration we only have data available for students and university graduates. Among this group, a large proportion (68 per cent) of all traineeships do not offer remuneration. Seventy three per cent of mandatory traineeships, which are required to complete a course of studies, are unpaid. With regard to voluntary traineeships the proportion is still 56 per cent.²² Considering the regulation on appropriate compensation by the Law on vocational training (BBlG), this number indicates a problematic situation for trainees.

With reference to gender differences, there is evidence of a gap between men and women. The proportion of unpaid traineeships among women is 55%, but only 41 per cent for men.²³ Regarding paid traineeships only, the findings differ between studies. According to a study of Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund (Federation of Trade Unions), the average trainee salary is €543 for women and €741 for men. The Hans Böckler Foundation identifies far lower numbers. According to that study, payment differs between €307 for women and €566 for men with a total average of €364. Regarding salary differences between men and women, we have to take into consideration that these might be assigned to different professional choices and do not express discrimination. For example, looking at the variation between sectors, we find an extraordinary high proportion of unpaid traineeships in art, culture and media. Whereas 27 per cent of all traineeships can be attributed to this field, 41 per cent of trainees without payment work in art, culture or media.²⁴

In addition to average compensation, the study of Hans Böckler Foundation showed different salary groups. Results revealed that only a small share of trainees would be able to cover their living expenses with their remuneration, as only 9 per cent received more than €800; 6 per cent of the trainees got a payment of up to €200, 23 per cent from €200 to €400, and 22 per cent between €400 and €800.²⁵

3.1.7 Quality of traineeship

Besides criticising inappropriate remuneration, public debate has also referred to the quality of traineeships and found the benefit for trainees as a reason for censure. However, findings in that field are overwhelmingly positive. Eighty three per cent of the interviewees stated, that their traineeship was beneficial in terms of extending their experience and practical knowledge.²⁶ A study on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) found out that 70 per cent held the opinion that being a trainee was very useful for getting information. Moreover, 67 per cent said that their duties as a trainee were at a good level. In other words, they were involved in tasks with good learning outcome.²⁷ According to a study of the HIS-Institute (Institute for Research on the University System) 64 per cent of interviewees said that the traineeship content was good, 61 per cent experienced good mentoring, and 57 per cent and 66 per cent respectively stated that their traineeship was useful for professional development and orientation.²⁸

²² Marian Krawietz / Peter Müßig-Trap / Janka Willige: Praktika im Studium, HISBUS-Blitzbefragung – Kurzbericht Nr. 13, HIS-Institut für Hochschulforschung, Hannover 2006.

²³ Dieter Grün / Heidemarie Hecht: Generation Praktikum?, Berlin 2010.

²⁴ Dieter Grün / Heidemarie Hecht: Generation Praktikum?, Berlin 2010.

²⁵ Boris Schmidt / Heidemarie Hecht: Generation Praktikum 2011. Praktika nach Studienabschluss. Die wichtigsten Ergebnisse, Hans-Böckler-Stiftung, Berlin 2011.

²⁶ Tatjana Fuchs / Andreas Ebert: Was ist gute Arbeit?, Stadtbergen 2008.

²⁷ Kolja Briedis / Karl-Heinz Minks: Generation Praktikum, Hannover 2005.

²⁸ Marian Krawietz / Peter Müßig-Trap / Janka Willige: Praktika im Studium, Hannover 2006.

3.2 Sectors where traineeships are prevalent

There is little data available on differentiation between sectors. The BMAS-study from 2008, which referred to all trainees, indicated that 16 per cent of all trainees worked in industry or the construction sector. Fifteen per cent of the traineeship positions were in the fields of health, veterinary or welfare and 12 per cent of the positions were in trade, 7 per cent in education and 6 per cent in media, art and culture.²⁹

As regards the specific situation of university students or graduates, BMAS experts recommended differentiation by subject and respectively degree, instead of dividing groups by sector, as graduates of very different fields of study can be found in one sector. Traditionally, social scientists, philologist etc. are much more likely to be forced into a traineeship position than engineers or medics.

3.3 Profile/Patterns of traineeships

There is no specific information available on this aspect.

3.4 Recruitment process of and equity of access to traineeships

There is no specific information available on this aspect.

3.5 Evolution of traineeships over time and impact of recent economic crisis on traineeships

There is no specific information available on this aspect.

3.6 Financing of traineeships

3.6.1 Funding Opportunities for national and transnational traineeships

There is a variety of funding opportunities for German trainees, especially for transnational traineeships. For domestic traineeships, students of low income families are eligible for Bafög (Federal grant on financial support for students). In some instances, this grant can be extended to international traineeships. Furthermore, there are specific programmes for transnational traineeships. The Carlo-Schmid-Program aims to support students who want to gain practical work experience in international organisations. Furthermore, the short-term scholarships of the DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) apply to students looking for traineeships in international organisations or German institutions abroad (e.g. the German Historic Institute). Additionally, financial resources are available through the EU-funded programmes Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci. In the academic year 2009/2010 German students participating in the Erasmus programme received an average monthly payment of €352 to finance a traineeship abroad.³⁰ The Leonardo da Vinci programme, which supports companies that engage in international exchange related to vocational education and training, contributed a total of €21,718,917 million to projects and partnerships that allowed young people to gain practical experience abroad.³¹ In 2010, among those young Germans going abroad 72.3 per cent used national or regional study

²⁹ Tatjana Fuchs / Andreas Ebert: Was ist gute Arbeit?, Stadtbergen 2008.

³⁰ European Commission, http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc/stat/0910/countries/germany_en.pdf.

³¹ European Commission, http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/doc/stat/germany_en.pdf.

loans grants as financial resource and 18.5 per cent received money from EU-funded mobility programmes.³²

3.6.2 Funding practices of trainees in Germany

As described in the section on remuneration, the large majority of trainees are not able to cover their living expenses with traineeship compensation. According to a study of the Hans Böckler Foundation from 2011, which focussed on the situation of college and university graduates, 40 per cent of the post-degree traineeships were unpaid. The second largest group received €200 to €400 per month.³³ Only 9 per cent received a monthly payment of €800 or more. To put this into perspective, it is worth looking at the level of unemployment benefits. A single person, who is without a job for more than twelve months, gets a monthly payment of €364. In addition he is entitled to get paid for an apartment of not more than 45 m² and a bonus for heating costs. The total of these benefits varies, as they depend on the actual rent. However, we can suppose, that a realistic total is about €800. As a result, a large majority of trainees have to rely on other financial resources to cover their living expenses.

According to information of a BMAS executive, a major proportion (48 per cent) of all trainees are supported by other people, primarily parents. Twenty seven per cent depend on social benefits. They receive the difference between traineeship compensation and basic living expenses. Eighteen per cent work part-time while they are doing traineeship. The study of the Hans-Böckler-Foundation delivered specific results for university graduates. Among this group 56 per cent were supported by their parents, 43 per cent used their own savings and 22 per cent depended on welfare benefits (multiple answers were possible).³⁴

3.7 Public perceptions about traineeships

In recent years, the public perception of traineeships has been dominated by reports of university graduates involved in traineeship relations. This has been seen as a problem, as most traineeships are unpaid or offer low remuneration and the costs of the trainees' living expenses are imposed on society. This has put pressure on politics to deal with this issue. All three opposition parties, Social Democrats, Green Party and Die Linke, have recently put forward proposals for regulations. These proposals will be discussed in chapter 5. However, the current government of Christian Democrats and the Liberal Party denied further regulation, arguing that additional rules might lead to a loss of traineeship positions. The Institute for Employment Research (IAB) supports this view with empirical evidence from a survey among businesses.³⁵ Therefore, the government favoured the development of guidelines for traineeships that ensure transparency and orientation for both trainee and employer.

With regard to transnational traineeships, Eurobarometer data of 2010 revealed interesting results about employers' perceptions of the importance of transnational mobility among new recruits. Of the respondents, 45.8 per cent rather disagreed and 30.2 per cent strongly disagreed with the statement that it was very important that new recruits have done a traineeship abroad. Similarly, more than 86 per cent disagreed with the statement that having studied abroad was a very important attribute for new recruits.³⁶

³² Flash Eurobarometer (2011) 319b: Education and Training, Mobility, Employment And Entrepreneurship. Youth on the Move. Available online: fl_319b_sum_en.

³³ Boris Schmidt / Heidemarie Hecht: Generation Praktikum 2011, Berlin 2011.

³⁴ Dieter Grün / Heidemarie Hecht: Generation Praktikum?, Berlin 2010.

³⁵ Christian Hohendanner / Martina Rebien: Umfang und Bedeutung von Praktika aus betrieblicher Perspektive, Nürnberg 2011.

³⁶ Flash Eurobarometer (2010): Employers' perception of graduate employability. Available online: fl_304.

4. Practices and Content of Traineeships

4.1 Traineeships as part of education and/or labour market entry and integration for young people

In Germany, there are various forms of traineeships that have become crucial in preparing young people for the labour market. Besides their importance in terms of providing practical skills and experience, they also play a role in recruitment. This includes both vocational and academic fields of occupation. We can distinguish between several different types of traineeships. Some of them are compulsory and required by training or study regulations, others are voluntary. The different types offer opportunities for school students, apprentices, university students and graduates as well as those that are between two different stages of their career and need to gain practical experience.³⁷

1. First, there are short-term trainees, who stay in a company for just one or a few weeks for professional orientation purposes. These traineeships are integrated in schooling and compulsory in most cases.
2. Second, we have trainees that complete long-term traineeships which are embedded into vocational training at a school. In Germany, the most common kind of VET is the so called Duale Berufsausbildung. This dual system consists of theoretical training at school as well as practical training in a company or organisation. Within this system, the apprentice is employed in the company, where he or she acquires practical skills. Therefore, compulsory traineeships as part of vocational schooling can be interpreted as a substitute for the practical part of dual VET within a specific company.
3. A third type of trainee includes those that have already finished their school career and are looking for a dual VET position. They might do a voluntary internship in a company, aiming for contract for full-time professional training. This strategy can be of especial importance for those adolescents with relatively low levels of formal education, but good practical skills.
4. As a fourth type, there are the traineeships of students at universities and polytechnics. These traineeships can be either mandatory or voluntary, depending on study regulations.
5. The fifth type of trainees are graduates of vocational training, polytechnics or universities. These traineeships are always voluntary, except for in certain fields of study like law or medical science. As for the fourth type, traineeships of this kind are usually designed to give trainees practical skills and experience, help them build their resume and put them in touch with prospective employers.
6. Another type of traineeship is the Practical Year of medical students and the Referendariat of law school graduates, teachers and students of technical subjects like architecture, construction engineering or environmental science, who are aiming for employment as civil servants. These kinds of traineeships are subject to detailed regulation by federal or state law (see chapter 2).
7. Similar to the Referendariat we have the so called 'Volontariat', which is very common in the fields of media, publishing and advertising. Within a period of one to two years, depending on experience, the trainee gains skills that are required for professional practice in these sectors. In contrast to the Referendariat there is no federal or state

³⁷ Gerd Busse: Trainees, Praktikanten & Co. – Ausbildung und Einsatz besonderer Personengruppen im Betrieb, Hans-Böckler-Stiftung, Düsseldorf 2009.

regulation, but collective labour agreements are in place (at least for some sectors), that rule on content, duration and remuneration. (see chapter 2)

8. Furthermore, we have a type of traineeship which aims to prepare university graduates for expert and executive positions. This kind of traineeship is very similar to a regular employment, though remuneration is lower. The trainee has a limited contract with an employer for one to two years. During that time, trainees work in different sections of the company. Despite recent media reports on misuse, these kinds of traineeships usually aim towards regular employment after their termination.
9. Finally, there are transnational traineeships. Although listed as a separate type, in many cases transnational traineeships can be identical to other types of traineeships that just take place in a foreign country. For example, these could be traineeships of university students and graduates as well as law students doing one of their stages in a law firm outside Germany or in one of the EU institutions. Furthermore, transnational traineeships as part of the Erasmus and the Leonardo da Vinci programme belong to this category. Additionally, with the Carlo-Schmid-Program, we have a more specific example of a transnational traineeship in Germany. Part of the programme line offers traineeships in international institutions like EU, UN, OECD etc.

4.2 Issues about employer practices as regards traineeships

There is no evidence of questionable practices in certain sectors. There is no question that there is misuse to some degree with traineeship positions. However, it can be assumed that all sectors show both positive and negative examples. Possible negative outcomes are extraordinary long traineeships, traineeships lacking a qualification benefit and trainees being employed as freelancers to avoid labour regulation. Nevertheless, according to experts of ministries and industry representatives it has to be emphasised, that only very few employers show questionable practices. The overwhelming majority offer traineeships with benefits for both employers and trainees.

5. Trainee's Rights and Terms and Conditions

The trainees' rights, terms and conditions are those described in chapter 2. In recent years there has been a discussion as to whether the regulation in place is sufficient to ensure trainees' protection. The political debate primarily centred on alleged exploitation of graduates with a university degree, the possible substitution of regular labour for trainees and the thesis of an endless cycle of traineeships. Although data revealed some statistical evidence for criticism it remains unclear how far the intensity of the debate, under the buzz phrase 'generation traineeship', was pushed by media.

For years, interest groups, particularly unions, have called for legislative action to address these issues. Recently, each of the three opposition parties in the German Bundestag, the Social Democrats, Green Party and Die Linke introduced bills dealing with traineeships into the committee of education and research. Social Democrats claimed there should be a minimum remuneration of €350 per month. Similarly, the Green Party and Die Linke suggested a threshold of €300. In addition, Die Linke argued in favour of limiting the duration of internships to three months. The Green Party suggested written contracts and certification should be compulsory for all traineeships. These suggestions accord to those of the Hans Böckler Foundation, a union-affiliated institution. They outline different measures to improve the trainees' situation. Firstly, they demand a definition in law that a traineeship is an apprenticeship which serves primarily for the acquisition of practical knowledge, skills and experience. A clear definition could also help to divide trainee positions from regular

jobs. Secondly, the study suggests that written contracts should be obligatory and there needs to be a defined traineeship plan which follows certain goals. Thirdly, they claim a limit on traineeship duration of three months. The latter regulation seems reasonable, as learning outcomes usually decrease rapidly after that period of time and longer traineeships are primarily beneficial to employers. Finally, monthly allowances of at least €300 should be defined.³⁸

Opponents of increased regulation pointed out, that this might lead to a significant loss of traineeship opportunities.³⁹ According to a survey of Deutscher Industrie- und Handelskammertag (DIHK), new traineeship legislation might result in a loss of at least 100,000 placements. However, the number depends on the details of regulation. For example, a ruling of obligatory written contracts would be accepted by most companies and only 4.8 per cent stated that they would stop offering traineeship positions if this was brought in. However, when asked about a rule for reversal of evidence, which means that companies would have to prove in the case of conflict, that the work relationship with a trainee had the character of a traineeship and not of a regular employment, 45 per cent answered that they would abolish traineeships, whereas another 28 per cent felt they would reduce their offers.⁴⁰ It has to be kept in mind, that traineeships impose costs on businesses, especially those companies offering high quality traineeships, for example with mentors devoting a lot of time to the trainee. Every additional regulation is usually related to additional costs. This can be an obstacle for businesses, notably for small firms that find it difficult to deal with an increase in bureaucratic requirements. As a result, regulation might bring disadvantages to students and graduates as less traineeship positions would be offered. This could even exacerbate employment problems if we take into account that a traineeship always is an opportunity to get a regular job. Trainees can develop contacts and seize opportunities in the companies they work for. Moreover, experiences can be made that contribute to a successful application to another organisation.⁴¹

The governing parties, Christian Democrats and Liberals, follow this businesses point of view. However, they saw a need to address this issue, though, instead of regulation, their chosen means was transparency. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS) and the Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) developed guidelines on traineeships in cooperation with several associations of industry, businesses and trade. These guidelines ensure transparency on existing rules and offer orientation for both employers and trainees by listing labour rights and recommendations (e.g. written contracts, definition of goals).⁴²

6. Quality Assurance of Traineeships

With regard to the quality of traineeships there are data available on the evaluations from trainees' point of view. According to the BMAS-study of 2008, 72 per cent of interviewees stated that their internships extended their professional skills to a high or intermediate degree. For 17 per cent the traineeship experience was only a little beneficial and 11 per cent did not acquire additional skills at all. Having a look at the details, we can observe differences between those trainees with a university degree or school-based VET on the one side and a dual VET on the other. Dual VET graduates benefit far less from an internship than the other groups. This difference can be attributed to the practical orientation of dual VETs, which consist of schooling as well as practical training in a certain organisation. As graduates of dual professional training are practically skilled and well prepared for the job

³⁸ Boris Schmidt / Heidemarie Hecht: Generation Praktikum 2011, Berlin 2011.

³⁹ Christian Hohendanner / Martina Rebien: Umfang und Bedeutung von Praktika aus betrieblicher Perspektive, Nürnberg 2011.

⁴⁰ Axel Nitsche / Jan Kuper / Franziska Pankow: Gesetzliche Regelungen für Praktika. Die Sicht der Unternehmen, Berlin 2008.

⁴¹ Axel Nitsche / Jan Kuper / Franziska Pankow: Gesetzliche Regelungen für Praktika, Berlin 2008.

⁴² BMAS/BMBF: Praktika – Nutzen für Praktikanten und Unternehmen, Bonn 2011.

market, the experience of a traineeship is less beneficial for them.⁴³ A large majority (81 per cent) experienced good mentoring. However, among those trainees that received low remuneration or no payment 61 per cent felt exploited during their traineeship.⁴⁴ Beyond this negative aspect, other studies support the view that traineeships are generally of good quality in Germany. According to a study of HIS (Institute for Research on the University System), 64 per cent of student trainees had a satisfying learning experience and 61 per cent experienced good mentoring. For 57 per cent of the interviewees the traineeships were beneficial in terms of their professional development; 66 per cent stated they were helpful with respect to professional orientation.⁴⁵ Another study on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) referring to university graduates also indicated positive results. Seventy per cent of interviewees described their last traineeship as useful in terms of learning outcomes and 67 per cent said that the level of tasks they were given was reasonable. Yet, 62 per cent criticised the lack of traineeship plans or the fact that, where they existed, they were either not useful or not followed.⁴⁶

These empirical results support the view of the government and industry representatives that traineeships in Germany are of a good quality and there is no urgent need for legislative action to improve quality. Furthermore, often even critics of traineeships are not very critical about the content of traineeships, but rather regarding the fact that university graduates work as trainees and have difficulties getting into a regular employment. Therefore, it seems to be promising way for BMAS to offer guidelines that give orientation to both trainees and employers. First, trainees and employers get familiar with existing regulation. Second, both sides get suggestions as to how to organise their relationship. Finally, clear definitions of traineeship and regular employment would help trainees avoid finding themselves in a situation in which they are substituting for the regular labour force. As a result, the new guidelines can contribute to quality assurance.

However, whether relationships between trainees and the organisations they work for is fruitful and beneficial for both, depends not only on regulations and guidelines, but also on the actors itself. Trainees, for example, should be aware of misconduct by companies' and should not hesitate to leave their traineeship positions if these are not contributing to their professional development. They should also gain practical experience and sharpen their professional profile *during* their course of study – which most do – to be prepared for employment after graduation. In this context, closer cooperation between employers and universities would be desirable to supply students with necessary information about what is required to enter the job market successfully. According to an industry representative, so far this cooperation between businesses and universities is underdeveloped and sporadic. As a consequence of missing relationships the between working and educational worlds students lack an informational link to companies and organisations. Therefore, they do not get important information on professional opportunities and, as a result, are not able to judge whether they are interested in following the career path to a specific profession. Furthermore, students have little knowledge of required qualifications in the field to which they aspire. To establish this link between students and the labour market, universities and businesses should approach each other and find ways of supplying students with this valuable information. Information is a key issue for the transition of young people from universities, as they need answers to some important questions to be able to plan their career: What opportunities are out there? Which professional choice fits my qualification? How can I realise my professional choice?

⁴³ Tatjana Fuchs / Andreas Ebert: Was ist gute Arbeit?, Stadtbergen 2008.

⁴⁴ Tatjana Fuchs / Andreas Ebert: Was ist gute Arbeit?, Stadtbergen 2008.

⁴⁵ Marian Krawietz / Peter Müßig-Trap / Janka Willige: Praktika im Studium, Hannover 2006.

⁴⁶ Kolja Briedis / Karl-Heinz Minks: Generation Praktikum, Hannover 2005

7. Overall Assessment as regards Traineeships

7.1 Benefits and drawbacks of traineeships

Besides circumstances of obvious misuse, traineeships have no negative aspects for those in a traineeship position. First, trainees get the opportunity to gain practical skills and experience in their chosen field. Second, trainees can transfer their theoretical knowledge into practice. They can find out how exactly far application of theoretical skills is possible. Third, students and apprentices get familiar with work processes and methods. Fourth, trainees can establish contacts with prospective employers. Sometimes they get offered regular positions for after graduation. Fifth, traineeships contribute to the trainees' resume building. Students can build up a specific profile that smoothes the way for a career in the desired job. Finally, traineeships offer an opportunity for professional orientation. Trainees get familiar with work environments and get an idea about their career goals. In some cases a traineeship might be not very enriching for the trainee, as he or she finds out, that the choice does not fit with their interests, abilities and skills. However, it can also be seen as a valuable experience to be able to exclude one possible field of employment.

Employers also mostly benefit from traineeships. Primarily, hiring trainees is an essential recruitment channel. Employers can observe their prospective employees over a longer period of time, test their skills and learn more about their personalities to decide whether the trainee fits into the team. Furthermore, employers usually get motivated young people, as they are seeking an opportunity for future employment. Moreover, trainees can be useful for organisations during times of increased workload, as trainees can be hired short-term and flexibly. After all, there is the cost aspect. The businesses' point of view is that trainees are an investment in the sense of cost. However, this strongly depends on the trainees' experience. The more experienced trainees are, the more they contribute to the regular work processes.

7.2 Main risks that young people face in relation to traineeships

Regarding the main risks young people face today in Germany, we have to differentiate between two major groups; those of school graduates facing the challenge of finding a dual VET position on the one hand and university graduates on the other. School graduates face the risk of not finding a dual VET position. However, this issue has become less serious in recent years, since the government and business related associations initiated the *Ausbildungspakt* (National Pact on Training) in 2004. Conversely, a lack of qualified labour force has become a more important issue. Especially in certain sectors, like handicraft, businesses are often not able to fill their apprentice positions. On the one hand, this phenomenon is due to demographic change. Furthermore, some professions have suffered losses in terms of popularity.

On the other hand, though, unsatisfying qualifications of the applicants are often a motive for businesses, not to use their whole training capacities.

University graduates face the risk of an endless cycle of traineeships and low paid jobs. This risk, however, strongly differs between fields of study. Engineers, for example are often wooed by companies even before graduation. In contrast, linguists, social scientists etc. are more likely to have difficulties finding employment. Moreover, this group is exposed to the risk of not getting a job that fits its qualification. Whereas the unemployment rate among university graduates is far below average, this positive fact should not mask the fact that we do not know whether the individual job is adequate for the acquired degree.

7.3 Effectiveness of traineeships

As described in the previous chapters, the general effectiveness of traineeships in Germany is satisfying.

7.4 Good practice examples and recommendations

There are various examples of good practice traineeships in Germany in different economic sectors and it would be one-sided to just present one example of good practice. With regard to the general situation of trainees in Germany, we can conclude that misuse of trainees is an exception and most traineeships contribute to smooth transitions; particularly between school and VET and university and employment. Therefore, from the German point of view, there seems to be no urgent need for a strong legislative action. However, low-threshold regulation can be taken into account to avoid the most serious forms of misuse, e.g. extraordinary long traineeships, employment without learning outcomes for the trainee, low payment for trainees with high qualifications etc.

A possible measure could be the obligation to implement written contracts with defined goals. By this regulatory measure trainees and employers would be more aware of the content of traineeships and their rights and duties. Furthermore, trainees would have a reference point when there were reasons for complaints. Another measure could be the limitation of a single traineeship to three months. As the goal of an internship is the learning outcome for the intern, traineeships of more than three months are not reasonable, as the primary beneficiary is the employer. Besides that, limiting the duration can also avoid the substitution of the regular workforce with trainees.

A minimum wage for traineeships is a problematic issue. As there is a huge variety of traineeships in Germany, it is difficult to find *the* remuneration which would be appropriate to all kinds. If we had a minimum wage of €300 per month, which has been suggested in the recent political debate, this could either be too much or far too low. For example, for a school graduate without experience seeking a dual VET position in a handicraft business, this would be a quite high payment, as he or she probably would not be able to contribute much to the work process. However, if we look at the situation of a university graduate, maybe with some practical experience, this would be a very low payment. In this case, a mandatory remuneration of €300 might even lead to a more disadvantageous situation for a trainee, as firms could justify a low payment as their fulfilment of regulations.

An important issue, which is difficult to address with regulatory measures, is the lack of communication between businesses and organisations on the one side and students, trainees and educational institutions on the other. Communication, however, is essential to provide students with information on how to plan their career. Therefore, schools, universities, businesses and organisations should actively cooperate. A governmental strategic action plan could help to define goals and to lay out ways of implementation. As a result, cooperation between educational institutions and businesses could no longer just be sporadic, but a broadly applied programme to smooth the transition between education and employment. If this could be achieved, the issue of university graduates working in low paid traineeship positions could be obsolete.

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German Case Study Report

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In Germany regulation of traineeships is largely restricted to those schemes which are training related, and as such, are covered by the Federal Vocational Training Act (Berufsbildungsgesetz). At present, of particular interest in Germany is how far the new Bologna-Structure of Higher Education causes substitution effects in recruitment at the cost of recruitment from the vocational education sector. Therefore, the aim of the German case study is to investigate whether the 'package' of Bachelor's degree plus traineeships might develop as an alternative to the dual system for clerical or technical occupations.

Policy Framework

The various national and European education policies, including higher education policies, were combined and bundled together with the signing of the Bologna Declaration in 1999. The introduction of a two-tier system (Bachelor's and Master's degrees) is intended to make European university degrees comparable, increase mobility and improve cooperation in the area of quality assurance of university education.⁴⁷

The German university system traditionally did not have a distinction between Bachelor's and Master's degrees. All traditional German degrees (Diplom, Magister, state examinations) were Master's-equivalents. At present, a distinction must be made between Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes on the one hand, and Diplom and Magister degree programmes and state examinations on the other. All Diplom and Magister degree programmes still in place had to be converted to Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes by 2010.

As compared to Diplom and Magister degrees, the Bachelor's degree has its own unique qualifying profile for professions which is linked to specific learning content. This should be imparted to students within the prescribed period of study. These courses of study should lead to degrees that qualify the holder to practice a profession.⁴⁸ Bachelor's degree programmes must therefore impart scientific basics, methodological competence and occupation-specific qualifications in line with the profile of the university and the course of study.

The focus of this case study are traineeships undertaken by Bachelor graduates. The question is if graduates are in competition with those with a VET qualification on the labour market. Although the Bachelor's degree should lead to a qualification which qualifies one for a specific profession, its acceptance within the German labour market is still unclear. However, it is likely that the 'practical' skills of those with VET degrees will be assessed more positively than those of graduates with only theoretical knowledge. Traineeships during studies as well as after graduation are seen as a potential solution to overcoming this skills gap (as perceived by employers).

⁴⁷ Kultusministerkonferenz, 2009.

⁴⁸ Kultusministerkonferenz, 2010.

Organisation of Traineeship under Study, Relevant Stakeholders and their Role

Relevant stakeholders in this case study are the employers and graduates. In the long-term it will be interesting to observe in how far the attractiveness of VET programmes (apprenticeships) will be affected by the introduction of first cycle Bologna degrees. In that regard, stakeholders are not only individuals (students/graduates), employers and higher education institutions, but from a wider perspective, also policy groups, such as social partners and public administration.

Funding & Resource Allocation

According to a 2011 study from the Hans Böckler Foundation, which focussed on the situation of college and university graduates, 40 per cent of post-degree traineeships were unpaid. The second largest group received €200 to €400 per month. The study of the Hans-Böckler-Foundation also included further results for university graduates. Among this group 56 per cent were supported by their parents, 43 per cent used their own savings and a further 22 per cent depended on welfare benefits (multiple answers possible).⁴⁹

More information on the funding of graduate traineeships is described in the national report in the chapters on remuneration and financing.

Description Of Traineeship Under Study

Content and Practices related to the Traineeship under Study

The companies interviewed as part of this case study have all established so-called 'traineeship programmes' for graduates for expert and executive positions. This kind of traineeship is very similar to a regular employment position, although trainees receive lower levels of pay for the duration of the placement. These trainees have the opportunity to learn more about the company during the traineeship. During the programme trainees can work in different departments to familiarise themselves with all relevant work-related aspects and to learn about the activities and tasks of all departments. Mentoring is part of these programmes. After the traineeship, which lasts one to two years, trainees are usually employed in a permanent position in the company.

Companies also use traineeships for graduates outside the formal traineeship programmes described above. In this case, the trainee usually has to work in one department for the entire duration of the traineeship. The average duration is six months for paid and five months for unpaid traineeships.⁵⁰ Companies also use these traineeships as an instrument for recruitment: if the trainee proves himself/herself, the company might offer a job after the traineeship.

Traineeship Contract and Trainee's Terms and Conditions

The traineeship can take place on an individually regulated basis as described in the national report (for more details see Chapter 5: Trainee's rights and terms and conditions). In this case, the terms and conditions depend very much on the company, sector and type of traineeship. In some sectors trainees receive compensation, while in others they do not.

However, the companies interviewed for the case study with established graduate traineeship programmes have more formalised and structured traineeship-related provisions, including terms and conditions. These traineeships are similar to a regular

⁴⁹ Dieter Grün / Heidemarie Hecht: Generation Praktikum?, Berlin 2010.

⁵⁰ Dieter Grün / Heidemarie Hecht: Generation Praktikum? Berlin 2010.

employment position, though trainee remuneration is lower. The trainee also has a temporary contract with an employer for one to two years with the same rights and conditions as a regular employee. During that time, trainees work in different sections of the company. Despite recent media reports about trainee abuse and exploitation, these traineeships usually result in regular employment after their completion.

Quality Assurance Mechanisms

Available trainee evaluation data about the quality of traineeships can be summarised as follows:

A study on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) about university graduates indicated positive results as regards the quality of traineeships. Specifically, 70 per cent of the trainees interviewed described their last traineeship as useful in terms of learning and 67 per cent stated that the level, content and complexity of tasks assigned to them were reasonable. Yet, 62 per cent criticised the lack of traineeship plans or the fact that, where they existed, they were either not useful or not followed.⁵¹

In a recent BIBB survey among apprentices there was a high degree of satisfaction with the quality of learning in the company. Eighty per cent of apprentices across 15 different occupations rated the quality of in-company learning as rather high. However, organisation and feedback mechanisms were criticised by respondents, similar to the traineeships results.⁵²

All in all, university graduates face the risk of various cycles of traineeship and of low paid jobs. This risk, however, varies strongly between fields of study. Engineers, for example are often wooed by companies even before graduation. In contrast, linguists, social scientists etc. are more likely to have difficulties in finding employment. Moreover, this group is exposed to the risk of not securing a job which is in line with their qualification.

Current Debate

As part of the European Bologna Process, participating countries agreed to harmonise their university systems. In Germany, this led to an extensive restructuring of *Diplom* degree programmes to convert them into Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes. The first university graduates with a Bachelor's degree have now been entering the labour market in Germany. Companies are still gathering experience with graduates who hold a Bachelor's degree. They have, however, already familiarised themselves with this 'new' qualification in recent years.

There is a discussion in Germany about the possible effects which the introduction of the Bachelor's and Master's programmes (as part of the Bologna process) will have for the renowned German vocational education system. It is assumed that bachelor candidates will be in competition with alumni of the VET system.⁵³ Although the Bachelor's should lead to a degree that qualifies for a particular profession, it is unclear if the Bachelor's is accepted on the German labour market.

On the one hand in June 2004, at the initiative of the Stifterverband (German Trade and Industry Association), the Centre for Higher Education Development and the Confederation of German Employers' Associations ('BDA'), 15 HR directors of large companies published the joint declaration 'Bachelor Welcome'. The signatories expected the reform to bring with it stronger practical orientation, shorter study periods, greater use of traineeships

⁵¹ Kolja Briedis / Karl-Heinz Minks: Generation Praktikum, Hannover 2005

⁵² Ursula Beicht, Andreas Krewerth, Verena Eberhard, Mona Granato: Viel Licht – aber auch Schatten. Qualität dualer Berufsausbildung in Deutschland aus Sicht der Auszubildenden. BIBB Report, Heft 9, Juli 2009.

⁵³ Steedman & Wagner (2007): The impact of national ICT qualification systems on companies' recruitment practices - an Anglo-German comparison. In: Zeitschrift für Arbeitsmarktforschung, p. 235-249

(‘traineeationalisation’) and improved trainee/traineeship comparability. This declaration was renewed and enhanced in 2006 and 2008.⁵⁴ Although these expectations were also expressed in the expert interviews conducted for this case study, they were not always confirmed by concrete experience. On the other hand, a study shows that it is not yet determined which functions could be taken by Bachelor’s graduates. Additionally, 62 per cent of businesses state that those at Bachelor’s level may be lacking appropriate qualifications.⁵⁵ Traineeships offer an opportunity for those with Bachelor’s degrees to enter the labour market. Since some companies complain that the Bachelor’s degree study does not contain sufficient practical elements, a traineeship could serve as a useful way to help a young person gain such work-related and practical experience.

Effectiveness of Case-studied Traineeship: Outputs and Results

Assessment of Bachelor’s degrees

Essentially the comments of interviewees tended to categorise Bachelor’s degrees alongside other academic degrees. Various studies which have looked into the employability of Bachelor’s graduates come to similar conclusions.⁵⁶

The university Bachelor’s degree, Master’s degree and *Diplom* are given equal treatment in connection with trainee or graduate programmes for young people holding such degrees. Apparently the type of educational institution where the individual has obtained a particular degree is of crucial importance here. Consequently, in Germany, holders of a Bachelor’s degree are expected to have a clear academic profile and be capable of academic/scientific work. However, doubts whether Bachelor’s degree programmes meet these requirements were noticeable in some cases. As one case study informant stated:

‘... a graduate holding a Bachelor’s degree is an academically-trained worker who must be familiar with the use of scientific methods for solving problems and must be able to apply and progressively develop these methods in an appropriate way. When an individual is unable to do so, he is not a ‘Bachelor’ and we consequently do not hire him. Since we have other youth segments from the vocational training system, since we have other segments via the experience and know-how of our employees, we don’t need him.’

As was said in an expert interview, young people who had obtained a Bachelor’s degree needed a ‘breaking-in’ period of more than 18 to 24 months until ‘they can walk on their own’. In this respect, traineeships are seen as of particular relevance since they help young people gain practical experience.

In addition, a recent study by the German Association of Chambers of Industry and Commerce shows that companies in Germany are partly sceptical about the value of university Bachelor graduates.⁵⁷ While employers were clear about their shortcomings, they felt that it was still less clear where their strengths lie. In comparison to initial vocational training or a degree programme at a college of advanced vocational studies (Berufsakademie) or a University of Applied Sciences (Fachhochschule), which can also award a Bachelor’s degree, a university-based Bachelor’s degree course offers a low proportion of work experience; on the other hand, in comparison to a Master’s degree course it only lays the foundations for an academic education. In these respects, the current appeal of a university Bachelor’s degree for employers is somewhat limited.

⁵⁴ BDA (2010). Bachelor Welcome 2010, Bundesvereinigung der Deutschen Arbeitgeberverbände.

⁵⁵ Marc Glasl et al.: Road Map Praktikum – Studie 2010, Esslingen 2010.

⁵⁶ Bergs, C. & C. Konegen-Grenier (2005). Der Bachelor aus Sicht der Unternehmen Karriere mit dem Bachelor - Berufswege und Berufschancen. Essen. Briedis, K., C. Heine, et al. (2011). Mit dem Bachelor in den Beruf.

⁵⁷ DIHK (2011): <http://www.dihk.de/presse/meldungen/2011-01-18-bachelor>

One German company interviewed for this case study has considerable experience with graduates from dual study courses which combine academic studies with in-company training. As was stressed in an expert interview this appears to be the priority for the company's recruitment activities: *'Up to 99 per cent of our recruits are persons who obtained a Bachelor's degree which involved practical training in our company'*. Due to the involvement of the company in these degree programmes, they do virtually no external recruitment, but train their recruits themselves.

Sector differences (clerical vs. technical occupations)

Asked about typical areas where vocationally-trained employees and graduate trainees or Bachelor's employees would be deployed in a private banking environment, the employee response was that they would be assigned to the retail side or 'back-office placements'.

Still, banks in Germany differentiate right from the start between VET trained employees and those with a university degree. Specifically, holders of Bachelor's degrees are assigned to so-called high-income customers. The advisory services provided to these customers are more sophisticated, less routine in nature and more tailored to the individual client's needs. Those who hold a Bachelor's degree perform tasks at the bank counter only as an exception.

In the investment banking field, one tends to see graduates with a Bachelor's degree. Nevertheless, vocationally-qualified staff are commonly found in back-office and retail roles. Crucially, such staff are also in demand, since they possess detailed knowledge about the company and, unlike graduates, move to other banks far less frequently. However, it was remarkable that companies rate the knowledge and skills of VET qualified individuals similar to those of Bachelor's graduates.

Expert interviews in the technical sector showed more differences between VET and Bachelor's graduates. The latter carry out higher-grade/level duties at the beginning of their careers. Key areas tend to involve planning, eg production planning, facility planning, plant load optimisation, etc. Duties assigned to Bachelor's graduates were said to be more complex and to call for 'integrated thinking'. The upshot is that Bachelor's trainees carry out other tasks than those qualified through VET courses. Companies in the technology sector pointed out that there are not enough applicants with a university degree who would be a good fit.

In both sectors it was noted that anyone who has proved themselves could work their way up to better positions in the respective companies and that, after several years, the type of initial education one had no longer plays such a significant role. However, the companies examined had separate career paths for vocationally-trained employees and for employees holding a Bachelor's or other degree, eg the already described 1-2-year traineeship programmes which are exclusively for HE, as opposed to VET, graduates.

Competition between Bachelor and VET? The role of traineeships.

The companies examined do not consider vocationally-trained applicants to be in competition with applicants who hold a Bachelor's degree. One reason is the fact that both the envisaged career path and continuing professional development opportunities are different, depending on whether the individual is vocationally trained or has obtained a Bachelor's degree. Reference was also made to the fact that a mix of staff with different qualifications is desirable in the different parts of the company.

The selection criteria for holders of a Bachelor's degree exhibits a number of differences compared to the selection criteria for those who have successfully completed formal vocational training. Respondents described the expectations placed on people holding a Bachelor's degree as 'higher' than those placed on vocationally-trained individuals.

Although the in-company part of vocational training is assessed favourably, respondents view such training as a vital foundation for ongoing continued development in the areas of personal commitment to work and responsibility.

The results of our investigation can be summed up as co-existence instead of competition between VET and Bachelor's graduates. Both types of graduates will be needed in the future. Traineeships and formalised graduate trainee programmes might evolve into important and complimentary building blocks to bachelor's-level graduation.

In addition, the companies surveyed would like to see more places offered on dual courses of study. They offer a combination of carefully coordinated and structured theoretical knowledge and practical experience at different learning locations (educational establishments and workplaces). To achieve this combination a regular Bachelor's graduate would have to do a number of traineeships which, due to strict university curricula, is not possible.

Conclusions

One point of criticism expressed about the content of Bachelor's degrees is the lack of practical relevance. This criticism was combined with the demand that universities should take the Bologna Process seriously and view employability as the aim of Bachelor's degree programmes. In this context, closer cooperation between employers and universities would be desirable to supply both parties with necessary information about what is required to enter the job market successfully. According to an industry representative, so far, this co-operation between businesses and universities is underdeveloped and sporadic. As a consequence of this lack of close ties between the employment and educational worlds, students and graduates miss an informational link to companies and organisations.

Generally speaking, German companies do not have a fundamentally negative attitude toward the Bachelor's degree. Indeed, the Bachelor's degree programmes at colleges of advanced vocational studies are rated very highly because the practical in-company training comprises a large segment of these programmes.

In relation to traineeships undertaken by Bachelor's graduates employers mostly benefit from these traineeships. Hiring trainees serves as a recruitment channel, employers can observe their prospective employees over a longer period of time, test their skills and learn more about their personality, attitude and performance in order to decide whether the trainee fits into their organisation and its culture.

Although the companies complain about the lack of practical experience of Bachelor's graduates, they do not consider vocationally-trained applicants to be in competition with applicants holding such degrees who apply for either a traineeship or regular employment.

National Report on Traineeships Denmark

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1. Traineeships as part of Member State's Youth Policy Measures

1.1 Overview of current situation of young people and traineeships as part of youth policy measures

High employment rates and low levels of unemployment have traditionally characterised the Danish youth employment situation. The average employment rate for people aged 20 to 24 was 66.0 per cent in 2010, but even for people aged 15 to 19 the employment rate was as high as 50.8 per cent. A habit of combining study and work, and the large share of young workers on temporary contracts explains earlier entry into the job market.¹ It is illustrative that 70 per cent of young people aged 23 to 24 were active in the job market.² The flexibility of the job market is also demonstrated by the fact that less than five per cent of the unemployed youth had to be activated, because most of them received unemployment benefits for less than six months in 2007.³

On the other hand, there have been changes in the job markets: youth unemployment in Denmark doubled from the first quarter of 2007 to the first quarter of 2009, which has led to changes in the youth policy. The annual youth unemployment rate for people aged under 25 has risen from 6.2 per cent to 13.8 per cent in 2000–2010.⁴ As a consequence of the worsened economic situation, initiatives to promote growth and to reduce youth unemployment (the so-called 'youth packages I and II') were incorporated in the budget in 2010.⁵

In general, the risk of unemployment is higher for those young people who have only lower secondary education, but highly skilled new graduates are also facing a slightly higher risk of unemployment. Because of a higher risk of long-term unemployment, there is a focus on young people who are not in employment, education or training.⁶ In general, the government is also steering the higher education (HE) programmes towards better corresponding to the needs of the society and the labour market. Establishing new vocationally oriented HE programmes is part of the process.⁷

In the field of upper secondary education and HE, the Danish government puts an effort into achieving a goal of 95 per cent of the youth cohort completing youth education, and 60 per cent higher education. However, the figures show that the levels of education have started to decrease slightly: the percentage of the population aged 18 to 24 with (at most) lower secondary education and not in further education or training was at 11.5 per cent in Denmark in 2008, whereas the EU-27 average was 14.9 per cent in the same year. However, the percentage of the population aged 20 to 24 to have completed at least upper-secondary education was 71 per cent in 2008, which was below the European average of 78.5 per cent. In comparison, the Danish percentage of completing at least upper-secondary education was 78.6 per cent in 2002 which was above the EU-27 average. It is notable that females are significantly less likely to drop out, but the difference can be explained to a certain extent by the difficulties in finding a traineeship, which is a

¹ EEO Report Youth employment measures 2010: 2

² Jobs for Youth/Des emplois pour les jeunes: Denmark 2010. OECD Publishing. 2010: 53

³ Jobs for Youth/Des emplois pour les jeunes: Denmark 2010. OECD Publishing. 2010: 124

⁴ Eurostat 2011

⁵ EEO Report Youth employment measures 2010: 28

⁶ EEO Report Youth employment measures 2010: 2

⁷ ReferNet Denmark: Denmark. VET in Europe – Country Report. 2010.

compulsory part of a vocational degree, especially in the male-dominated areas of vocational education and training (VET).⁸

Danish students have a tendency to spend a gap year after upper secondary school and gain employment experience during transition, but more than 24 per cent of the Danish population aged 25 to 29 were still students in 2008.⁹ The latest Eurostudent IV data shows that Danish students take the longest transition time in Europe before entering from secondary education to higher education.¹⁰ In addition, the proportion of students who enrol within a year after obtaining their entry qualification is significantly lower than average. The late access and drop out percentage are seen as challenging in Denmark. About third of the tertiary education students drop out at some point and start another programme.¹¹

Table 1.1: Main traineeship programmes

Main traineeship programmes	Brief description	Web link
VET traineeship	VET traineeships are compulsory and students are entitled to wages during their traineeship, as agreed in the collective agreement. The VET main programme consists 50-70% of practical training. VET is organised as a system in which classroom education and practical training alternate.	http://www.eng.uvm.dk/Uddannelse/Upper%20Secondary%20Education/Vocational%20Education%20and%20Training.aspx ReferNet Denmark: Denmark. VET in Europe – Country Report. 2010.
EUX programme(new academic preparation programme)	Traineeships in companies that alternate with longer classroom education than in VET.	http://www.eva.dk/projekter/2010/erhvervsuddannelsernes-tilbud-til-staerke-elever/haefte-og-bilag
University traineeships	The traineeships are mandatory in university degrees and in most cases remunerated. The Bachelor’s Degree comprises 180-210 ECTS and the traineeship is 30-60 ECTS. Unpaid traineeship is approvable only under special circumstances. Regulations require that a business academy degree comprises a traineeship for a minimum of 3 months.	http://www.ubst.dk/en/laws-and-decrees/The%20ministerial%20order%20of%20the%20study%20programmes.pdf http://www.ubst.dk/ovgivning/akkreditering/da-en%20retsinformation_NY%20%282%29.pdf

⁸ ReferNet Denmark: Denmark. VET in Europe – Country Report. 2010.

⁹ Jobs for Youth/Des emplois pour les jeunes: Denmark 2010. OECD Publishing. 2010: 53, 73

¹⁰ Eurostudent IV 2011: 5

¹¹ Jobs for Youth/Des emplois pour les jeunes: Denmark 2010. OECD Publishing. 2010: 53, 73

2. Legislative Framework for Traineeships

2.1 Legal framework for and governance of traineeships

In the field of HE, the ministerial *Order on Bachelor and Master's Programmes (Candidatus)* at Universities stipulates that a bachelor programme comprises 180 ECTS points, but the bachelor programme in journalism comprises 210 ECTS points which includes a paid practical training period of 60 ECTS points. It is also explicated that the practical training period as a part of the bachelor programme in food science corresponds to 30 ECTS points. The order gives the universities permission to approve unpaid practical training periods under special circumstances. On a more general note, the curriculum for a bachelor programme must contain rules governing work experience.¹²

The *Ministerial Order on Criteria for the Relevance and Quality of University Study Programmes and on Procedures for Approval of University Study Programmes* outlines descriptions of ordinary higher degrees in Denmark. It is specified in the descriptions that a business academy degree comprises a traineeship for a minimum of three months, whereas a professional bachelor degree comprises a traineeship for a minimum of six months. The scope of a university bachelor degree programme may exceed 180 ECTS if a paid traineeship is part of the course.¹³

In the field of VET, the legal rights of students and the role of enterprises offering apprenticeships are covered in the *Vocational Education and Training Act (Erhvervsuddannelsesloven)*. To complement to the Vocational Education and Training Act, there are statutory orders and guidelines which further define certain aspects of vocational education and apprenticeships.¹⁴

In 2000, the number of technical training programmes was reduced, and content of the programmes became more individualised and flexible. Additional amendments in 2003 focused on practice oriented and further individualisation of the courses. In 2007, all IVET programmes were gathered under the same legislation. More structured basic programmes were introduced to serve the needs of the weaker students in the highly individualised Danish VET system. In the new system, there are 12 access routes to the basic programmes and more possibilities to gain partial qualifications.¹⁵

The governance of initial vocational education and training (IVET) is both centralised and decentralised to some extent. The VET colleges adapt to local needs, but the qualifications are recognised on a national level. The *Ministry of Education* is responsible for setting objectives for the programmes and providing the legislative framework.¹⁶

Boards comprised of teachers, students, social partners and administrators govern the vocational schools, whereas the national trade committees representing employers and employees have a central role in the renewal and creation of IVET courses. The committees decide on the length of traineeships; grant enterprises the role as a provider of training; and resolve conflicts between enterprises and apprentices. The role of the social partners is noteworthy, because they are involved in the work of the *National Advisory Council on Initial Vocational Education and Training* and the local training committees.¹⁷

¹² The Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation: Ministerial order no. 338. Ministerial order on bachelor and master's programmes (candidatus) at universities.

¹³ The Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation: Ministerial Order on Criteria for the Relevance and Quality of University Study Programmes and on Procedures for Approval of University Study Programmes.

¹⁴ ReferNet Denmark: Denmark. VET in Europe – Country Report. 2010.

¹⁵ ReferNet Denmark: Denmark. VET in Europe – Country Report. 2010.

¹⁶ ReferNet Denmark: Denmark. VET in Europe – Country Report. 2010.

¹⁷ ReferNet Denmark: Denmark. VET in Europe – Country Report. 2010.

2.2 Definition of traineeships and trainees

The legal status of traineeships and apprenticeships differs at least in terms of their role in the collective agreements. Apprentice wages and working conditions are specified in the collective labour agreements in which the minimum wages for apprentices are negotiated every third year.¹⁸

2.3 Legal provisions about aspects of traineeships

The employer can normally agree on the job description, duration and salary with the intern, but it is also possible that an educational institution is involved in defining the content of the agreement.¹⁹

Traineeship placements are a compulsory part of the curriculum for academy professional and professional bachelor education programmes. For example, the duration of the journalist professional bachelor education programme is four years of which 1½ takes places at school, 1½ on a traineeship and the last year of studies is again taken at school. As a trainee the student is entitled to a salary of some €1,746 (DKK 13,000) per month.²⁰

It appears that traineeships can also be free-of-charge from the employer's point of view, if the salary of the traineeship is not specified in the study programme, which indicates that in the case of the traineeship not being a compulsory part of the studies the trainee does not necessarily receive payment. For example, the Danish Immigration Services outline conditions which a prospective traineeship placement must fulfill in order for an applicant outside EU/EEA to get a residence permit. It is stated that employment conditions must correspond to the Danish collective labour agreements for interns, but in some cases the traineeship can be unpaid.²¹

Denmark adheres to EU regulations in respect of foreign students. Interns who are not EU/EEA and/or Nordic citizens can be granted residence and work permits if the traineeship is a part of an educational programme which the applicant has begun or completed in the country of origin. Nordic citizens²² are free to reside, study and work in Denmark.²³ Visas, residence permits or work permits are not needed from Nordic citizens.²⁴ According to European Union regulations, Union citizens must apply for a registration certificate if the stay is longer than three months (or more than six months for job seekers).²⁵

¹⁸ The Ministry of Children and Education: Basic Vocational Education and Training (EGU). 2009.

¹⁹ FBE and Cirius 2009:15

²⁰ Professionsbacheloruddannelse: Journalist. 2011. UddannelsesGuiden.

²¹ The Danish Immigration Services. 2011.

²² Citizens of Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden.

²³ The Danish Immigration Service: Interns. Newtodenmark.dk. The official portal for foreigners and integration. Last updated 14.6.2011.

²⁴ The Danish Immigration Service: Nordic citizens. Newtodenmark.dk. The official portal for foreigners and integration. Last updated 14.7.2010.

²⁵ The Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs: Residence in Denmark for Union citizens and EEA nationals. Last updated 1.5.2009. Newtodenmark.dk. The official portal for foreigners and integration.

3. Availability of and Access to Traineeships

3.1 Statistics/quantitative information about traineeships

In 2007/2008, 7.6 per cent of graduates with a medium-cycle higher education²⁶ and 3.8 per cent of graduates with short-cycle academic education²⁷ went on a traineeship or conducted studies abroad. In comparison, 28.9 per cent graduates from university long-cycle higher education conducted studies or traineeships abroad.²⁸

According to the Flash Eurobarometer (2011) the proportion of young people who have journeyed abroad for education or training purposes is 21 per cent among Danish respondents. Thirty five per cent of the studies conducted abroad were part of HE studies and 21 per cent had studied abroad as part of their vocational studies. Traineeships in a company or in an equivalent organisation abroad were equally unpopular among VET and HE students with nine per cent of participants who had been on a traineeship in both of the groups. In contrast, 66 per cent of all Danish respondents were willing to work abroad in another European country in the future.²⁹ In comparison, Eurostudent IV survey results show that six per cent of the Danish HE students³⁰ had been on traineeship or work placement abroad and 13 per cent had studied abroad.³¹

In general, Danish young people's longest stay abroad was funded from their own savings and private funds in 65 per cent of cases. On the other hand, lack of funding accounted for 20 per cent of Danish respondents' reluctance to go abroad either to study or to go on a traineeship.³²

In total, over a period of twelve months, counting from June 2010, there have been little over 47,000 new vocational traineeship agreements made in Denmark.³³ However, recently there has been a lack of practical training placements in the VET sector as a result of the global economic recession. The number of available VET practical training placements dramatically decreased from the 2007 figure of 47,197 placements to 39,721 placements in 2009. In 2009, government support initiatives increased the number of available traineeships to a total of 41,221. In 2011, the estimated number of available VET traineeships is going to be 50,630 which includes the government subsidised 8,900 additional traineeships.³⁴ At the moment, there are over 60,000 companies which have approval to offer practical training at least in one field of vocational education.³⁵

In 2009/2010 the number of outgoing Danish Erasmus mobility placements was 622.³⁶ The statistics of Leonardo da Vinci placements are available in Table A 1 in the Annex.

²⁶ Medium-cycle higher education takes place in University Colleges which offer HE programmes such as teacher, nurse, mid wife etc.

²⁷ Academies of Professional Higher Education (erhvervsakademier) offer short-cycle programmes, mainly 2-year Academy Profession degrees.

²⁸ Danish Ministry of Education: Stepping up study and internship abroad. 2010: 10.

²⁹ Flash Eurobarometer (2011) 319b: Education and Training, Mobility, Employment and Entrepreneurship. Youth on the move.

³⁰ ISCED 5A

³¹ Orr D., Gwosc C., Netz N.: Social and Economic Conditions of Student Life in Europe. Synopsis of indicators | Final report | Eurostudent IV 2008–2011. Bielefeld: W. Bertelsmann Verlag.

³² Gallup Organization, Hungary: Youth on the move Summary. Flash Eurobarometer 319b: Education and Training, Mobility, Employment and Entrepreneurship. 2011.

³³ Quaade, T.: Praktikpladssituationen ultimo juni 2011. UNI•C Statistik& Analyse.

³⁴ Ministry of Children and Education: Aftaleomflerepraktikpladser i 2011 [Agreement on the increase in training agreements in 2011].

³⁵ ReferNet Denmark: Denmark. VET in Europe – Country Report. 2010.

³⁶ European Commission. Education & Training. Erasmus statistics.

3.2 Sectors where traineeships are prevalent

Companies which take trainees from academies of professional higher education are most likely to be SMEs. As a matter of fact, 37 per cent of traineeship providers have more than 50 employees and 16 per cent have more than 250 employees.³⁷

3.3 Profile/Patterns of traineeships

Traineeships are common in various fields of VET and professional HE, because traineeships are a compulsory part of the training programmes.

3.4 Recruitment process of and equity of access to traineeships

In many academies of professional HE and University Colleges, traineeship arrangements are co-ordinated to some extent, but students have a great responsibility in finding the placement themselves and there appears to be lack of available traineeships. In general, academies of professional HE place the responsibility for the traineeship search on students, whereas university colleges are more active in assisting their students in finding traineeship providers.³⁸

Especially, international degree students have difficulties in gaining access to traineeships. FBE, Forum for Business Education, and Ciriushave published a guide for employing international students. According to the guide, Danish companies are in need of competent employees with a global outlook, but international students are often unable to make contact with Danish companies. However, there are attempts to improve the likelihood of international students finding student jobs. For example, Aarhus School of Business arranges CompanyDating, an event where companies have an opportunity to recruit international trainees.³⁹

Another sector in which socio-economic background matters is vocational education. It has to be remembered that VET suffers from a reputation of a dead-end choice, which is exemplified by the news according to which guidance services explicitly advise academically gifted students against VET. The lack of appreciation of vocational training indicates that, apart from concentrating on improving the availability of traineeships, there is also work to be done with increasing the attractiveness of the field.

Nevertheless, a high emphasis on practical training in VET may work as an obstacle to obtaining a vocational degree. The proportion of students with an immigrant background, and a language other than Danish as their mother tongue, constitutes ten per cent of student population. A large number of these young people come from Turkey, the Middle East, Iran, the former Yugoslavia and Pakistan. In general, traineeships part of the VET are an efficient way of gaining work experience, but 61 per cent of immigrant students are expected to drop out of the programme they have signed up for. In comparison, the overall dropout rate of the VET programme is 49 per cent which is high as well.⁴⁰

The main reason for the high number of wastage is lack of traineeship placements and difficulties in obtaining them, which has been identified as one of the most serious factors that leads to an incomplete vocational education among the immigrant youth. On the other hand, it has been stated by the Danish Ministry of Education that students with an immigrant background have also benefited from a higher number of available traineeship

³⁷ DEA: Erhvervsakademiuddannelserne i etaftagerperspektiv. 2011.

³⁸ Rambøll Management Consulting: Praktik i Erhvervsakademi- og Professionsbacheloruddannelser. Rapport til Undervisningsministeriet. [Traineeships in Academies of Professional Higher Education and University Colleges. A report for the Ministry of Education.] 2010.

³⁹ FBE and Ciriushave 2009

⁴⁰ OECD Reviews of Migrant Education: Denmark 2010 p.7

and apprenticeship contracts for vocational students in the recent years.⁴¹ As a solution to the situation, an OECD report suggests that the Ministry of Education along with stakeholders should develop a more inclusive VET apprentice system together with taking into account diverse learning needs in the classroom environment. There have already been successful mentoring and guidance initiatives that have been implemented around the VET colleges, which is a sign of improvement.⁴²

In the field of professional bachelor education, availability of traineeships varies a lot. According to the Danish Evaluation Institute 2006 report, there are big differences in the allocation of traineeship placements in the field of professional bachelor programmes. Some university colleges cast lots and others have allowed wish lists based on which the traineeship placements are distributed to students. For programmes in which the required placement is long, the students themselves are responsible for finding the traineeship provider. If the student seeks the placement independently, the university college's responsibility to look after the students who have not found a placement by themselves is limited. On the other hand, for many graduates the traineeship search process is a positive experience, because of the practice they gain in application writing and interviews. This is especially the case for students required to undertake a longer traineeship placement, who might hope the university colleges would take a more active role in initiating discussions about future career plans and providing guidance for the students before searching for traineeships. From the employer point of view, the distribution of shorter traineeships among students requires development, because employers do not have enough influence over the recruitment process. As a consequence, the traineeship placement providers hoped, for example, to gain access to student profiles via the university college's intranet where students could upload their own profiles.⁴³

3.5 Evolution of traineeships over time and impact of recent economic crisis on traineeships

Youth unemployment in Denmark doubled from the first quarter of 2007 to the first quarter of 2009, which led to changes in the youth policy. Initiatives to promote growth and to reduce youth unemployment (the so-called 'youth package') were incorporated in the 2010 budget.⁴⁴

The third 'youth package' initiative with a budget of €13.4 million (DKK 100 million) was introduced in July 2011. The government has agreed to implement policies to reduce youth unemployment and to support under 30-year-olds in finding employment or educating themselves. There are several traineeship related measures which the government is going to carry through. For instance, highly educated young people will be marketed to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and €1.3 million (DKK ten million) is reserved for the development of vocational skills of the academic graduates recruited to SMEs. There will also be a €1.3 million (DKK ten million) job rotation campaign for highly educated unemployed graduates. An emphasis on traineeships is most visible at a campaign level. An ongoing campaign by the Ministry of Education to create more traineeship placements in enterprises which have not had a trainee before is going to be strengthened. A campaign to create traineeship programmes for the youth will be launched by the Ministry of Education together with the Youth Education Counselling (UU – Ungdommens Uddannelsesvejledning) and municipalities.⁴⁵

⁴¹ OECD Reviews of Migrant Education: Denmark 2010 p.46

⁴² OECD Reviews of Migrant Education: Denmark 2010 p.8

⁴³ The Danish Evaluation Institute: Praktik i professionsbacheloruddannelser. Udfordringer, erfaringer og gode råd. [Traineeships in Professional Bachelor Education. Challenges, Experiences and Good Advice.] 2006.

⁴⁴ EEO Report Youth employment measures 2010: 28

⁴⁵ Ministry of Employment: En styrket indsats over for unge. [Strengthened Efforts to Support the Young.] July 2011.

In 2009 €180 million (DKK 1.35 billion) was allocated to the creation of 5,000 additional traineeship placements for VET students.⁴⁶ By the end of first half of 2010, approximately 3,400 training agreements out of the expected 5,000 additional training agreements had been realised. The figure comprises vocational training programmes (excluding studies in social and health care and teaching assistance), basic vocational training programmes (EGU) and 600 students in school-based practical training. In 2011, a new agreement has been reached on investing €322 million (DKK 2.4 billion) in the creation of 8,900 new training placements. As a result of lack of training agreements with enterprises, school-based practical training opportunities are researched into as well.⁴⁷

3.6 Financing of traineeships

Ever since 2008, students who are eligible for the Danish student allowance have been able to receive a study abroad grant that covers tuition fees partially or entirely. In addition, students have the opportunity to receive student support during traineeships abroad, as long as the traineeship gives study credits i.e. the traineeship is accepted by the educational institution.⁴⁸

As a result of generous subsidies, labour costs of an apprentice are half of the cost of a regular employee. Apprentice wages may be lower than the normal ones, but, on the other hand, in the manufacturing sector apprentices received a slightly higher pay rise than other staff.⁴⁹ According to the Ministry of Education, students in vocational education and training programmes receive ordinary trainee wages, which are determined on the basis of first year wages (approx. €1,072 month).⁵⁰

In the field of VET, students are entitled to wages during their traineeship, as agreed in the collective agreement. VET studies and traineeships are free of charge for the students. The wages which the company pays for the student are reimbursed from the Employer's Reimbursement Fund which is financed through fixed contributions from both public and private enterprises. Students who have not been able to obtain traineeships can receive grants from the Danish State Education Grant and Loan Schemes.⁵¹ Since 2009, the employers have been able to receive state subsidy up to €6,715 (DKK 50,000) per VET training agreement. In 2011, those employers who enter into at least 24 month training agreements have a chance to receive a maximum bonus and a premium of €9,401 (DKK 70,000) per agreement. The latest agreement on the increase in training agreements costs the state €24 million (DKK 179 million) and the Employer's Reimbursement Fund €302 million (DKK 2.25 billion).⁵²

In Denmark the Erasmus budget for mobility actions in 2009/2010 was €5,261,000. The average monthly grant in traineeships was €332 in 2009/2010⁵³. In Leonardo da Vinci programme the grants total in 2010 was €2,038,238⁵⁴.

⁴⁶ ReferNet Denmark: Denmark. VET in Europe – Country Report. 2010.

⁴⁷ Ministry of Children and Education: Aftaleomflerepraktikpladser i 2011 [Agreement on the increase in training agreements in 2011].

⁴⁸ Danish Ministry of Education: Stepping up study and internship abroad. 2010.

⁴⁹ European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions 2011: 22; Jobs for Youth/Des emplois pour les jeunes: Denmark 2010. OECD Publishing. 2010: 15

⁵⁰ The Ministry of Children and Education: Basic Vocational Education and Training (EGU). 2009.

⁵¹ Ministry of Children and Education: Vocational Education and Training (VET). Last updated 30 October 2008.

⁵² Ministry of Children and Education: Aftaleomflerepraktikpladser i 2011 [Agreement on the increase in training agreements in 2011]

⁵³ European Commission. Education & Training. Erasmus statistics.

⁵⁴ European Commission. Education & Training. Leonardo da Vinci statistics.
http://ec.europa.eu/education/pub/pdf/vocational/leonardo15_en.pdf

3.7 Public perceptions about traineeships

Organisations have recently been criticised for taking advantage of the desperation of job applicants by offering unpaid traineeships. Communications advisor and professor Ray Langer criticised unpaid traineeships for weakening the role of normal work contracts in July 2011. For example, the Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration hired an unemployed IT-specialist for 18 months as a state subsidised trainee. Langer admits that the unemployed and graduates gain work experience, but on the other hand the employers lack motivation to fill vacancies with paid work force as long as there is a steady supply of highly skilled trainees and subsidised workers. According to Langer, the current administration and the trade unions have done little to protect unpaid trainees and other subsidised workers from exploitative practices.⁵⁵

In 2008, EsbenØrberg, the Communications Director of the Danish Union of Journalists, also points out that most traineeships for students at universities are unpaid: trainees live on the state financial aid for students during their traineeships. In most cases, student financial aid can also be received during paid traineeships. The Danish Union of Journalists looked into the use of trainees and the trainee salaries paid by the Danish PR agencies which are the most active participants in taking on trainees in the field of communications. Out of the 16 surveyed agencies ten did not pay wages to the trainees. In the six remaining agencies, the salaries varied between €470 (DKK 3,500) and €672 (DKK 5,000). In interviews for the article in the *Magasin K*, which is the Journalist Association's magazine, it turned out that companies were unwilling to pay wages, because they considered the traineeships as part of studies rather than salaried work or they did not have the resources to pay the trainees. On the other hand, Asbjørn Haugstrupa, vice-president of the Public Relations Employer's Association (BPRV) and partner at Rostra Kommunikation, was surprised by the varying trainee pay practices in the field of business. "*I honestly thought that DKK 5,000, which we pay, is the norm in the industry*", contemplated Haugstrupa. In general, in respect to the salary and conditions, it appears that public relations company representatives disagree with each other whether unpaid traineeships are justified or not.⁵⁶

In contrast, the Danish Association of Masters and *PhDs* (Dansk Magisterforening, DM) have very clear opinions about the basic conditions that traineeships should meet in the future. First of all, traineeships should be an available option for all HE students in all of the programmes. Secondly, the work done during the traineeship should be compensated to the trainee in the form of a small payment. Thirdly, traineeship arrangements should be more regulated and the educational establishments should make endeavours to make the offers attractive to students. Fourthly, employers and trainees are to enter into an agreement which is approved by the educational establishment.⁵⁷ Furthermore, in 2007, Kasper Rasmussen, the then president of DM Students, argued in the *Dagbladet Information* that universities had a responsibility to guarantee students certain work conditions through the means of entering into agreements with the traineeship placement providers.⁵⁸

However, in the same article, Mette Sandbye, Associate Professor at the Department of Arts and Cultural Studies at the University of Copenhagen, did not find the requirements for paid traineeships realistic. She expressed the opinion that in the field of humanities the possibility of undertaking paid traineeships is utopian. However, Sandbye considered paid traineeships a realistic possibility for journalism and nursing students, but then again noted

⁵⁵ Langer, R: Du Sigerpraktikant, jeg siger slave. 14 July 2011. Kommunikationsforum.

⁵⁶ Ørberg, E: Praktikant: Er arbejdet lønnen i sig selv? [Trainee: Is work itself a reward?]. 1 October 2008. Kommunikations Forum.

⁵⁷ Danish Association of Masters and PhDs [Dansk Magisterforeningen]: DM Studerendespolitikompraktik. [DM Policy on Traineeships].

⁵⁸ Funder T.D., Madsen K.S.: Studerendeer gratis arbejdskraft. [Students Are Free Workforce.] 13 September 2007. *Dagbladet Information*.

that the intended duration of traineeships for students in humanities was shorter than in fields where the financial remuneration of traineeships is much more common.⁵⁹

University student perceptions about traineeships are perhaps the best reflected by a survey carried out by the DM Students in 2006. Out of 1,500 respondents 500 had been on a traineeship. The study background of the respondents goes as follows: humanities 70 per cent, natural sciences 18 per cent and social sciences seven per cent. Four per cent reported studying something else. Ninety one per cent of students were very pleased or pleased with their traineeships, even though 30 per cent of the respondents were not granted study credits and 68 per cent did not receive payment for the work done during the traineeship.⁶⁰

4. Practices and Content of Traineeships

4.1 Traineeships as part of education and/or labour market entry and integration for young people

Danish upper secondary programmes (ISCED 3) are divided into general upper secondary programmes which prepare for higher education and vocational upper secondary education which prepare for a career in a specific trade or industry.⁶¹ Approximately 57 per cent of the youth cohort enrol in VET, but fewer and fewer students come directly from the lower secondary level of education (Folkeskolen). At the end of the day, approximately 38 per cent of the youth obtain a vocational education, and approximately five per cent of those who have a vocational degree continue to HE.⁶² In 2008, 51 per cent of pupils enrolled in VET.⁶³ On the other hand, the number applying to general upper-secondary education has steadily increased from 25.7 per cent in 2000 to 38.4 per cent in 2010, which means that the popularity of the initial vocational education is decreasing.⁶⁴

The VET programmes are comprised of a basic and main programme. The basic part of the programme consists of a 20 to 76 week course in an educational institution. In order to be able to finish the main programme, which consists of 50 to 70 per cent of practical training, it is obligatory to have a training agreement with a company which is approved by the social partners which are represented by a confederation of representatives of employers and employees. The duration of the entire programme typically varies between three to 3½ years, but it is also possible for the programme to be either shorter or longer. The structure of the VET is sandwich-type, which refers to a system in which classroom education and practical training alternate with each other. School-based education blocks are organised at intervals between five and ten weeks.⁶⁵ The students must obtain the traineeship placement themselves, but in 40 to 50 per cent of programmes a school-based practical training period is an option for those unable to find a suitable traineeship.⁶⁶

The flexibility of the system is demonstrated by the number of choices and study combinations available to students. For example, a new EUX programme which combines

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Dahlsgaard C., Kretzschmer, L.: Hvertredjopraktikantfaringen coaching. [Every third trainee is left without a traineeship supervisor]. DMstud.bladet 1/2006.

⁶¹ Danish Agency for International Education: General and vocational upper secondary education. Last modified 25 March 2011.

⁶² Ministry of Children and Education: Vocational Education and Training (VET). Last modified 30 October 2008

⁶³ Danish Agency for International Education: General and vocational upper secondary education. Last modified 25 March 2011.

⁶⁴ ReferNet Denmark: Denmark. VET in Europe – Country Report. 2010.

⁶⁵ Ministry of Children and Education: Vocational Education and Training (VET). Last updated 30 October 2008; Ministry of Children and Education: Initial Vocational Education and training programmes. Last updated 23 December 2010

⁶⁶ Ibid.

vocational studies with the general upper secondary STX programme aimed at preparing pupils for academic studies has started in the school year 2010/2011.⁶⁷ The EUX programme utilises the normal sandwich structure of the Danish vocational education, which means that the students undertake traineeships in companies, but the duration of school-based education is longer and traineeships are shorter if needed. EUX gives access into HE.⁶⁸ In addition, *New Apprenticeship* (nymesterlære) programme presents another kind of alternative pathway into VET for those who do not have the motivation to complete the school-based education in its entirety. In this case, the student typically spends the first year of education receiving practical training within an enterprise.⁶⁹

Perhaps in contrast to many other European Union countries, the Danish VET system strives towards enrolling the talented students as well, instead of concentrating on the weak ones only. According to research by the Danish Evaluation Institute (EVA) 30 per cent of the programme leaders responded that they offer more challenging courses for the talented ones. For example, Tech College Aalborg offers talented future electricians, carpenters and graphic designers entry into a 'Career Line', which means that the basic subjects are taught at a higher level than usual and the pupils are offered extra guidance in the field of innovation and entrepreneurship. However, the research also shows that the capable students in the field of VET are not academically inclined in a traditional sense – the gifted VET students may not perceive themselves as talented due to earlier discouraging experiences in the Folkeskole (ISCED 1 and 2). In addition, it appears that vocationally talented students require additional encouragement in acknowledging their strengths.⁷⁰

Programmes between the upper-secondary and tertiary levels (ISCED 4) do not exist in the Danish educational system apart from foundation courses organised for the purpose of preparing students for HE. Higher education (ISCED 5) is thus provided at business and technical academies (short cycle diploma programmes), at university colleges (medium cycle professional bachelor's programmes) and at universities (long cycle university master's and bachelor's programmes).⁷¹

Theoretical studies, practical training through work placements and a bachelor project are always a compulsory part of the curriculum for the Professional Bachelor education programmes. Professional Bachelor's programmes are offered at institutions, which are referred to as Centres of Higher Education or University Colleges or Colleges.⁷² Academies of professional education offer two-year academy profession programmes which combine theory with a practically oriented approach and are usually completed with a three-month project work assignment.⁷³ In contrast, at the universities, the teaching is research-based not practice oriented, which is a fundamental principle at all Danish universities aiming at ensuring high standards in all programmes.⁷⁴ Thus it is quite clear that differences in the purpose of the HE institutions leads to traineeships having a different role in the curricula.

Regulations require that a business academy degree comprises a traineeship for a minimum of three months, whereas a professional bachelor degree comprises a traineeship for a minimum six months, which makes traineeships an integral part of HE programmes outside

⁶⁷ Danish Agency for International Education: General and vocational upper secondary education. Last modified March 25, 2011.

⁶⁸ Danish Evaluation Institute: Tilbudtilstærkeleverpårhversuddannelserne. Status ogerfaringer. [Opportunities for Talented Students in Vocational Education.Current Status and Experiences]. 2011.

⁶⁹ The Danish School of Education, Aarhus University: A bridge to the future: European policy for vocational education and training 2002-10 National policy report – Denmark.

⁷⁰ Danish Evaluation Institute: Erhvervsskolergårefter de stærkelever. [Vocational Colleges Are Going for the Talented Students.] Press release. 3 May 2011.

⁷¹ ReferNet Denmark: Denmark. VET in Europe – Country Report. 2010.

⁷² Danish Agency for International Education: 3–4 - year Professional Bachelor's Programmes. 13 May 2009. Copenhagen.

⁷³ Danish Agency for International Education: Higher education in Denmark. 26 May 2009.

⁷⁴ Danish Agency for International Education: Higher education. 25 May 2011.

universities.⁷⁵ For instance, the duration of a journalist professional bachelor education programme is four years of which 1½ takes places at school, 1½ on a traineeship and the last year of studies is again taken at school. The trainee student is entitled to a salary of €1,746 (DKK 1,300) per month.⁷⁶

A strategy for enhanced outbound mobility in the academy profession and professional bachelor education programmes by the Ministry of Education lays out recommendations for reaching the 20 per cent goal of graduates within the European space of higher education to spend a study period or a traineeship abroad.⁷⁷ The Ministry of Education offers concrete suggestions and initiatives in its report in order to enhance mobility. Apart from initiatives aimed towards a general increase in stays abroad as part of studies, some of the policy recommendations are directly aimed at increasing the number of traineeships.⁷⁸

HEIs are encouraged to prepare a traineeship manual that outlines models, grants and opportunities for traineeships abroad. Student counselling should be systemised due to lack of information about study and traineeship opportunities abroad among students. In connection with the accreditation and planning of the study programmes, study periods and traineeships abroad in academy professional and professional bachelor programmes should be more stringently formulated. In addition, businesses should make traineeships available to international students so that educational institutions can establish mutual agreements about exchange of traineeships.

4.2 Issues about employer practices as regards traineeships

Unpaid academic traineeships as part of ALMPs have been discussed in the media. In the public debate, there have been examples of accusations of utilising qualified workers as free labour.

5. Trainee's Rights and Terms and Conditions

A guide for potential employers notes that if traineeships are a compulsory part of the study programme, or in the case that the traineeship substitutes for one or several subjects in a programme, the educational institution may have requirements regarding the academic content of the traineeship. In this case it is also typical that the employer and the employee must enter into a written agreement about the traineeship.⁷⁹

In general, there is no legal minimum wage. In 2007, one out of two workers in the private sector was covered by a collective agreement. The collective agreement determines a wage floor which the employer must adhere to according to the regulations laid out in the agreement.⁸⁰ According to the Ministry of Education, wages for VET students on a traineeship vary between €1,075 (DKK 8,000) and €1,612 (DKK 12,000) per month depending on the line of industry. The exact amounts are specified in the collective agreements. The wages normally correspond to the estimated average productivity of a trainee student, depending on the year of studies.⁸¹

⁷⁵ The Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation: Ministerial Order on Criteria for the Relevance and Quality of University Study Programmes and on Procedures for Approval of University Study Programmes.

⁷⁶ Professionsbacheloruddannelse: Journalist. 2011. UddannelsesGuiden.

⁷⁷ Danish Ministry of Education: Stepping up study and internship abroad. 2010: 10.

⁷⁸ Ibid. pp. 10-23

⁷⁹ FBE and Cirius 2009:15

⁸⁰ Jobs for Youth/Des emplois pour les jeunes: Denmark 2010. OECD Publishing. 2010:104

⁸¹ Ministry of Children and Education: Vocational Education and Training (VET). Last updated 30 October 2008.

6. Quality Assurance of Traineeships

In Denmark, students in professional higher education programmes have chosen their field of studies on the assumption that the courses comprise both practical and theoretical elements. Correspondingly, lack of cohesion between theory and practice is contributing to lack of interest in the professional higher education programmes and their high drop-out rates.⁸²

Quality assurance practices depend on the guidelines of the study programme and the educational institution, but typically the traineeship placement is approved by the school and the agreements are prepared before the traineeship begins. The learning objectives for the traineeship may be individually assigned or prescribed in the curriculum – or both. During the traineeship, it varies whether the school is in contact with the student. In most cases, the school stays in contact. After the traineeship, the student writes a traineeship report. The policies of professional HEIs define the role which the traineeship provider takes in the final evaluation of the traineeship.⁸³

The Danish Evaluation Institute (EVA), which conducts programme accreditation of higher education programmes within the auspices of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Culture, considers practical training and its quality in professional bachelor education to be one of the key factors which is being taken into account in the accreditation process of the professional bachelor education programmes. According to EVA workshop interview results, university colleges, traineeship placement providers and graduates are adamant on agreeing on the objectives of the traineeship and transmitting the agreed objectives into a written agreement. Contracts are seen as a good way of committing the different parties to the traineeship, because planning and writing down the objectives of the traineeship also serves as an evaluation tool at the end.⁸⁴

In Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci programmes there are tools that guide stakeholders in quality assurance. For example the Leonardo da Vinci quality commitment helps in getting the picture of the responsibilities of each stakeholder in the traineeship process.⁸⁵

7. Overall Assessment as regards Traineeships

7.1 Benefits and drawbacks of traineeships

Traineeships abroad are one of priorities in developing Danish traineeships patterns. However, taking a traineeship or study period abroad is often considered laborious and expensive in relation to its benefits. When surveyed in 2009 about study periods abroad, Danish university college and academy profession students saw both benefits and disadvantages in taking studies and/or study related traineeships outside Denmark. Practical training has an important role in the study programmes, but international traineeship and study opportunities are not being seen as an essential part of the curriculum among all of the students. Only a few respondents (three to four per cent) saw

⁸² The Danish Institute of Governmental Research: Students' Assessment of Linkage between Theory and Practice in the Professional Education Programmes. [Studerendesvurderingafteoriogpraksispåprofessionsbacheloruddannelserne]. 2010.

⁸³ Rambøll Management Consulting: Praktik i Erhvervsakademi- ogProfessionsbacheloruddannelser. Rapport til Undervisningsministeriet. 2010.

⁸⁴ The Danish Evaluation Institute: Praktik i professionsbacheloruddannelser. Udfordringer, erfaringeroggoderåd. [Traineeships in Professional Bachelor Education.Challenges, Experiences and Good Advice.] 2006.

⁸⁵ Leonardo Da Vinci Mobility Quality Commitment Training Placements.

study related stays abroad as the most important factor in finding a good job after graduation.⁸⁶ Based on the interviews, it was possible to show that the students fell in one of the two main groups.

The ones that did not attach major importance to the study period abroad believed that going abroad was not worthwhile because of large labour shortages in Denmark (e.g. pedagogy and nursing related professions). The respondents also noted that the networking and job opportunities were better if the traineeship was taken in Denmark. In addition, the Danish education system was considered sufficient in relation to the demands of the labour market.⁸⁷

The others who believed studies and traineeships abroad might have a positive effect on finding employment thought that a study period abroad gave a good impression of their competences and openness towards other cultures. Also professional competences and networking opportunities were thought to improve in case of the industry being highly international or the destination country being better than Denmark in a particular area.⁸⁸

It is important to note that academic fields differ from each other in terms of whether a stay abroad is considered to lead to better career opportunities. For example, 81 per cent of students in technical education programmes were motivated to live abroad in order to improve their career opportunities but only 32 per cent of pedagogy students saw staying abroad as an important factor in their career development.⁸⁹

As a comparison to the student opinion, a survey based on interviews with 26 public and private enterprises in 2009 shows that approximately half of the Danish private enterprises and three in four public enterprises were of the opinion that international experience had less or no importance in the recruitment process of new employees.⁹⁰ In addition, only 16 per cent of the private enterprises and 25 per cent public enterprises were interested in arranging traineeships abroad.⁹¹

On the whole, it appears that the university college and academy profession students appreciate traineeships for providing them with networking opportunities, but international traineeships and exchange programmes are at times being viewed as more of a hindrance than a help. As a matter of fact, one quarter of teachers are not willing to recommend their students to take a study period or traineeships abroad because of the lack of benefits in comparison to a Danish programme.⁹²

In the field of vocational education, many students prefer practical training to classroom teaching. According to a national VET policy report the challenge of closing the gap between the theory and practice is being confronted with encouraging a close collaboration between vocational education and enterprises. For example, in order to improve the level of classroom education, VET teachers have the opportunity to spend some days within an enterprise and to get acquainted with the work environment.⁹³ From a student point of view, lack of traineeship placements is a definite risk in terms of not being able to complete their education without a training agreement with a company.⁹⁴

In the field of professional bachelor education, combining practice with theory has been difficult. According to the Danish Evaluation Institute (EVA), professional bachelor education

⁸⁶ Danish Ministry of Education: Stepping up study and internship abroad. 2010:46

⁸⁷ Danish Ministry of Education: Stepping up study and internship abroad. 2010:46

⁸⁸ Danish Ministry of Education: Stepping up study and internship abroad. 2010:46

⁸⁹ Danish Ministry of Education: Stepping up study and internship abroad. 2010:43

⁹⁰ Danish Ministry of Education: Stepping up study and internship abroad. 2010:63, 64

⁹¹ Danish Ministry of Education: Stepping up study and internship abroad. 2010:67

⁹² Danish Ministry of Education: Stepping up study and internship abroad. 2010:18

⁹³ The Danish School of Education, Aarhus University: A bridge to the future: European policy for vocational education and training 2002-10 National policy report – Denmark.

⁹⁴ ReferNet Denmark: Denmark. VET in Europe – Country Report. 2010.

is practice oriented and much of the learning takes place in practical training, which why both traineeship providers and educational institutions must meet certain requirements. According to a report⁹⁵ on traineeship quality in the field of professional bachelor education by the EVA, combining theory and practice in the right proportion has proven especially difficult in the planning of courses, because the traineeship has to be both educationally relevant and worthwhile to the employer at the same time. Some of the challenges related to traineeships in their preparatory stages are concrete in their nature. For example, there have been issues with the appropriate distribution of practical training placements among students, ways of preparing oneself for the meeting with the traineeship provider, receiving the student at the workplace etc. There are also more wide-ranging challenges in the areas of goal setting for the traineeship and co-operation between the educational establishment and the traineeship provider.⁹⁶

However, many of the traineeship related problems can be dealt with by establishing strong co-operation and continuing dialogue between the educational institution and the traineeship provider. For instance, the preparatory stage of traineeships can be improved through the implementation of concrete planning tools, for example, in terms of setting high requirements for student orientation and giving concrete goals for the preparatory process. The preparatory stage is then finalised in the form of an agreement between the parties. Eventually, the traineeship provider can affect the outcome by arranging pre-meetings with the trainee, informing the student via letters and organising orientation at the work place.⁹⁷

From a student perspective, the lack of cohesion between theory and practice has to be taken seriously as it may prove to be a factor that prevents them from obtaining a degree. A recent study by The Danish Institute of Governmental Research shows that students with difficulties in linking theory with practice are more likely to drop out from a professional bachelor programme. Some personal factors such as low grades from previous education, non-Danish ethnic background and poor health indicated a higher risk of leaving an educational programme and a lower experienced linkage between theory and practice. Also, the teaching environment both at the traineeship placement and at the school were considered relevant in maintaining the linkage between theory and practice, which points to a need of the educational institution to “*work on several fronts simultaneously*” from a student point of view.⁹⁸

The reason why international professional HE students especially have difficulties in finding traineeships is due to cultural differences and language barriers. It has been suggested that Danish companies could take on international trainees together with Danish ones to provide additional support for foreign students and to ease the efforts that the company has to make in training a foreigner.⁹⁹

7.2 Effectiveness of traineeships

The Danish Economic Council has come to the conclusion that on-the-job-training is the only ALMP that shows a positive effect on subsequent employment and earning.¹⁰⁰

In the field of vocational education, the significance of traineeships is exemplified by the sheer number of placements. As mentioned before, in total, in a period of twelve months,

⁹⁵ The data source of the report has been workshop interviews with the representatives of stakeholders, such as educational establishments, employers and trainees.

⁹⁶ The Danish Evaluation Institute: *Praktik i professionsbacheloruddannelser. Udfordringer, erfaringer og gode råd.* [Traineeships in Professional Bachelor Education. Challenges, Experiences and Good Advice.] 2006.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ The Danish Institute of Governmental Research: *Students' Assessment of Linkage between Theory and Practice in the Professional Education Programmes.* [Studerendesvurdering af teori og praksis på professionsbacheloruddannelserne]. 2010.

⁹⁹ Rambøll Management Consulting: *Praktik i Erhvervsakademi- og Professionsbacheloruddannelser.* Rapport til Undervisningsministeriet. 2010.

¹⁰⁰ *Jobs for Youth/Des emplois pour les jeunes: Denmark 2010.* OECD Publishing. 2010: 133

from June 2010, there have been little over 47,000 new vocational traineeship agreements made in Denmark.¹⁰¹

In the field of professional HE, traineeships are compulsory as well, which indicates that the role of traineeships in finding employment is going to remain crucial. However, the effectiveness of traineeships can be debated in the case of foreign degree students. Also the economic recession may have an effect on the availability of traineeships and prevent students from graduating. Thus development of school-based practical training programmes ensures that traineeship-oriented VET and professional HE serve the needs of the students.

7.3 Good practice examples and recommendations

As result of extensive utilisation of traineeships and apprenticeships, plenty of research has been carried out into traineeship policies and their functionality in the field of VET and professional HE. Traineeship guides and quality frameworks have been created on the basis of extensive research. Many of the research results, models and methods could without a doubt be utilised internationally.

The traineeship orientation of the VET system and professional HE is an asset, but, on the other hand, the individuality of the programmes has led to high number of dropouts. Therefore it is important to develop school-based practical training methods as an option for those unable to find a placement. However school based training programmes do not always provide the same benefits for the students so increasing incentives in the private sector to take in trainees would be important. The appropriate measures could be for example offering financial support for the private sector or by including social clauses in public procurement contracts. Additionally, it would be important to offer support for students with a foreign background in finding a traineeship placement.

¹⁰¹ Quaade, T.:Praktikpladssituationen ultimo juni 2011. UNI•C Statistik& Analyse.

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Annex

Table A 1: LLp 2007-2013 Leonardo da Vinci subprogramme¹⁰²,
Denmark, Mobility Projects

Call	Target group	2007*	2008*	2009*	2010	2011*
Participants	Initial vocational training	838	940	1,104	996	1,170
(*planned)	People on the labour market	4	0	13	40	1
Participants	Initial vocational training	838	889	706	n/a	n/a
Realised till 01.01.2011	People on the labour market	4	0	1	n/a	n/a

¹⁰² European Commission. Education & Training. Leonardo da Vinci statistics.

National Report on Traineeships Estonia

Henna Harju and Matti Tuusa, Rehabilitaton Foundation

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1. Traineeships as part of Member State's Youth Policy Measures

The Estonian labour market has faced dramatic changes in employment during the last five years. In 2007 the unemployment rate in Estonia was as low as 4.1 per cent; in fact, Estonia suffered from a shortage of labour in certain lines of business, e.g. construction and the service sector. However, the European financial crisis and the recession changed the employment situation in Estonia very fast and thoroughly. In 2009, the country's unemployment rate increased rapidly to 15.5 per cent, and in 2010 the rate was as high as 19.8 per cent which is the record high for the period since 1991. In Q2 2011 the unemployment rate was still 13.3 per cent, and the youth unemployment rate was at 23.6 per cent.¹

Due to several years of high unemployment, presently more than a half of the unemployed are long-term unemployed and have been unemployed for a year or more. Unemployment has remained particularly high among young people, especially among those who lack vocational training and previous working experience.

The participation rate in education of 15-24 year olds in Estonia is 62.1 per cent (2007) which remains far below the EU medium and the targets of the Estonian government. In comparison, the participation rate is 70.9 per cent in Finland and 41.2 per cent in Cyprus. The school-dropout rate has remained at 14.4 per cent, and is considerably higher in vocational education and training. The NEET indicator of young people (i.e. the percentage of people in the age group not in education, employment or training) in Estonia has increased from 11 per cent in 2008 to 19 per cent in 2009. This is most probably a result of the increased unemployment rates. A recent study² shows that in Estonia only 31 per cent of upper secondary students are enrolled in vocational education as compared to 69 per cent in general education. According to the study, a lack of vocational qualifications contributes directly to unemployment, as the unemployment rates for people with the lowest and highest educational attainment levels differ almost five times. At a policy level, it is really important to develop vocational education further and reduce early school leaving to increase the share of people with higher educational attainment.³

The difference of educational level of men and women in Estonia contributes to the gender gap, as well in the unemployment rates. Tertiary education is far more common among Estonian women and men. Tertiary education provides noticeably better protection against labour market risks compared to vocational education. During the crisis the risk of unemployment increased, and also among people with vocational education due to the restructuring of the economy, for example the downfall of the construction sector had a big impact on unemployment among young men.⁴

Until now, emigration has been an attractive solution to joblessness and a chance to build a career, especially for qualified graduates, but the option to leave the country has become difficult because of high unemployment in the target countries in Europe, e.g. Finland, Germany and Great Britain during the crisis. According to the information from EURES, around a third of young people in Estonia prefer to emigrate to Finland, Australia and USA are also very popular among them.⁵

¹ CoE Youth Partnership Web Portal

² Nurmela, Leetmaa

³ European Employment Observatory

⁴ European industrial relations observatory on-line

⁵ CoE Youth Partnership Web Portal

Vocational education has traditionally had an unfavourable image in Estonia. People tend to value upper secondary general education and higher education, which has led to a situation where over 45 per cent of Estonians have no vocational skills training. Most Estonians have finished upper secondary general education and some years of higher education without any finished degree. However, in recent years the image of industry and production and related vocational training has improved, as has the image of skilled labour.⁶

The public debate has concentrated on the quality of vocational education and matching the supply of vocational education to the demand on the labour market. The number of schools is excessive in the Estonian education system, especially at secondary level. Improving the efficiency of the system and thereby quality is a priority for the authorities at the moment. Partly as a result of such discussions, a social partner agreement was concluded in 2006, which aimed at further developing and increasing the quality of Estonian vocational education. The signatories included, for example, the Minister of Education and Research; the Minister of Economic Affairs and Communications; the Minister of Social Affairs; and representatives of central employer and trade union organisations. At the end of the day, a greater amount of attention has been paid to government policies so that the vocational education system can be improved.⁷

The Estonian education and vocational training system and employment services are facing big challenges in finding proper measures for supporting graduates in entering the labour market. The focus of policy in the past has been on the financial causes of early school leaving. For the period of the Estonian Action plan for growth and jobs 2008–11, the focus has been more on educational measures to support young people in continuing their studies (e.g. through more efficient support systems). Some of the new measures have included language teaching to non-nationals already in pre-school education, developing counselling systems and introducing customised measures for children with special educational needs.

In 2008, The Estonian Ministry of Education and Research introduced the Development Plan for the Estonian Vocational Education and Training System 2009-2013.⁸ The plan is comprehensive and covers four objectives and numerous practical measures to meet its objectives. One of the objectives is to tighten the links between vocational training and the labour market. However, in terms of this study on traineeships, it is interesting to note that the development plan does not contain any measures related to developing traineeships, promotion of practical training in enterprises and in real jobs as a part of vocational training. For example in Finland, during last ten years, developing the traineeship system as an essential part of VET curricula (on-the-job-learning) and skills training of the trainee supervisors in companies have been major priorities in the development of the Finnish VET-system.

⁶ VET in Europe

⁷ European Commission

⁸ The Estonian Ministry of Education and Research

Table 1.1: Summary table of main ALMP traineeship programmes in Estonia

Main traineeship programmes & initiatives, including, ALMPs, educational VET & university traineeships as well as mandatory professional training	Brief description	Web link
Traineeships as a part of vocational education and training (VET)	<p>Vocational education and training (VET) in Estonia is provided by 47 vocational training institutions, annually for 27,000 students. Traineeships (work practice) are defined both in the Vocational Education Institutions Act and in the Vocational Education Standard, as work performed within the framework of the curriculum in the working environment under the supervision of an instructor with specific study objectives. The traineeships are a compulsory part of the VET curricula. The educational institutions can decide independently on the content and length of the traineeships.</p>	<p>The Ministry of Education and Research</p> <p>http://www.hm.ee/index.php?1511073</p> <p>The Development Plan for the Estonian Vocational Education and Training System 2009-2013</p>
Traineeships as part of professional higher education	<p>According to the Standard of Higher Education, the minimum duration of traineeships (practical training) in companies and work places, in professional higher education is at 15 per cent of the total curriculum.</p>	<p>The Ministry of Education and Research</p> <p>http://www.hm.ee/index.php?1511854</p> <p>Fact sheet about Estonian HE and R&D system</p>
Traineeships as part of university education	<p>According to the Standard of Higher Education there are no minimum provisions for the duration of traineeships in university education, and the duration of traineeships is instead regulated by the universities and institutions individually.</p> <p>For certain professions, e.g. teachers, physicians, pharmacists, dentists, midwives, there are specific regulations in relation to the amount and quality of traineeships.</p>	<p>The Ministry of Education and Research</p> <p>http://www.hm.ee/index.php?1511854</p> <p>Fact sheet about Estonian HE and R&D system</p>

2. Legislative Framework for Traineeships

2.1 The legal framework of the Estonian vocational education and training system

Compared to many other European countries, the present system of vocational education and training in Estonia is very new. The legal basis for vocational education and training in Estonia was created in the late 1990's as the Soviet Union based system was thoroughly modernised. However, many major reforms and adaptations have been made during the 2000s in order to update the training system to meet the demands of the changing labour market and to harmonise the Estonian training system with the EU standards.

The main laws related to vocational education and training are:

- Vocational Education Institutions Act (*Kutseõppeasutuse seadus*, 1998) regulates the provision of VET at upper and post-secondary (non tertiary) level, as well as the foundation and operation of VET institutions. It was amended considerably in 2006. The changes stipulate the involvement of social partners in VET, provide students with new and flexible ways to enter VET and continue to general higher education, etc.
- Vocational Education Standard (*Kutseharidusstandard*, 2006) is a set of uniform requirements for vocational and professional training at the level of basic and secondary education. It applies to all vocational education institutions which organise vocational training. In 2009, recognition of the Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL) principles was added to the standard.
- Policies of Implementing Workplace Based Training (*Töökohapõhise õppe rakendamise kord*, 2007) regulate the provision of apprenticeship training. Apprenticeship training has been introduced in the Estonian training system and legislation very recently in 2008 as result of EU-funded development programme.
- Private Schools Act (*Erakooliseadus*, 1998) regulates the provision of training which is longer than 120 hours, as well as the foundation and operation of private educational institutions.
- Higher education is primarily regulated by the University Act (*Ülikooliseadus* - 1995; 2003). The Applied Higher Education Institutions Act (*Rakenduskõrgkooliseadus* - 1998) regulates the foundation and operation of applied higher education institutions (tertiary education) and provision of applied higher education, including that in vocational education and training institutions.
- Adult Education Act (*Täiskasvanute koolituse seadus*, 1993) regulates education and training provisions for adults.
- Conditions and Policies for Arranging Professional Training for Working Adults in VET Institutions (*Täiskasvanute tööalase koolituse kutseõppeasutuses korraldamise tingimused ja kord*, 2007) regulates the provision of IVET, CVET and retraining in VET institutions.
- Professions Act (*Kutseseadus*, 2000) regulates the work of the Vocational Councils and the qualifications system. The act is the basis for developing vocational qualification requirements and the conditions and procedure for their authentication and awarding, as well as the organisation of the work of professional councils. The new Professions Act, which was adopted by the parliament in May 2008, makes the qualifications system more compatible with the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (EQF). Furthermore, APEL (Accrediting Prior Experiential Learning) was introduced in 2004 and later developed further. One of its objectives is to facilitate recognition of non-formal and

informal learning. The aim of the system is to value all the knowledge and skills a person has acquired, both through vocational education and workplace learning.⁹

- The recognition of Foreign Professional Qualifications Act (*Välisriigis omandatud kutsekvalifikatsiooni tunnustamise seadus, 2000*) is applied to regulated professions and takes European Union directives into account.
- Youth Work Act (*Noorsootöö seadus, 1999*) regulates the required conditions for youth activities (youth aged 7-26 years), which take place outside the family and formal education/work and are organised on a voluntary basis.
- Study Allowances and Study Loans Act (*Õppetoetuste ja õppelaenu seadus 2003*) provides the basis, conditions and procedure for the grant of study allowances and study loans for ensuring access to secondary vocational education and higher education. The purpose of the act is to enable students to study full time and to complete the study programme in the nominal period of time.¹⁰

2.2 Traineeships in vocational education and training in Estonia

Traineeships are an essential part of both secondary and higher level of vocational education and training in Estonia. Traineeship in the secondary level of vocational education is defined in the Vocational Education Institutions Act. The act also prescribes two separate forms of studying in vocational education: regular school-based training and workplace-based (apprenticeship) training.

Vocational education and training (VET) in Estonia is provided by 47 vocational training institutions. The majority of VET institutions (32) belong to the state and are run by the Ministry of Education and Research. Three of 47 VET institutions are run by municipalities (Tartu VET Centre is the biggest even among all VET schools), 12 of the institutions are private institutions. State and municipal VET institutions are financed in relation to the number study places they offer. The state also orders a specific number of students to be educated in a particular curriculum group. Public and municipal VET schools have become more independent, as the School Board is the most important administrative body whose responsibilities include, among others, the preparation and supervision of the fulfillment of the development plan, approval of the activity plan and drafting of the school budget and the investment plan. Private institutions are supported by the government to the extent that the scheme of state funded study places is also applied to the private schools if the state considers it important to fund certain study programmes (e.g. hotel management training).¹¹

In Estonia the definition of **work practice** is established both in the Vocational Education Institutions Act and in the Standard of Higher Education. Work practice is defined as work performed within the framework of the curriculum in the working environment under the supervision of an instructor with specific study objectives.¹²

2.3 Traineeships in Estonian higher education

The Estonian (tertiary) higher education system is binary and consists of universities and (applied) professional higher education institutions. Higher education is provided by universities, institutions of (applied) professional higher education, and some vocational education institutions. Universities are institutions that provide higher education, but they

⁹ European industrial relations observatory on-line

¹⁰ VET in Europe

¹¹ VET in Europe

¹² The Ministry of Education and Research

can offer professional higher education programmes as well. Professional higher education institutions provide professional higher education studies that are the first stage of higher education and correspond to the Bachelor's-level programmes at universities. The studies of both, the Bachelor's-level of universities and applied (professional) higher education, last for three years and consist of 120 credits (180 ECTS). Applied (professional) higher education institutions may offer Master's-level programmes in all fields of study in cooperation with universities.

Estonia has undertaken several extensive reforms in the field of higher education. These reforms took into consideration the aim to integrate European education and research practices. Since 2000, the changes in the higher education area have followed the principles of the Bologna process. In the years 2001-03, amendments were made to all substantial legislation governing higher education. The changes which have taken place in Estonia in the course of the Bologna process have primarily been directed towards the new qualification structure (the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning) and towards supporting mobility. The introduction of the accreditation process and adopting a system of accumulation of credit points had taken place earlier.¹³

2.4 Traineeships for young people as part of labour market services

Labour market services in Estonia are provided by the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund (*Töötukassa*). The fund is the administrative arm of the Ministry of Social Affairs. It has 16 regional employment offices and aims at reducing unemployment and assisting both job-seekers and employers. The fund is governed by the Ministry of Social Affairs and representatives of employers and employees. This organisation has been operating since 1 May 2009 when The Labour Market Board and the Unemployment Insurance Fund became a single public law agency. The legal basis of the activities of the Unemployment Insurance Fund is found in two laws: the Unemployment Insurance Act which describes the unemployment insurance system and the organisation of the Fund, and the Labour Market Services and Benefits Act, which contains the provisions concerning job mediation and related services.¹⁴

Labour market services for the clients include:

1. **Providing information about the situation of the labour market and about labour market services and benefits** is the provision of information regarding the status of and changes in the labour market, as well as the nature of labour market services and the conditions for receiving such services and labour market benefits. This service is designed for all clients of the Unemployment Insurance Fund.
2. **Job mediation** is a service in which the Unemployment Insurance Fund finds suitable positions for job-seekers and the unemployed and also assists employers by looking for workers who meet the criteria they submit. This service is free of charge to job-seekers, the unemployed and employers alike. Information about working abroad is available from the Unemployment Insurance Fund's EURES consultants.
3. **Labour market training** is professional training organised for unemployed people in which they obtain or develop professional and other skills designed to make it easier for them to find a job. The training can last for up to one year. Trainees' existing skills and knowledge, the positions which are available on the market – or are due to become available – and the requirements of potential future positions are all taken into account when selecting the most appropriate form of training. Those taking part in training, which lasts for more than 40 hours, receive a grant as well as transport and accommodation allowances.

¹³ VET in Europe

¹⁴ Ministry of Social Affairs

4. **Careers counselling** is designed to support people in making and implementing informed decisions relating to their career development. The service seeks to resolve issues associated with a person's choice of jobs and professions, their professional career and finding or losing jobs. The counsellor guides them through education, training and employment options appropriate to their character, educational background and skills.
5. **Work practice** is a labour market service for gaining practical experience provided to unemployed people by employers with the aim of improving their knowledge and skills needed for the employment. Work practice is designed to either get people used to working for the first time or to reintroduce them to work. It aims to prepare the unemployed to take part in labour market programmes and activities or take on work. Work practice helps the participants to gain practical experience in the work place. Participants spend time working for an employer under the guidance of a supervisor. Work practice normally involves simple tasks that do not require special knowledge or for which the necessary skills can be learnt in the course of the work under the guidance of a supervisor. The maximum length of a work experience placement is four months. Those taking part receive a grant, while the supervisor is also paid a fee. Participants are also eligible to apply for transport and accommodation benefits.
6. **Public work** is temporary paid work which does not require professional or special training. Unemployed people can only be asked to do public work if they wish to do so. Public work is organised by local government departments, non-profit organisations and foundations who pay the participant at least the hourly rate of the minimum wage for their work.
7. **Coaching for working life** is a labour market service for the unemployed to restore work habits or to gain first work habits. The aim of coaching for working life is to prepare an unemployed person for working. The duration of coaching for working life is up to three months.
8. **Wage subsidy** is a benefit paid to employers who hire an unemployed person. It is paid in the case of unemployed people who were released from prison in the 12 months prior to registering as unemployed and those who have been registered as unemployed for more than 12 consecutive months and have not found work during that time. The benefit may also be paid if an unemployed person between the ages of 16 and 24 is hired who has been registered as unemployed for more than six consecutive months and has not found work during this time.
9. Unemployed people who are at least 18 years of age and have completed business training, have higher or vocational education in economics or have business experience are eligible to apply for a **business start-up subsidy**. To do this they must submit an application, a business plan and copies of documents evidencing their business training, business experience or higher/vocational education in economics to the Unemployment Insurance Fund.
10. **Adaptation of work premises and equipment** is a service designed for unemployed people with disabilities in which an employer's premises, working area or equipment are rendered accessible to people with disabilities so that they are able to use them in their work.
11. The '**special aids equipment**' service provides equipment to people with disabilities without which they would otherwise be unable to do their job. This does not include equipment required for the completion of tasks unrelated to the person's disability or equipment which the person requires in order to be able to cope in everyday life. The technical aids provided as part of the service can be used for a period of up to three years.

12. **Communication support at interviews** is a service provided to unemployed people with disabilities who need help communicating with a potential employer due to their disability.
13. The **'working with a support person'** service is provided to unemployed people with disabilities who need assistance and supervision while working due to the nature of their disability. The service is designed to increase the ability of the person to work independently and is therefore provided in decreasing amounts over time: up to eight hours a day during the first month; up to four hours a day during the second month; and up to two hours a day during the third and fourth months, but not more than 700 hours per year. The Unemployment Insurance Fund pays employers a fee for the work of a support person.¹⁵

The most relevant labour market services for young people in Estonia, which can be defined as traineeship programmes, are work practice and coaching for working life. These services have been introduced very recently, in 2006, as active labour market measures (ALMPs) in Estonia. The work practice scheme in companies is a measure targeted towards young unemployed people to support their entry into the labour market. This measure enables young people to gain practical work experience and allows employers to train potential employees according to company-specific needs. Job coaching contains more personal support in the job seeking and job placement process and is targeted especially at people with disabilities and other special needs.

Assignment of a support person is a special measure targeted at supporting the employment of disabled people, which may also include providing traineeships as a possible course of action. Wage subsidy, however, cannot be listed as a traineeship related measure, because it is regular paid work primarily aimed at permanent employment, providing the employer with a financial initial incentive to hire an unemployed person.

These measures have been implemented, as well, by European Social Fund projects targeted at young jobseekers in risk of social exclusion. However, there is no relevant data available on the quality, amount and types of traineeships these projects have provided.

3. Availability of and Access to Traineeships

3.1 Traineeships as a part of VET and tertiary education in Estonia

Vocational education and training students have always had practical training at enterprises in Estonia. Annually, there are about 27,000 students enrolled in VET programmes in Estonia. The number of VET students has slightly decreased during last five years. Table A 1 (annex) shows the number of VET students in various fields of study through last five years. The VET training in Estonia is very much concentrated on technical, production and construction sectors, with approximately one third of the VET students studying in these sectors. Social welfare, health care and business sectors constitute a remarkably smaller part of VET enrolment in Estonia (10 per cent in 2009) compared to many other European countries.¹⁶

As a compulsory part of VET studies, traineeships cover all sectors of training. The traineeships are a part of the VET curricula, and the educational institutions can decide independently on the content of the curricula and the traineeships involved. At a national level, the curricula are regulated by national educational standards, but the definition of

¹⁵ Ministry of Social Affairs

¹⁶ Chapter 1, Table 1.1

traineeships remains on a very general level. The Ministry of Education and Research has no national level data or statistics on the amount, context, quality or length of the traineeships.

Alongside with the mainstream school based VET in Estonia the Ministry of Education and Research set an aim in 2009 to increase the amount of apprenticeship training (workplace based training) from 673 students up to 1,000 students in 2013. This form of VET was introduced in the Estonian training system and legislation in 2008.¹⁷

The number of higher professional and university education students is shown in Table A 2 and Table A 3 (in the annex). The total number of students in tertiary education in 2010 was over 69,000. The number of students has slightly increased during the last five years. The majority of students are enrolled in university Bachelor's and Master's programmes. Professional higher education programmes constitute only 15 per cent of student enrolment, which is much less than for example in the Nordic countries. More than one third of the university students are studying social sciences, business and law. Technology, manufacturing, building and construction sector and arts and humanities constitute both 14 per cent of the student enrolment.¹⁸

The traineeships are part of the curricula and the educational institutions and universities can decide independently on the context of the curricula and the traineeships involved. The Ministry of Education and Research has no national level data or statistics on the amount, context, quality and length of the traineeships.¹⁹

Although traineeships as a part of vocational and tertiary training are considered to be an essential part of studies, the availability of practical training opportunities for students, however, has varied a lot through the years, depending strongly on the economic and labour market situation. Throughout the 1990s and early 2000s enterprises were eager to have trainees from vocational training in the hope of being able to recruit the trainees after their graduation. Vocational education and training colleges previously faced the challenge of losing their students to companies, as often they would not return to studies from practical training, instead the students were recruited by the company before graduation. The financial crisis and increased unemployment has changed the situation dramatically. Nowadays, it is much more difficult than before for schools to find places for practical training in companies, e.g. in the building construction, business and commerce sector. The situation varies from sector to sector. To solve the problem of lack of places for practical training, schools have opened their own workshops or model companies and sell their services to the general public, so that the students can practice their skills. On the other hand, the dropout rates have decreased as a consequence of the enterprises not recruiting VET students while they are still studying or on a traineeship.^{20 21}

3.2 Transnational traineeships

In terms of transnational traineeships The Erasmus programme is the largest in Estonia with 214 professional higher education and university students in 2009/10.²² As of 2007, through the new programme the number of Estonian students going on international traineeships has increased considerably. Earlier the number of students was around 50-60 annually. The most popular traineeship countries are Spain, Finland, Great Britain, Greece and Germany. Most often the length of the traineeships is three months (on average in 2009/10 it was 3.9

¹⁷ The Ministry of Education and Research

¹⁸ Annex, tables A 1 and A 2

¹⁹ Stakeholder Interview

²⁰ VET in Europe

²¹ Stakeholder Interview

²² European Commission, Education, Erasmus

months)²³, which students can complete in during their summer holidays. Completing a 6-12 month traineeship means prolonged studies for students.

In Estonia the Erasmus budget for mobility actions in 2009/10 was €2,836,000, covering both study and traineeship programmes.²⁴

Students on transnational traineeships do not usually receive a salary for their work. They cover their costs with a regular study allowance and the extra Erasmus grant. The average monthly grant in the Erasmus Programme in Estonia is €439.²⁵ In terms of money, international traineeships tend to be selective, because students have to finance at least part of their stay themselves.

Transnational traineeships are also organised through the Leonardo da Vinci sub programme for VET students. In 2008/09 55 Estonian students participated in the programme. The total annual sum for grants of the programme in 2010 was €1,349,083 in Estonia, which covered transnational initial vocational training, traineeships and VET professionals programmes.²⁶

Transnational traineeships have obvious positive impacts on the employment of students. Work experience abroad is highly appreciated in Estonia when students are seeking a job. This is especially the case when they are looking for a job in international companies, and certain sectors, e.g. tourism, business and ICT-sector, health care. The traineeships are controlled by written tri-partite contracts between the trainee, employer and the educational institution. Regular feedback is gathered from the students. Generally the feedback is very positive, but sometimes the work in practice turns out not to have been what students were expecting.

National level information on transnational traineeships by Estonian students is very scattered, as various organisations and also educational institutions themselves arrange them. There are no statistics available on the full amount of annual traineeships, and there is either no up-to-date evaluation of this issue in Estonia.²⁷

4. Practices and Content of Traineeships

4.1 Practices and content of traineeships in VET

In vocational education and training, the duration of a traineeship is dependent on the form of study. According to the Vocational Education Institutions Act and the Vocational Education Standard, work practice in companies (traineeship) should not exceed half of the total volume of the vocational training part of the curriculum (i.e. the general education part of the curriculum is not regarded), but is not less than 25 per cent. In apprenticeship training, work practice in companies will be at least two thirds of the total duration of the vocational training part of the curriculum. The exact length of the individual work practice is defined in the contract concluded between the school, student and work practice enterprise prior to commencement of work practice.

Vocational education and training of over 17-year-olds without basic education (i.e. lower secondary education ISCED 2C) allows drop-outs to recontinue their education. The length of studies is 20-100 study weeks of which school-based practical work and practical training in enterprises constitutes at least 50 per cent.

²³ European Commission, Education, Erasmus

²⁴ European Commission, Education, Erasmus

²⁵ European Commission, Education, Erasmus

²⁶ European Commission, Education, Leonardo da Vinci

²⁷ Stakeholder interview

Upper-secondary vocational education (ISCED 3B) lasts at least 120 study weeks and students are required to have basic education as a prerequisite. Students acquire the knowledge, skills and competences necessary for independent work. Twenty five per cent of VET is dedicated to school-based practical work and 25 per cent of studies are carried out in practical training in enterprises. VET without upper secondary general education (ISCED 3C) suits students who have difficulties with acquiring general upper-secondary education. General subjects are limited to the content required for learning the vocation. As in other VET options, 50 per cent is undertaken as school-based practical work and practical training in enterprises. The length of studies is between 40 and 100 study weeks.

Post secondary non-tertiary education (ISCED 4B) lasts from 20 to 100 study weeks and students must have upper-secondary education (*gümnaasium* ISCED 3A) as a prerequisite. In order to graduate, students are required to pass a vocational final examination or a professional examination.²⁸

4.2 Practices and content of traineeships in tertiary education

The most significant difference between the two types of tertiary education in Estonia is the percentage of practical work as a part of the curricula. According the Standard of Higher Education, the minimum duration of a traineeship, practical training in companies and work places, in professional higher education is at 15 per cent of the total curriculum. According to the Standard of Higher Education, however, there are no minimum provisions for the duration of traineeships in university education, and the duration of traineeships is instead regulated by the universities and institutions individually.

There are no national level formal obligations in relation to traineeships in higher education, and the practices may vary depending on the curriculum within a school. For example, in some university Bachelor's study programmes the amount of compulsory practical work practice can be only one month, and in some professional higher education programmes 7.5 months, i.e. 30 per cent of a course.²⁹

In the Estonian educational system, traineeships are a very important part of the professional higher education. All the graduates of professional higher education obtain work experience and an idea of the acquired profession during their studies. Traineeships are part of the curricula and the educational institutions can independently decide on the content, following the guidelines of the national curricula.

At the universities, there are no common regulations relating to traineeships in Bachelor's and Master's programme education. The ministry has less data available on university programmes in comparison to fields of education in which traineeships are more regulated.³⁰

For certain professions, there are specific regulations in relation to the amount and quality of traineeships. Regulation of certain professions is based on the directive of the recognition of professional qualifications 2005/36/EC. Specialist medical training comprises of theoretical and practical training at a university or medical teaching hospital, or, when appropriate, the traineeship can be taken in a medical care establishment approved for the purpose by competent authorities or bodies. However, there are no specific ECTS amount requirements. For pharmacists, 30 ECTS traineeship is compulsory in a pharmacy which is open to the public or in a hospital, under the supervision of the hospital's pharmaceutical department.

Regulations are the most specific for the midwife course – e.g. carrying out the examinations necessary for monitoring the development of pregnancies etc. Practical

²⁸ European Commission

²⁹ European Commission

³⁰ Stakeholder interview

training for civil engineers is regulated through specific subjects, but not the amount of ECTS. Requirements for teacher training are also regulated nationally. The laws governing teacher training were passed in the Government of the Republic Regulation No 381 in November 2000. Teacher training curriculum includes at least 40 credit points (60 ECTS) of general studies in educational science, psychological and didactic studies, including practical training of at least 10 study weeks.³¹

In the Estonian professional higher education, all courses contain obligatory traineeships due to national level minimum requirements. The role of internships is also confirmed by the study of Research Center Klaster (2007) on the socio-economic conditions of Estonian higher education students. According to the study, almost 100 per cent of the professional higher education students said that work practice is an obligatory part of their curriculum. When considering only public universities, where the proportion of work practice is not defined in terms of minimum standards, 60 per cent of students answered that work practice is obligatory for them.³²

Research by Klaster in 2007 indicates that in higher education workplace training is a compulsory part of the curriculum most often in construction, manufacturing and engineering in which 92 per cent of students claimed that work practice is a compulsory part of their studies. According to students, traineeships were obligatory in 90 per cent of the health and welfare sector, 85 per cent in the field of education, 85 per cent in the field of business and administration and 83 per cent in the field of services. The results were predictable as these are also the branches that are most common in professional higher education. Also, work practice for those studying to become teachers or health care professionals in general higher education is often compulsory.³³

In higher education, the recruitment of trainees is not actively being pursued by either public or private sector. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has pointed out that a general problem across the system of higher education seems to be limited opportunities for practical training experience through traineeships in the production sector. There is a great lack of interest in companies to take students on a traineeship for short periods and acting as their mentors. It is proposed in the OECD report that partnerships between institutions and the business sector should be strengthened by, for example, arranging traineeships for students and teachers by drawing on the current good practices in the professional and vocational sector where links with industry are more developed. Also, there is a need to make the partnerships more sustainable and systematic across the entire tertiary education sector.³⁴

The fact sheet on the development of Estonian higher education, research and development in 2010 emphasises specific measures to support the collaboration between universities and enterprises.³⁵ A key development programme aims at creating a platform for curricular development taking into account the needs of the labour market, integrating the resources and supporting the collaboration between universities and different stakeholders. The intention of the programme is to support the activities of enterprises to re-orient their activities towards higher value-added products and services. The programme supports Master's and professional higher education. The activities funded include curricular development, training in enterprises and various internationalisation activities. The compulsory requirement for all projects implemented is the involvement of representatives of labour market stakeholders, professional associations and enterprises.

³¹ Stakeholder interview

³² European Commission

³³ European Commission

³⁴ European Commission

³⁵ Ministry of Education and Research

4.3 Practices and content of traineeships in the Estonian labour market services

Implementation of the active labour market measures has increased considerably in Estonia during the recession. According to the Unemployment Insurance Fund, 1,722 people participated in work practice in 2009, but the number increased to 3,769 people in 2010.³⁶ However, work practices are not targeted specifically towards the young unemployed and work practices are not offered to all unemployed. Currently there is no statistical data available on the age distribution of the participants. Studies which estimate the employment and earnings effects on the participants are not available. The work practice measure may have several positive effects on the youth employment – for instance, it may create direct contacts to potential employers or it may help in gaining work experience, etc. The potential negative impacts could be the misuse of ALMP measures by employers, e.g. trainees that replace regular workers, or exploitation in the form of handing out only menial routine tasks. However, according to the statistics of the Unemployment Insurance Fund in 2008, 49 per cent of participants who completed the work practice were employed six months later. In 2009, the respective indicator was 39 per cent.³⁷

Recent major changes in the labour market legislation have also had an important impact on the quality of jobs for young people. As a result of the new Employment Contracts Act introduced in 2009, labour market regulations are more flexible. The flexible regulations are expected to ease the initial access of young people into the labour market. However, the legislation also means that it will be more difficult for young people to find and keep good quality jobs. In terms of other flexible forms of work, in general, these are not common in Estonia. According to Statistics Estonia, the share of temporary work among all employed people has remained around 2 per cent to 3 per cent since 2000. Also, part-time work remained limited to 18 per cent of young people employed in 2009. Despite the fact that there are no measures targeted solely at young unemployed people, in the package of Estonian active labour market policies several measures work towards increasing the employment opportunities of young people. However, since active labour market measures are not properly evaluated in Estonia, the impact of these measures on the future employment and earnings of the participants is difficult to ascertain.³⁸

In Estonia, the use of the wage subsidy scheme aimed at risk groups was made more favourable during the crisis from January 2010 until January 2011. The wage subsidy scheme supports employers hiring young unemployed people aged 16–24 and the long-term unemployed. The period of unemployment was shortened for young people to three months (from six months) and to six months for the long-term unemployed (from 12 months). Employers can apply for a wage subsidy of 50 per cent of the employee's salary but not more than the minimum wage which was around €278 in 2010. In the case of fixed term contracts, the wage subsidy is paid for half a year at most, while it is extended to a year in the case of contracts made for an indefinite time. However, the conditions of the measure were reverted to the pre-crisis level in 2011. In 2011, the employment service introduced the opportunity of a probationary work period of up to three days. During this probationary period, the unemployed person has a chance to decide whether the job is suitable for him and the employer can see whether the potential new employee is qualified for the job. During the probationary work period, candidates retain the right to be registered as unemployed and receive unemployment benefits.³⁹

³⁶ Annex, Table A 3

³⁷ European Employment Observatory

³⁸ Nurmela, Leetmaa

³⁹ European Employment Observatory

5. Trainee's Rights and Terms and Conditions

In Estonian vocational education and training and higher education, there are no regulations on the remuneration of a traineeship. The amount of remuneration is regulated only for apprenticeship training. Young people taking traineeships in Estonia are most often students, and as students they live on a study allowance during the traineeship without salary from the company. In some cases, students are employees during the traineeship and they get paid according to the regular salary rate and common agreements, which is very often the case in the business and commerce sector. However, paid internship arrangements are much less common nowadays than they were during the better economic years. The Ministry of Education and Research has no statistics available or studies made on the topic of paid internships.⁴⁰

According to the Vocational Education Institutions Act, in case of work practice a tripartite contract between the school, student and work practice enterprise will be concluded. The contract has to define the rights and obligations of the student, school and the enterprise in which the traineeship takes place. Also, the legislation related to occupational health and safety applies to students during practical training at a work place. The school has an obligation to ensure students with practical training positions and that the traineeship is in accordance with the objectives of the study programme. The school supervises the traineeship and assesses its effectiveness.

6. Quality Assurance of Traineeships

The Ministry of Education and Research has no official role in the context, quality and implementation of traineeships. The educational standards contain a very common level description of traineeships, but the educational institutions have the responsibility to control the quality of traineeships. In certain professional and university training programmes traineeships are more regulated and standardised nationally.

Usually, the educational institutions have standardised practices related to traineeships: written contracts, schedules for introduction to work and work supervision, follow-up forms for guidance, evaluation and measurement of learning outcomes. The quality of the traineeships is controlled by teachers and educational institutions. Related to transnational mobility programmes there are specific quality control procedures.⁴¹ Biggest problems related to traineeships are lack of supervision and guidance, unclarified aims of practical training, no access to proper work during the traineeship and lack of feedback from the company. According to the Ministry of Education and Research, there should be much more quality control on behalf of the educational institutions.⁴²

One national major quality development measure is the Primus-project implemented jointly by the Archimedes Foundation and The Estonian Ministry of Education and Research. The project is funded by EU structural funds and it aims at improving the quality of university education. The project concentrates especially on improving the teaching and supervision skills of university teachers and developing high quality education based on outcomes. The aims include the practical training aspect as well.⁴³

⁴⁰ Stakeholder interview

⁴¹ European Commission, Education, Leonardo da Vinci

⁴² Stakeholder interview

⁴³ Stakeholder interview

7. Overall Assessment as regards Traineeships

Traineeships are considered to be an essential part of both VET and tertiary education in Estonia. However there is no national level statistical or research data available on the amount, length, context and quality of traineeships. Traineeships are defined as a part of the curriculum, and the educational institutions and universities can independently decide on the content of the study programmes and the traineeships involved in them. On the basis of the information available, it is difficult to evaluate how well the present VET and tertiary education is linked with the needs of the labour market and how the traineeships contribute to the employment of the young graduates entering the labour market. There a need for more research on the topic.

Both the Development Plan for the Estonian Vocational Education and Training System and the Estonian Higher Education Strategy 2006-2015 stress the aim to tighten the links between education and the labour market. However, in terms of this study on traineeships, it is interesting to note that the documents do not contain any practical measures aimed at developing traineeships and real jobs as part of the training in enterprises.

There are very good European level practices developed for vocational training purposes on practical work-based leaning and skills development, guidance, supervision and evaluation. For example, in Finland, during the last ten years, developing the traineeship system as an essential part of VET curricula (on-the-job-learning) has been a major priority. In Estonia, where the majority of the companies are small or medium sized, it is a challenge for the educational institutions to increase the employer involvement the in the traineeships.

Traineeships have been introduced very recently, in 2006, as a part of the active labour market measures in Estonia. On the basis of the present statistical and research data, it is very difficult to estimate the impact of these schemes on the employment of young people in Estonia. A study conducted in 2010 shows that a little less than half of the people who had participated in work practice service had been employed after six months. However, it is difficult to distinguish the efficiency of this measure for young jobseekers from the data available.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ European industrial relations observatory on-line

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Annex

Table A 1: Number of Students in Vocational Education and Training in Estonia by Areas of Study

	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09		Change
Humanities and arts	1,038	1,126	1,084	1,016	1,080	↗	4,0 %
Sciences	1,679	1,361	1,215	1,221	1,459	↘	-13,1 %
Agriculture	1,687	1,85	1,979	1,952	1,898	↗	12,5 %
Social sciences, business and law	3,742	3,661	3,468	3,339	3,372	↘	-9,9 %
Broad area of study	6,708	6,458	6,514	6,183	6,337	↘	-5,5 %
Technical fields, production and construction	14,319	13,722	13,602	12,970	12,491	↘	-12,8 %
Health and welfare	742	835	789	700	602	↘	-18,9 %
Total	29,915	29,013	28,651	27,381	27,239		-8,9 %

Source: (Ministry of Education and Research, 2008)

Table A 2: Number of Students in Professional Higher Education and University Programmes in Estonia

Educational Programmes	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Professional higher education	23,502	23,659	22,938	23,019	22,454	21,970
Bachelor's programmes	29,773	28,628	27,926	27,511	27,531	27,461
Integrated Bachelor's and Master's programmes	3,463	3,684	3,853	4,079	4,160	4,122
Master's programmes	9,664	10,654	11,070	11,325	12,907	12,632
Doctoral studies	1,971	2,142	2,381	2,465	2,653	2,928
Total	68,373	68,767	68,168	68,399	69,705	69,113

Source: (Ministry of Education and Research, 2011)

Table A 3: Number and Percentage of Professional Higher Education and University Students in Various Areas of Study in Estonia

Area of study	1994/94	2000/01	2005/06	2010/11
Education	3,384 14%	5,809 10%	5,182 8%	5,133 7%
Arts and humanities	3,182 13%	6,445 11 %	7,902 12 %	9,470 14 %
Social Sciences, law, business	6,439 26%	22,234 39%	26,605 39%	23,333 34%
Natural and exact sciences	2,140 9 %	4,883 9 %	6,860 10 %	7,712 11 %
Technology, manufacturing, building and construction	5,675 23%	6,858 12%	8,412 12%	9,940 14%
Agriculture	1,456 6 %	1,294 2 %	1,703 2 %	1,563 2 %
Health and welfare	1,593 6%	5,603 10%	5,823 9%	6,458 9%
Services	1,195 5%	3,311 6%	5,800 8%	5,504 8%
Total	2,506,502	5,643,799	68,288	6,911,399

(Ministry of Education and Research, 2011)

Table A 4: Participation in certain active labour market measures In Estonia

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Work practice	682	945	782	1,722	3,769
Coaching for working	461	1,324	862	1528	1003
Working with support person	54	30	25	10	15
Wage subsidy	700	211	116	194	10,885

(Labour Market Fund, 2011)

Table A 5: Leonardo da Vinci subprogramme, Lp 2007-2013, mobility projects, Estonia⁴⁵

Call	Target group	2007*	2008*	2009*	2010	2011*
Participants (*planned)	Initial vocational training	298	166	268	356	69
	People on the labour market	60	29	39	36	11
Participants Realised till 01.01.2011	Initial vocational training	298	186	276	n/a	n/a
	People on the labour market	60	30	55	n/a	n/a

⁴⁵ European Commission, Education, Leonardo daVinci

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Transition towards competence-based study programmes is one of the strategic development areas in the Estonian Higher Education Strategy for the period of 2006–2015. Development of practical training is an essential developmental aim in the strategy. This includes the development of curricular connections, organising, structure and employer involvement of practical training. The aim is to develop a clearer linking of work practice with the achievement of competence in the completion of study programmes. However, the role of traineeships as part of practical training is not highlighted in these strategic aims.⁴⁶ The fact sheet on the development of Estonian higher education, research and development (2010) emphasises specific measures to support the collaboration between educational institutions and enterprises.⁴⁷ The activities being implemented include curricular development, training in enterprises and increased internationalisation.

According to the stakeholders interviewed, traineeships are considered an essential part of professional higher education in the Estonian education system. Traineeships are mandatory and regulated, at least at a minimal level. According to legislation and the national education standard, 15 per cent of the training should consist of practical training in companies and work places. Traineeships are versatile, some fields of study follow the minimum standards whereas in some fields of study the traineeships are more regulated and considered to be essential in the learning of specific practical skills, e.g. training of health care professionals. The traineeships are part of all curricula, and the educational institutions can decide independently on the context of traineeships. The Ministry of Education and Research has no national level data or statistics on the amount, context, or quality and length of traineeships.

With regard to university education curricula, the practices of traineeships vary very much. Traineeships are mandatory and their extent and quality are regulated for the training of certain professions, such as medical and pharmacy studies, and teacher training. In Bachelor's and Master's degree education in Estonian universities there are no common regulations related to traineeships. The ministry has less data available on university programmes than on those fields of education in which traineeships are more regulated.

Traineeships do exist in the universities, but it is up to the universities how they are implemented. Traineeships are defined as a studying method to gain specific learning outcomes within the curricula. The types, contexts and lengths of the traineeships vary greatly depending on the educational institution and the field of study. Some programmes have very minimal work practice elements, while on the other hand some Master's programmes can include traineeships that last the whole academic term.

According to the Estonian stakeholders interviewed, traineeships are considered an essential part of university education, combining theory and practice and they should be a much more integrated part of the university curricula. The Ministry of Education and Research and the University of Tartu have set an aim that all university curricula should contain practical training and traineeships implemented in the open labour market. In 2012-2013 the ministry is putting a lot of effort into the development of practical training and traineeships.

⁴⁶ The Estonian Higher Education Strategy 2006-2015 <http://www.hm.ee/index.php?149743> (25.8.2011)

⁴⁷ Ministry of Education and Research

Description Of Traineeship Under Study

The Primus project, implemented by the Archimedes Foundation over the period 2008-2015, is designed to implement some of the major aims of the Estonian Higher Education Strategy. The project is funded from European structural funds. The project supports the institutions of higher education to raise the competitiveness and quality of teaching and the development of competence-based study programmes. Development of the quality of traineeships and their introduction in all university curricula is one of the actions of the project.

The aim of the Primus project is to spread the best practices of traineeships for the use of all university curricula traineeships. In many fields of study traineeships have traditionally been an in-built and essential part of the curricula, e.g. medicine, teacher training, journalism, engineering, IT-professions, social work, and psychology. Many of them have developed very good traineeship practices of written tri-partite contracts, learning aims for the traineeship, forms of guidance, assessment and quality control. According to the Ministry of Education and Research, there are a lot of examples of good practices of traineeships and co-operation models with employers.

In the development of traineeships the faculties and the institutions can decide on these issues independently. The practices and quality of traineeships vary very much depending on the fields of study. Some "new" fields of study at the University of Tartu have recently introduced traineeships, e.g. philosophy and semiotics. The introduction of traineeships to certain traditionally very theoretical and academic curricula has raised contradictions as well.

The Primus project is supporting the universities and faculties in these efforts and is providing the teaching staff and work supervisors at the companies with training programmes, on practical training, guidance and outcome evaluation. The project has recently published a manual on practical training (Praktika kõrgkoolis).⁴⁸ The guidebook forms a basic structure for practical training and traineeships: principles of practical learning and how to evaluate learning outcomes, both by the teacher, supervisor and the trainee himself. The idea of the guidebook is to highlight and open up the basic elements of practical training and show good examples of traineeships, so that each field of study can design their own models of practical training and traineeships.

The project has started training work supervisors. In Estonia this has been an ongoing practice in VET and professional higher education training since 2002-2003, especially in health care training. The project is expanding this training to university education, initially piloting with the university staff, in order to learn how to orientate the trainees into work, how to guide the students in learning new skills and how to assess skills learned and aims achieved. This is a new approach and it is strongly supported by the university, because it motivates the work supervisors and tightens the co-operation between the university and the enterprises. With regard to the training of supervisors in companies in Estonia, it is a challenge to involve and motivate small companies to take part in work supervisor training. For them the project has tailored short supervisor training sessions which cover elementary issues related to work orientation, skills training, supervision and evaluation.

Organisation of Traineeship under Study, Relevant Stakeholders and their Role

According to the stakeholders interviewed, the educational institutions have to put a lot of effort into employer and work supervisor involvement, as they are developing the traineeship practices. In Estonia, most of the employment available is in small and medium sized companies, and it is a challenge to find suitable traineeship placements. In the

⁴⁸ Praktika kõrgkoolis (Practical training in higher education), Archimedes Foundation, Primus-project http://primus.archimedes.ee/sites/default/files/oppekavavorg/praktika%20k%C3%B5rgkoolis%20trykki_0.pdf

present economic situation companies cannot afford to have any additional expenses and due to limited staff resources, it is more difficult for these companies to organise the supervision and guidance required for trainees. Usually, the supervisors do not get any extra pay for their traineeship guidance, supervision and evaluation efforts, with the exception of a formal fee paid for the supervisors in the health care sector and medicine studies. To be more successful in the future universities and educational institutions should have a chance of using incentives, at least on a formal and minimal level, to cover the working hours spent on trainee supervision, guidance and assessment.

Another challenge in the development of traineeships is to involve the university faculties and educational institutions in the development process. The introduction of traineeships signifies a thorough change in the way of thinking related to learning and teaching. Traineeships are project-based while the student and learning based parts of the curricula and presently the whole way of functioning is institution based. In certain theoretical and traditional academic fields of study this requires the introduction of totally new approaches to teaching. Some institutions have expressed fears that the introduction of practices and realities of working life and increasing employer involvement at the universities erodes the traditional academic freedom of the university. In some fields of study, e. g. the arts and IT-sector, traineeships can be innovative development projects for the companies involved. This is motivating for the companies, as they get something extra and new through the student outputs.

Content and Practices related to the Traineeship under Study

Good Practices of Traineeships

Case: The Tallinn Technical University of Applied Sciences

The first case example of good practice is the Tallinn Technical University of Applied Sciences. The university is a public institution providing professional higher education and has very up-to-date premises at the centre of Tallinn. The university has long traditions of providing training in engineering, construction, architecture, machinery and other technical fields of study for more than 2,600 students. Recently, the university has renovated and updated the premises, machinery and technical appliances related to practical training at the university. It is considered very important to update the technology used at the university so that practical training is at the same level as in companies, otherwise it would be very difficult for students to move into a company traineeship learning environment.

Traineeships form a very essential part of the studies in all fields of study. The basic concept of higher professional training is to combine theory and practice together. In all fields of study the proportion of traineeship is 15 per cent of the curricula. This means 36 learning points altogether. Traineeships start during the first study year, with an initial orientation in the companies. The longest traineeship period is during the last study year (24 learning points). Very often the traineeship is combined with the final thesis of the student, which is usually a development project for the traineeship company.

The university has established regular partnership agreements with companies related to the fields of study of the university. These relationships are versatile, and the representatives of the key companies are involved in the administration board of the university and faculties, and the employers are involved in the curricula development as well.

The financial crisis and the difficulties in the economy have affected very little in the traineeships. Currently it is more difficult to find traineeship placements in road engineering and building construction, and the employment of students after graduation is also worse. In most cases the trainees have a student status without salary. Some companies do pay

salary to students, but this practice has decreased noticeably since the better economic years. Earlier, when the economic situation was better and companies were short of skilled experts, interruption of studies due to direct employment through traineeships used to be a bigger problem; now the drop-out problem has improved. International traineeships have also increased during last two or three years.

The university has a well advanced quality system of traineeships with written tripartite agreements, commonly setting out specific learning aims, close teacher and supervisor contacts, tripartite follow-up meetings and assessment and analysis of the learning outcomes and skills learned at the end of the traineeship. Both the student and the supervisors submit an assessment report on the traineeship.

The traineeships are considered an essential part of the training in terms of employment. More than 50 per cent of the students find employment in the traineeship companies, and very often this also means that their final thesis has been a development project and essential for the company. Employment numbers as a whole are still very good at the moment in the field of engineering in Estonia, with the exception of the building construction branch.

Case: Physiotherapy Training at the University of Tartu

The second case example of good practice is the training of physiotherapists at the University of Tartu. There are both Bachelor's and Master's degrees available for physiotherapists in Estonia, and presently doctoral studies have been started as well.

Working life orientation is very strongly in-built within the curriculum of physiotherapy. Interaction between theory and practice, the learning by doing approach, and practical training, are the key elements from the beginning of the curriculum. The institution has built close ties with employers, both public and private, around Estonia, and also abroad. In Estonia they have 18 established partnerships with organisations providing traineeships, and in addition to this, regular placements abroad.

During the first year of studies the students are provided with an orientation practice in their own practical training premises. During the second and third year the students get more involved in their professional practice, and have short traineeship periods in workplaces outside the university. During the fourth year the students participate in a three-month traineeship in a working environment.

The structure of the traineeships is controlled by tripartite written agreements and clear written aims and steps of learning, assessment of learning, co-operation of the university teachers and work supervisors. Both the student and the work supervisor prepare an assessment of the traineeship, identifying how the aims have been reached. At the end of the traineeship period the university organises an assessment seminar in which students, teachers and work supervisors participate. Each graduating physiotherapist must pass a practical examination which consists of practical skills performance and a portfolio of skills learned theoretically and in practice through practical training at the university and traineeships in real working life.

The traineeships in the physiotherapy training are well structured, which is also the case in teacher training and medical training, where the same methods are used.

A physiotherapy student interviewed had recently been on a three-month traineeship programme in Finland. The traineeship had been organised in co-operation with the Metropolia University of Applied Sciences in Helsinki. It is very common for Estonian physiotherapy students to go abroad for their last year traineeship. The traineeship in Helsinki started with an initial introductory phase of theory and practice at the Metropolia. After that the trainee had field placements in various hospitals, clinics and health care centres, covering pediatric care, general hospital wards and elderly care. For this student the practice was very much about observing and following the work of the professionals,

and not so much actual practical independent work, which she would have preferred. But in spite of this, she found the traineeship period very positive, as she learned a lot about physiotherapy practices and systems in Finnish health care which are organised differently to those in Estonia. She felt that in Estonian health care the trainees have the chance to work much more independently than in international traineeships. In her opinion traineeships contribute greatly to employment. She said that currently it is difficult to find a job in Estonia, because there are a lot of applicants for open vacancies, however, through traineeships it is easier because the employer gets to know the student and they have an opportunity to demonstrate their skills.

An example of an employer providing good quality traineeships in Estonia is the Haapsalu Neurological Rehabilitation Centre. The centre is the biggest and foremost in its field in Estonia, and has 130 employees. The centre is specialised in the rehabilitation of severe spinal cord injuries, neurological injury rehabilitation of children and traumatic brain damage. The centre is well developed and uses up-to-date rehabilitation methods and technology. It has highly qualified professionals and a very good reputation as an employer. The centre is very active in organizing traineeships. It continually has trainees from various professional fields; physiotherapists, doctors, social workers, psychologists and nurses, both from Estonia and abroad. The maximum number of professional trainees is eight people at the same time. The centre also provides accommodation for the trainees. The attitude of the staff is very positive about traineeships, it places a lot of value on their good image and reputation. Traineeships are also an essential recruitment channel for permanent staff.

The practice of traineeships and co-operation with training institutions generally function well. The centre has an organised and structured procedure for trainees. The head nurse coordinates all traineeships and each trainee has an assigned professional supervisor. The aims, traineeship content and the skills and learning outcomes planned are written down in the contract and signed by the centre, the student and the educational institution. The supervisor is responsible for the orientation to work, training, guidance, supervision and assessment of the practical work of the trainee. At the end of the traineeship the outcomes are evaluated at a tripartite meeting. The feedback received from the students is mostly very positive because the centre can offer very up-to-date professional practices and team work, which is not so well developed elsewhere in Estonia. Students learn specific practical skills that it is not possible to learn in the university setting.

Traineeship Contract and Trainee's Terms and Conditions

The majority of higher education trainees in Estonia have student status and the traineeships are not remunerated. As students they are entitled to their study allowance during the traineeships. In certain fields of study, e.g. engineering, business and commerce and ICT training, the students can be treated as employees during the traineeship programmes, and they get paid according to the regular salary rate and common agreement. However, this arrangement is less common currently than it was during better economic years. In these sectors the drop-out rate from university education is still higher than the average due to employment without graduation. However there is no accurate information on this.

Transnational traineeships for Estonian students are organised both directly by the higher educational institutions and by various international student exchange programmes. During these traineeships the students are remunerated through the exchange programmes. Educational institutions also have specific extra scholarships for international traineeships, and in some cases the students and the employers are both remunerated. However there is no accurate information on this.

According to the stakeholder interviews, in order to have a successful traineeship, it must be curriculum based and the training institution and the teachers must have a strong initiative. It is very important to develop established and regular contacts with companies and other work places. Those traineeships which are very much up to the student's own

initiative and activity, are more loosely connected to the curriculum and theoretical training, and are not so successful. They tend to follow the aims and needs of the employer rather than the curricula and the learning interests of the student.

Quality Assurance Mechanisms

Usually educational institutions have standardised practices relating to traineeships: written contracts, schedules for work orientation, follow-up forms for guidance, supervision, assessment and measurement of learning outcomes. The quality of the traineeships is controlled by the teachers and the educational institutions. In terms of the content, quality and implementation of traineeships the Ministry of Education and Research has no role; in educational standards there is a very general quality definition of traineeships.

The Primus project is developing measures for involving practical training as a part of the quality system within the curricula. It should be built with the idea of a continuous and identified learning process. The aims and outcomes should be carefully written out so that they form a process within the curriculum. The next step is to develop indicators of learning outcomes related to practical training. Documentation of traineeships is also very important. However, this should be planned by the fields of study themselves. Documentation should be exact and reasonable, but not too troublesome or a burden for the trainees, work supervisors and teachers.

In certain fields of study traineeships have a very loose curricula connection. In these sectors it is also very difficult to motivate teachers to start new working life co-operation and develop traineeships, because many of the teachers represent the older generation and they don't have experience of the working environment in companies in the present day. In these cases the criticisms of employer organisations favouring modernizing and up-dating vocational training in Estonia are very appropriate.

Current Debate

Estonian employers call for educational reform. According to the Estonian Employers' manifesto⁴⁹ the present Estonian education system does not offer the labour market sufficient numbers of specialists with high professional qualifications. The excessive size of school networks should be rationalised and the funding should be changed to support the learner's interests more, instead of the present institutional interests. The co-operation of educational institutions and workplaces should be strengthened, including traineeship practices. Employers also recommend the introduction of tuition fees in higher education, supported by scholarships for talented students and for those from disadvantaged backgrounds. This would also encourage studying currently less popular sciences and technology.

According to the various stakeholders interviewed, the biggest problem related to traineeships is the loose curricular connection, which contributes to unclear aims of the traineeships. The other problems are the lack of adequate supervision and guidance in the workplace, no access to proper work during the traineeship and the lack of sufficient feedback from the companies. There should be much more quality control of the traineeships by the educational institutions and they should also ensure that the students are sufficiently prepared as employers say that students sometimes start their traineeships without proper information on the purpose of the traineeship. Contacts from the educational institutions should be made well in advance and the institutions should send more information on the aims, contents of the traineeship and on the student and his/her skills and personal aims. For the employer organizing and supervising traineeships is a big and time consuming effort, and this is not always properly understood by educational

⁴⁹ The Employers' Manifesto 2011-2015. Estonian Employers' Confederation

institutions. Teachers/tutors should also keep much closer contact with the students and supervisors during the traineeships.

The stakeholders interviewed have sometimes heard of misuse of traineeships, repeatedly hiring free workers, or students placed on jobs as assistants, performing menial and routine tasks, without access to actual professional work. The feedback on misuse cases goes directly to the teachers, the institution or the faculty. For example, the University of Tartu and the Ministry of Education and Research do not have any central quality control system. However, according to the interviews, these cases are not a common feature related to traineeships, and there has been no public debate on these issues. There is no relevant research data available on this phenomenon in Estonia.

Effectiveness of Case-studied Traineeship: Outputs and Results

Traineeships are defined as an integral part of the higher education curricula and they follow the theoretical training and the learning aims. According to the stakeholders interviewed the best practice of traineeships is when theory and practice form an interactive learning process for the student. When one has learned theoretical skills one has a chance of experimenting, applying and implementing them in practice. Students can analyze by themselves what they have learned. Traineeships enable the students to orientate themselves to working life, acquire basic work skills, apply theoretical knowledge in practical work situations and make practical decisions based on the achieved theoretical knowledge. Traineeships are considered essential for the students, as they enable them to get accustomed to working with people of various backgrounds, ages and ways of thinking. Also, through the assessment of traineeships the students gain self-assessment skills, which are also very important but can be difficult. Students can also learn to tolerate the assessment of others, and give and receive feedback.

The stakeholders interviewed see traineeships as a very important part of university studies, and the role and structures of traineeships should be strengthened in all fields of study. For employers, higher education traineeships and contacts with training institutions enable them to follow the latest developments in their field of study, and they serve as a good channel for recruiting young qualified professionals. Through traineeships the students gain valuable work experience which is appreciated by the employers as they apply for jobs after graduation; a graduate without practical work experience has less value in the recruitment process. In many cases, traineeships can be a direct link to employment in the same company after graduation.

Conclusions

The Estonian Ministry of Education and Research and the higher education institutions have an ambitious aim of introducing traineeship practices to all higher education curricula as a part of the transition into competence-based study programmes.

This case study shows that the advantages of traineeships are obvious to all stakeholders. Traineeships improve the co-operation of educational institutions and working life, and improve and modernise the quality and practice orientation of the study programmes. For the students traineeships contribute to the application of theoretical knowledge, learning of basic working life skills, gaining valuable work experience related to their field of study and notably improving their employability.

Involvement of employers and their representatives is very important in the development process. Traineeships are not only an issue for educational institutions, they also require time and supervision resources from employers. For employers, traineeships should be seen as a tool to promote the dialogue between education and practice, which contributes to the recruitment of young qualified professionals and the improvement of the image of the company.

In Estonia the development of traineeships in higher education is implemented without incentives for employers and students and this seems to be very challenging. Attention should also be paid to the development of trainees' terms and conditions; traineeships with a minimum salary level remuneration for the trainee, and partial compensation from university scholarships for the employers would increase the motivation of all stakeholders.

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National Report on Traineeships Greece

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1. Traineeships as part of Member State's Youth Policy Measures

1.1 Overview of current Situation of Young People

The issue of high youth unemployment, including high graduate unemployment, and the poor integration of young people into the labour market has bedevilled Greece for some time and has been considerably exacerbated by the severity and duration of the current economic crisis. Indeed, the issue of youth unemployment, including graduate unemployment and/or under-utilisation or precarious employment, has been at the forefront of government action by successive governments. These have introduced a number of youth measures, including traineeships, in their effort to address youth unemployment and under-employment (see below).

It is worth noting that the impact of the crisis has hit Greek young people even harder than it did their counterparts in Europe and beyond. Specifically, according to OECD data, between the second quarters of 2007 and 2010, youth unemployment rate increased more in Greece than on average in the other OECD countries (respectively +9.4 and +5.3 percentage points) (OECD, 2010b).

Young people in Greece have historically faced a number of challenges in relation to their fast and smooth entry into the labour market. For example, the school-to-work transitions, including graduate transitions to employment, have historically been long and difficult in Greece (Mitrakos et al., 2010; Politis et al., 2010). According to the OECD, after leaving education young people in Greece take on average 24 months to find their first job, compared to the European average of 17 months and 6 months in the US (OECD, 2010a). This, in turn, reflects the historically very weak links between the education system and the labour market as well as the fact that opportunities for work-based learning have been limited to date (OECD, 2010a; 2011). That said, it should also be noted that the speed and ease of labour market transitions vary according to one's study subject. In other words, certain groups of graduates, e.g. engineers, have historically faced far fewer difficulties in entering the labour market than others, notably arts and humanities graduates (Mitrakos et al., 2010; Politis et al., 2010).

As with other Mediterranean countries in Greece, holding a tertiary / higher education qualification has, for some time and reflecting structural labour market deficiencies and an over-supply of graduates, not necessarily been a guarantee for sustainable employment (Scarpetta et al., 2010; Higgins, 2010; CoE, 2011). Moreover, again in line with other Southern European countries, notably Italy and Spain, the extent of over-qualification among young people is considerable, and a large number of young people work in jobs requiring lower skills than those they possess (vertical skills mismatch). Indeed, both the vertical and, increasingly, horizontal skills mismatches are significant among Greek young people.

Interestingly, education/qualifications do not provide a guarantee against unemployment and/or precarious employment, with young graduates showing the highest unemployment and temporary employment rates among the 20-29 year-olds of all educational attainment levels. Even before the crisis, in 2008, the risk of a graduate being unemployed in 20-24, 25-29 and 30-34 age groups was respectively 29, 16 and 7 per cent. Similarly, the rate of temporary work by graduates in the same age groups was respectively 33, 26 and 17 per cent (Karamessini, 2010). To this one should add the chronic inability of the Greek economy, notably its private sector, to generate sufficient numbers of high skilled jobs which could absorb the growing number of graduates. According to the OAED's President, the private sector in Greece can create jobs for only 15 out of 100 graduates. As a result, a

growing number of graduates are either unemployed, under-employed or accept jobs requiring lower level skills.

Moreover, their first job(s) is/are often low-paid, i.e. jobs paying less than two-thirds of the median wage. For example, in 2006 Greece had the highest incidence of low paid young workers (57 per cent) (OECD, 2010). The extent of temporary, casual and even undeclared work undertaken by young people is also significant.

In summary, the Greek youth labour market is characterised by the following features which are typical of the so-called Southern European model:

1. very lengthy job search or long wait at initial career stage;
2. low mobility between jobs combined with stability once employment is secured;
3. positive correlation between labour market experience and likelihood of employment (but not between the latter and education, at least in the first few years after graduation);
4. strong educational effects on occupational attainment (Karamessini, 2010).

To these one should add the, until recently, very weak links of the education system with the labour market and employer requirements; the lack of parity of esteem between academic and vocational education with the concomitant very poor image of vocational training; and the provision of few work-based learning opportunities.¹

1.2 Traineeships as part of Youth Policy Measures

In view of the above discussion, successive Greek Governments have pursued policies aimed at addressing the major issue of youth unemployment, under-employment and precarious employment as well as making school-to-work transitions smoother, shorter and more stable. Traineeships, in their various forms, have constituted a critical tool in the pursuit of these goals. Crucially, most of these traineeships have been promoted by a number of Operational Programmes implemented in Greece as part of successive Community Support Frameworks, notably CSF II, CSF III, and CSF IV, which have also provided part of the funding for certain schemes, e.g. those linked to university study curricula, STAGE programmes, etc. It is worth stating that the current Operational Programme *Education and Lifelong Learning*, which is part of the Greek National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) 2007–2013, makes explicit reference to and foresees actions aimed at forging closer and more effective links between the educational system and the labour market, not least through the promotion of traineeships as part of university curricula (Priority Axis 4).² In particular, it offers financial support to higher education institutions (HEIs), including Technical Education Institutes (TEIs), so that they can either set up, or enhance the operation of offices tasked with organising and co-ordinating traineeships as part of their study curricula. To this end, in March 2009 the Ministry of Education invited all Greek HEIs and TEIs to submit proposals about the extension of their traineeship programmes, for which it made available €50,000,000 (Ministry of Education, 2009).

Depending on their specific type, traineeships have a varied history in Greece. The ones linked to specific liberal and technical professions have a long-standing tradition, e.g. law, medicine, architecture, engineering, etc. These traineeships (called 'praktiki askisi') are undertaken either as a compulsory part of undergraduate studies, or immediately after graduation. Since 1983 6-month traineeships are also compulsory part of study curricula at

¹ Historically, in Greece one has placed a much higher value on university as opposed to vocational education. For example, according to Cedefop, about 7 out of 10 apply for university entry each year (Cedefop, 2003)

² This OP's total Co-funded Budget from the EU amounts to €2,058,000,000, of which €1,440,000,000 is from Community Resources (ESF) and €618,000,000 from National Resources

TEIs.³ The explicit aims of such traineeships are to allow students to apply their theoretical knowledge in real work settings; familiarise them with the world of work, including working conditions and norms and routines; and create a two-way interaction and exchange of knowledge between the educational system and the employer skills requirements.

The concept of traineeship as part of university study curricula is more recent and the way it is structured and organised is not defined in such a detailed and prescribed manner. As far as university study curricula are concerned, these started to introduce traineeships in a more organised way since mid 1990s, thanks to, *inter alia*, the co-funding provided by national (Ministry of Education) and European (ESF) sources. For example, the traineeship programme linked to study curricula at the Aristoteleio University of Thessaloniki, which with about 95,000 students is the largest HEI in Greece, started in the period 1996-1999 as part of the Operational Programme Education and Initial Vocational Training (EPEAEK) of the CSF II.⁴

The importance of traineeships as part of study curricula was reiterated in the latest HEI Reform Law (4009/2011), introduced by the current Government in summer 2011. However, respecting the autonomy and independence of each HEI, the Law stipulates that the incorporation of traineeships into study curricula, their specific terms and conditions, etc., depends on particular study programmes and is organised in line with each University's 'Internal Statute of Operations'. That said, in Article 60 it supports the creation of offices tasked with the organisation and co-ordination of traineeships (such offices are already in operation in a large number of HEIs and TEIs).

It is worth noting that although most of the aims of TEI and HEI traineeships are the same, there are some subtle differences. Specifically, although both seek to create better and closer links between the spheres of education and employment, HEI traineeships also pursue the forging of close links with companies for research purposes as well (EEO Group, 2009).

In addition to the above, a range of VET traineeships are available at upper secondary (ISCED 3) and ISCED 4 levels. For example, since 1996, IVET trainees who are graduates of either public or private Vocational Training Institutes (IEKs) have had the option to undertake a six-month traineeship aimed at allowing them to apply their skills and knowledge in a real work setting and acquire practical work experience.⁵

Another type of traineeships which have been used widely in Greece are the so-called STAGES. These aim at familiarising young people with the world of work across the board and were first introduced in 1998. Since then, they have acquired a chequered history and questionable reputation (see relevant section). The initial aim was to allow young people to develop links with the labour market and acquire work experience as an effective way of combating youth unemployment (Fakou, 2010). In particular, such traineeships were defined in Article 20 of Law 2639/1998; were co-ordinated by Hellenic Manpower Employment Organization (OAED); and were financed by both national and European (ESF) sources. The initial target groups of these schemes were primarily HEI and TEI graduates. Over the years, there were successive STAGE programmes and encompassed a wider number of target groups, including those with upper-secondary education. Their duration initially ranged between six and 36 months, the first of which was for familiarisation with the working environment and theoretical training, while the remaining ones were devoted to the acquisition of knowledge and practical work experience in the chosen field of studies. The trainees (called 'stagers' or 'stagiaires') were covered in terms of social security contributions.

³ TEIs are vocational educational institutions at the tertiary level. Law 2916/2001 incorporated the TEIs into Higher Education and 'upgraded' the status of technical vocational education by making them equivalent to the academic higher education institutions (universities, or AEI).

⁴ <http://www.cso.auth.gr/Greek/PA.gr.htm>

⁵ <http://iek-sindou.thess.sch.gr/?q=el/system/files/KANONISMOS.pdf>

For example, the previous government introduced a STAGE programme (now discontinued) which offered placements of up to 18 months to secondary and tertiary education graduates. Secondary education graduates received an allowance of €25, while higher education graduates received an allowance of €30. Participants received some medical insurance, but not full social insurance coverage. Most of the funding (80 per cent) came from the ESF and around 30,000 to 35,000 stagiaires were on the scheme in any given year.

According to this scheme, a contract between the organisation employing the young person and the Hellenic Manpower Employment Organization (OAED) is signed detailing respective obligations. Interestingly, the STAGE programme initially used to involve both public and private sector placements. However, the expansion of public sector placements led to accusation of abuses by public bodies which were, allegedly, using STAGE trainees as cheap labour when budget constraints meant they were unable to recruit full-time members of staff. As a result, in November 2009 the programme was discontinued and a new programme with similar aims was launched in 2010 (*Work Experience Programme for New Labour Market Entrants, aged 16-24*). This new programme restricts traineeships only to the private sector and provides full social security protection and minimum pay for trainees (more details are given in the relevant Section).⁶

As regards the concept of traineeship, according to our informants, it is worth stressing the impact of European policies and related funds, notably the ESF. In other words, the concept of traineeships was first introduced within the context of ESF-funded community programmes aimed at creating better links between the world of education and the labour market, notably by promoting compulsory traineeships as part of TEIs' study curricula. Over time, they expanded, though not in a compulsory form, into the study curricula of HEIs. Crucially, since 1998 this concept was also integral in the succession of STAGE programmes, which contrary to their initial aim, were predominant in the public sector.

The table below provides an overview of the range of traineeships which can be found in Greece.

Table 1.1: Summary Table of main Traineeship Programmes in Greece

Traineeship Programme	Brief Description
Work Experience Programme for New Labour Market Entrants, aged 16-24	Launched in 2010, this new programme is aimed at unemployed young people aged 16-24 and seeks to redress the plethora of criticisms of the STAGE programmes. The duration of the traineeship can be 6-12 months, while trainees are entitled to 80% of the NMW and full social security coverage. The programme foresees 100% subsidization of both employer and employee social security contributions, while employers are also given further incentives to keep on the trainees upon completion of the traineeship.
STAGE Programmes (now discontinued)	Introduced in 1998. The initial aim was to allow young people to develop links with the labour market and acquire work experience as an effective way of combating youth unemployment. The programme offered traineeships of up to 18 months to secondary and tertiary education graduates. It initially involved both public and private sector traineeships but the expansion of public sector placements led to accusation of abuses. As a result of which they were discontinued in November 2009.

⁶ According to Law 32046/1032 (FEK B' 2343/16.11.2009) no young people could take part in the STAGE programme as implemented in the public sector and municipalities (Fakou, 2010)

Traineeship Programme	Brief Description
Traineeships as part of study curricula of Technical Education Institutes (TEIs)	Since 1983 6-month traineeships are compulsory part of study curricula at TEIs. These traineeships are legally specified and regulated. Their explicit aims are to allow students to apply their theoretical knowledge in real work settings and familiarise them with the world of work, including working conditions and norms and routines
Traineeships as part of study curricula of Higher Education Institutes (HEIs)	Started to be introduced in mid 1990s. Their importance was reiterated in the latest HEI Reform Law (4009/2011). The incorporation of traineeships into study curricula, their specific terms and conditions, etc., depends on particular study programmes and is organised in line with each University's 'Internal Statute of Operations'
Traineeships linked to mandatory professional training, e.g. education/teaching, law, medicine, engineering, architecture	e.g. Legal Traineeships: law graduates need to undertake an 18-month traineeship at a law practice, after which they have to pass a set of bar exams. This is a prerequisite in order to secure an admission to practice law (admission to the bar). Long-standing tradition of this type of traineeships for a number of professions.
Traineeships as part of IVET	Since 1996 IVET trainees who are graduates of the Vocational Training Institutes (IEKs) have the option to undertake a 6-month traineeship aimed at allowing them to apply their skills and knowledge in a real work setting and acquire practical work experience

2. Legislative Framework for Traineeships

2.1 Legal framework for and governance of traineeships

There is a great variety of traineeships in Greece, ranging from those linked to the acquisition of practical work experience as part of study curricula, e.g. at both TEIs and HEIs; the STAGE programmes aimed at young people aged 16-24; the traineeships linked to mandatory professional training in a number of liberal and technical professions, etc. Not surprisingly, these are better regulated than to the ones offered in the market. That said, both traineeships linked to the STAGE programmes and to the mandatory professional training of certain professions have also attracted some criticism despite the fact that they are regulated.

The new *Work Experience Programme for New Labour Market Entrants*, the successor to the STAGE programme, aimed at unemployed young people aged 16-24, was introduced by Law 3845/2010 Article 2 paragraph 8 and was officially launched by the Hellenic Manpower Employment Organization (OAED) on 29th October 2010.⁷ The new programme seeks to address the plethora of criticisms which were levelled at the previous generations of STAGE programmes (see relevant section).

Significantly, traineeships linked to HEI, as opposed to those linked to TEI, study curricula are not as well legally specified and regulated. Specifically, the TEI traineeships, lasting 6 months and undertaken in the last semester of one's studies, are legally defined as an

⁷ www.oaed.gr/Repository/FI_2026.file

integral and compulsory part of TEI-related study curricula by the 1983 Law 1404/83 which created the TEI institution. According to this Law, traineeships ('Praktiki Askisi') linked to TEI study curricula are an integral, compulsory and important part of one's studies and are a prerequisite for the granting of the degree. Crucially, Law 1404/83 also stipulates that, for the first time, TEI trainees will receive compensation and be insured against occupational risks. The TEI traineeships are organised by each department according to the requirements and focus of the specific study curriculum and are supervised by the relevant scientific staff. All aspects of traineeships are defined in the 'Traineeship Guide' ('Odigos Praktikis Askisis') which is compiled for each specialism.

On the other hand, the legislative framework in relation to HEI traineeships is less clearly defined. In contrast to TEI traineeships (and the related Law 1404/83), there is no uniform legislative and regulatory framework for these traineeships. As a result, HEI traineeships are organised in line with each university department's own 'Traineeship Guide' ('Odigos Praktikis Askisis'), Statute of Operation ('Kanonismos') and the educational needs related to the specific study subject.

The legislative framework for the IEK-related VET traineeships was set by a Ministerial decision published in the Government Gazette No 104 of 22/2/1996.⁸ The decision stipulates the duration (six months); character (optional); timing (before the trainee passes the accreditation of VET exams); the application/selection procedure; the way they should be realised (e.g. need for the trainee to keep a Learning Diary/Book); the quality assurance mechanism; etc.

2.1.1 Case Law in relation to Traineeships

It is worth noting that a growing volume of case law has started to accumulate as regards certain types of traineeships, most notably traineeships undertaken under the old STAGE programme. Specifically, the successive renewals of traineeship contracts which took place in many cases under this programme, meant that the length of one's traineeship (stage) in the public and municipal sectors could last for years (instead of a limited period of up to 18 months as initially foreseen). In a number of court cases brought in by trainees and their associations, Greek courts, e.g. The Athens Court of First Instance (Department of Temporary Measures Procedure) have decreed that, if one is employed as a trainee for a significant period of time, this cannot be considered a traineeship with a learning focus but proper employment. For example, as was mentioned in the first STAGE-related Court Decision (No 6920/2010):⁹

'It is not possible to regard as a traineeship the lengthy period of employment of trainees who were assigned tasks normally performed by regular staff and met fixed and permanent needs of the employer. Instead, such appointments should be regarded as employment proper and, as a result, be accompanied by all the necessary provisions in relation to compensation, pensions, health insurance, etc.'

In passing this judgement the Court also drew on the decision of the European Court of Justice of 23 April 2009 which ruled on a controversial issue regarding contract workers in the Greek public sector. More specifically, it decided, contrary to the previous Greek Supreme Court jurisprudence, that the courts do have the jurisdiction to decide on the true nature of an employment contract, including fixed-term contracts.¹⁰ Following the 2010 Court Decision, there have been a number of other similar court decisions, which made a clear distinction between work-related practical experience ('traineeship' or 'mathiteia') and work, e.g. Court Decision 862/2011¹¹, Court Decision 2019/2011, etc. A number of other

⁸ http://oEEK.thess.sch.gr/images/stories/documents/fek_kyb/104b-96.pdf

⁹ http://www.argolidablogs.gr/Peter_Pan/2010/09/10/%CE%A3%CF%85%CE%BC%CE%B2%CE%AC%CF%83%CE%B5%CE%B9%CF%82_stage_%CF%83%CF%84%CE%BF_%CE%94%CE%B7%CE%BC%CF%8C%CF%83%CE%B9%CE%BF

¹⁰ <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/2009/10/articles/gr0910039i.htm>

¹¹ <http://www.perpataris.gr/?p=519>

Court Decisions have focused on particular aspects of traineeships, e.g. pay, social security contributions, etc.

It is worth outlining the main demands of individual trainees and/or their associations who have sought judicial review, which is currently creating case/soft law:

1. request to receive social security and insurance coverage (and the relevant contributions to be paid to the relevant bodies), both retrospectively (i.e. since they started their traineeship) and for as long as they are employed as trainees;
2. the need to have their length of employment (as trainee) in the public sector recognised, especially since many had been working as trainees for years;
3. request, by those who had been working for over 24 months, to receive special points ('moría') which would allow them to be appointed as permanent employees in the public sector (since if they had been working for over 24 months, this could mean that they covered standard work-related needs and were not there for learning purposes – there were numerous precedents about this);
4. request to receive compensation based on the national minimum wage (as opposed to the STAGE-related compensation which was lower).¹²

The above discussion notwithstanding, it is worth adding that, according to some of our informants, the case law relating to this type of traineeships has recently started to change, in that it is now less certain that the judges will find in favour of trainees, especially those recruited after 2003. Before 2003, if one was employed for more than 18 months, one was entitled to a permanent contract. As a result of Laws passed in 2004 and 2005 (and in conjunction with Peponis Law of 2190/1994), for one to secure a permanent position as a civil servant, one has to successfully pass the civil service exams administered by the Supreme Council for Civil Personnel Selection (ASEP).¹³

2.2 Definition of traineeships and trainees

As mentioned in the previous sections the various forms of traineeships are defined on the basis of different Laws and regulations:

Type of Traineeship	Law
STAGE programme (old); Work Experience Programme for New Labour Market Entrants, aged 16-24 (new)	Law 2639/1998 (old); Law 3845/2010 (new)
Traineeship linked to Study Curricula (HEIs)	Law 2817/2000; Presidential Decree 160/2008
Traineeship linked to Study Curricula (TEIs)	Law 1256/1982; Law 1404/1983
(after graduation) Traineeship linked to mandatory professional training for certain liberal & technical professions, e.g. lawyers	Legislative Decree 3026/1954 (for lawyers)
IVET Traineeships for IEK graduates	Ministerial Decision published in Greek Government Gazette No 104 of 22/2/1996

That said, it is worth pointing out that the TEI traineeships are the ones which are most tightly legally defined (as opposed to HEI traineeships).

Although there is a plethora of definitions for traineeship-related schemes in Greece, the precise definition of the trainee is less clear. In general, although there is no formal

¹² <http://e-elftheria.com/?p=2418>

¹³ ASEP is an independent authority responsible for verifying the proper and impartial implementation of the provisions on civil service staff hiring, www.asep.gr

definition, in practice, a trainee is usually considered to be a young person who is applying the skills and knowledge he/she has acquired from his/her studies in a work setting, thus gaining valuable work experience and adapting his/her skills and competences to actual employer and labour market requirements (SYSDEM expert, 2008).

2.3 Legal provisions about aspects of traineeships

Depending on the type of the traineeship, there are different legal provisions.

The new Work Experience programme for young people aged 16-24, launched in 2010 by Law 3845/2010 Article 2 paragraph 8, seeks to address the plethora of criticisms of the previous generations of STAGE programmes by introducing specific legal provisions. Specifically, it foresees the following:

1. the signing of a 'traineeship/work placement' contract;
2. 100 per cent subsidization of both employer and employee social security contributions¹⁴;
3. the payment of trainees of 80 per cent (€591 gross earnings) of the National Minimum Wage (as defined by the General National Collective Agreement, i.e. €740);
4. the traineeship/work placement should take place only in private sector companies; and
5. its duration should be 6-12 months.

Crucially, the new programme also provides strong incentives for companies to keep on the trainees and convert the traineeship/work experience contract into an ordinary employment contract by continuing to subsidise 70 per cent of both employer and employee social security contributions for another 12 months, provided that the company keeps the trainee on for extra six months after this subsidy runs out. In other words, the private sector employer receives 100 per cent subsidy of the trainee's social security contributions during the 6-12 months of the traineeship and 70 per cent of the trainee's social security contributions for another 12 months, if the trainee is given a proper employment contract and is also kept on for another 6 months after the 6-12 month traineeship and the extra 12 months.

Crucially, the new programme also seeks to safeguard against the risk of employers laying off existing staff and replacing them with 'subsidised' trainees. Specifically, companies which have reduced their staff in the last six months before expressing an interest to participate in the programme are not eligible to do so. In addition, in order to benefit from this programme, employers should maintain all existing staff. Finally, the maximum subsidies a single employer can receive over the three years of the programme should not exceed €200,000.

The specific target group of the programme are unemployed young people aged 16-24 who, *inter alia*, have not worked in the company in the last 12 months before that particular organisation joined the programme. In addition, they should not have accumulated social security contributions corresponding to more than 150 days. As part of the new pensions provisions, the 12-month duration of traineeship will be included in one's pensionable years.¹⁵ This last provision is a direct response to a major STAGE-related criticism, where young people would undertake traineeships in the public and municipal sector for years, but without this protracted period being recognised as pensionable time.

Traineeships are a compulsory part of studies at TEIs, whereby a student has to complete a six-month traineeship after the last (i.e. 8th) semester of his/her studies. The element of compulsory traineeships in the TEI curriculum was introduced in 1983 by Law No 1404/1983 (Article 24). Specific provisions about their regulation, operation, supervision,

¹⁴ These include contributions related to pensions, health insurance and occupational health and safety – IKA ETAM

¹⁵ Kathimerini, 2/7/2010, http://news.kathimerini.gr/4dcgi/w_articles_economy_2_02/07/2010_406521

scope/content, trainee's terms and conditions, evaluation, etc. were included in the Presidential Decree No 174, issued in 1985. In the following year, based on a joint decision (No E5/1303/3-3-86) by the Ministry of Education and Religion and the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Social Insurance, the insurance, including health and medical insurance, coverage of TEI trainees was extended so that it covered them also during the period of traineeship.¹⁶ Moreover, the way TEI trainees would be compensated was determined by Article 71 of Law 1566/85 (ΦΕΚ 167/τ. Α'/30-9-85). Finally, the Presidential Decree 483/13-11-84 (ΦΕΚ 173/τ.Α' /13-11-84) defines specific assistance arrangements for working TEI students and, as such, also covers those who are doing a traineeship.

The traineeships linked to mandatory professional training of certain liberal, technical and other professions, e.g. law, medicine, architecture, etc. are also characterised by certain legal provisions which differ depending on the specific profession. For example, law graduates need to undertake an 18-month traineeship at a law practice or state-owned Bank, after which they have to pass a set of exams. The provisions of this traineeship were initially outlined in Law 2026/1954 and amended with subsequent legislation. For example, Law N. 3996/5.8.2011 (ΦΕΚ 170 Volume A) stipulates that trainee lawyers must have social and medical insurance coverage. Although it is not legally binding, the Athens Bar Association (and other regional Bar Associations) strongly recommends that trainee lawyers should receive at least €600/month compensation. However, despite these provisions, there is a lot of anecdotal evidence about widespread abuse of trainee lawyers by their employers, including very long working hours, no or very little compensation, very heavy workload, etc.

The way IVET traineeships for IEK graduates are realised is defined by the Ministerial decision published in the Greek Government Gazette No 104, published on 22/2/1996. For example, this decision stipulates that:

1. these traineeships are optional;
2. their duration is six months;
3. should take place before the trainee passes the accreditation exams associated with the professional qualifications;
4. the traineeship period (i.e. six months) is recognised towards licence to practice;
5. they should start either on 1st or 15th of each month;
6. the trainee working hours can be 6-8 hours a day but the trainee should not be employed at the weekends;
7. the focus, content and scope of the traineeship should be closely related to the trainee's study subject;
8. the trainee should keep a 'Traineeship' Diary (Biblio Praktikis Askisis); etc.

Although the trainees are not entitled to medical/healthcare coverage, they are insured against accidents at the place where the traineeship take place (by their IEK). Trainees are likely to receive compensation which is paid either by OEEK (for public IEKs), or by the employer (and by OAED) (for private IEKs) (SYSDEM expert, 2008).

¹⁶ Until then they were insured for the duration of their studies [Π.Δ. 174/84 (ΦΕΚ 61/τ.Α' /8-5-84)]

3. Availability of and Access to Traineeships

3.1 Statistics/Quantitative Information about traineeships

To date, it has not been possible to find aggregate data about the various types of traineeships. As regards the ones linked to HEI and TEI study curricula, the reason is that each institution operates autonomously, especially as regards the organisation of traineeships. Every HEI and TEI has an 'Office for Traineeships' ('Γραφείο Πρακτικής Ασκίας') which is responsible for organising traineeships for students with the aim of forging closer links between the educational system and the world of work. As a result, data about trainees under these schemes are dispersed and can be found at establishment level. For example, the table below shows relevant data available from the Office for Traineeships of the University of Athens:¹⁷

Table 3.1: Data from the Office for Traineeships of the University of Athens

Time Period	No of Departments participating in the Traineeships programme	No of Student Trainees	No of Organisations offering Traineeships
2001-2005	17	3,031	816
22/9/2005-30/9/2008	22	3,990	895

Source: Office for Traineeships of the University of Athens, <http://www.grapas.uoa.gr/?q=istoriko>

Numbers available from the Office for Traineeships of the Aristoteleio University of Thessaloniki since the start of the programme are given below:

Table 3.2: Data from the Office for Traineeships of the Aristoteleio University of Thessaloniki

Time Period	No of Departments participating in the Traineeships programme	No of Student Trainees
Phase I: 1996-1999	13	N/A
Phase II: 2001-2005	19	5,569
Phase III: 2005-2008	23	3,394
Phase IV: 2010 - present	23	N/A

Source: Office for Traineeships of the Aristoteleio University of Thessaloniki, <http://www.cso.auth.gr/Greek/PA.gr.htm>

According to available data from the Greek Organisation for Vocational Education and Training (OEEK), in the late 2000s, there were 6,000 traineeship placements available to IEK graduates, of which 3,000 were subsidised.¹⁸

As far as the STAGE programme is concerned, available figures vary wildly. In its initial inception it was expected that in any given year there would be 30,000-35,000 young people (called 'stagers') undertaking a stage. However, estimates published in various

¹⁷ <http://www.grapas.uoa.gr/>

¹⁸ http://www.oEEK.gr/html/iek_praktikh_askhsh.shtml

documents, including the press and other grey literature material, put the number of trainees between 60,000 and 100,000 (Kopsini, 2009). According to the SYSDEM expert, during 2008 and 2009 the numbers of trainees in some of the various STAGE programmes in operation in the public and municipal sectors were as follows:

1. 12,000 trainees in the STAGE programme in local authorities and in public services;
2. 1,182 trainees in the STAGE programme in Social Security Organisations, including IKA;
3. 1,500 trainees in the STAGE programme in the Ministry of Health and in social care units;
4. 569 trainees in the STAGE programme in public libraries (Karadinos, 2010).

The latest estimates put the number of STAGE trainees at 40,000 university graduates who, until the programme was discontinued in late 2009, were employed in public sector organisations and local authorities (Matsaganis, 2011).

The new Work Experience Programme for New Labour Market Entrants, the successor to the STAGE programme, launched in 2010, aims to provide, between 2010 and 2012, traineeships in the private sector to 10,000 young people aged 16-24.

3.2 Transnational Mobility

Greek young people, especially students and graduates, have historically shown high long-term (linked to studies, including post-graduate, and lasting for at least one year), but low short-term mobility (linked to youth exchange and mobility programmes lasting six months or less). Specifically, although on average 2.8 per cent of EU students choose to live in another country for more than one year, 5.7 per cent of Greek students do so which makes Greece the Member State with the fifth highest long-term transnational mobility. In contrast, the proportion of Greek students who go abroad for six months or less is 3.8/1000 as opposed to an EU average of 8.2/1000, which is the fourth lowest proportion in the EU.

According to data from the State Scholarship Foundation (IKY), which is the national coordinating body of the EU's Lifelong Learning Programme, in the academic year 2008-2009 2,737 Greek students went abroad for Erasmus study placements and 292 for Erasmus work placements. Crucially, the Erasmus work placement category experienced by far the greatest increase compared to 2007-2008, i.e. take-up rose by 82.50 per cent (as opposed to a rise of 18.58 per cent for study placements) (IKY, 2010). IKY also predicts that the impressive rise in the take-up of Erasmus work placements will continue in the years ahead.

Table 3.3 below presents the number of both Greek outgoing and incoming Erasmus students who opt to undertake a company placement abroad (European Commission, 2011a).

Table 3.3: No of Erasmus Students doing Company Placements abroad (Greece)

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	TOTAL
OUT	160	292	389	841
INC	488	903	924	2,315

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc/stat/0910/countries/greece_en.pdf

Table 3.4 below shows both the average duration and average grant of the Erasmus company placements abroad. Specifically, in 2009/10 the average duration of such placements was 4.4 months, while the average monthly grant was €662.

Table 3.4: Average Duration and Grant for Erasmus Students doing Company Placements abroad (Greece)

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Average duration (months)	4.2	4.7	4.4
Average monthly grant (€)	717	672	662

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc/stat/0910/countries/greece_en.pdf

Apart from the Erasmus programme, another important international youth exchange programme with a long-standing presence and activities in Greece is AIESEC¹⁹ which is active in the country since 1956. Through its International Practical Training, AIESEC supports every year more than 10,000 youth exchanges in the world. In Greece, AIESEC is located in seven major Greek Universities (Athens University of Economics, University of Piraeus National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, University of Macedonia (Thessaloniki), Aristoteleio University of Thessaloniki, University of Aegean and University of Patras and has more than 600 members.

Table 3.5 below shows both the planned and the realised (until 1.1.2011) the number of Greek Leonardo da Vinci participants in both IVET and labour market actions in another country (European Commission, 2011b).

Table 3.5: Leonardo Da Vinci Participants in Mobility Projects in Greece

Call	Target Group	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Participants	Initial vocational training	0	0	0	0	791
(Planned)	People on the labour market	0	0	0	0	1,275
<i>Total</i>		<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>2,066</i>
Participants	Initial vocational training	0	0	0	n/a	n/a
(Realised till 1.1.2011)	People on the labour market	0	0	0	n/a	n/a
Total		0	0	0	n/a	n/a

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/doc/stat/greece_en.pdf

3.3 Sectors where traineeships are prevalent

The tradition, availability and take-up of traineeships in Greece vary depending on the specific variant of traineeships. Traineeships are well-established for students of TEIs and for university students/graduates for certain technical and liberal professions, e.g. architecture, engineering, law, medicine as well as for students at the apprenticeship schools of the Manpower Employment Organisation (OAED) (SYSDM expert, 2008). For these students, traineeships form a compulsory part of studies and professional training, either before, or immediately after graduation. For example, TEI students have to undertake a six-month traineeship during the last semester of their studies, provided they have successfully completed 2/3 their studies. The sectors where TEI students can undertake traineeships include the public sector, municipalities, co-operatives, banks, transport, and private, including subsidised private, sectors.

¹⁹ www.aiesec.gr

As far as traineeships linked to studies at HEIs are concerned, these, which last 2-4 months, can be either a compulsory or optional part of the study curriculum. That said, mainly thanks to ESF-support which, *inter alia*, contributes towards trainee compensation and insurance, HEI traineeships are becoming increasingly more widespread. As with TEI traineeships, these can also take place in a variety of private and public sector settings. However, if the traineeship is undertaken in the private sector, then the trainee signs a written special employment contract with the company ('eidiki symvasi ergasias').

In relation to the old STAGE programme, as mentioned earlier, in Greece its history in relation to the sectors within which traineeships ('stages') could take place is chequered. Although its initial aim was to provide traineeship opportunities primarily in the private sector, it ended up employing trainees mainly in the public sector, including the health sector and tax authorities, as well as regional and local authorities (in contravention to the original plan). This was due to the fact that, due to budgetary constraints and the lengthy public sector recruitment process, these sectors recruited trainees to quickly address the issue of staff shortages (SYSDEM expert, 2008).

Access to TEI and HEI traineeships is secured through their respective 'Offices for Traineeship' ('Grafeia Praktikis Askisis') which have been set up, with ESF support, at departmental/Faculty/School/HEI/TEI level. Access to the new Work Experience Programme for New Labour Market Entrants, the successor to the STAGE Programme, is secured through the Hellenic Manpower Employment Organization (OAED).

Access to the traineeships linked to the mandatory professional training associated with certain professions, e.g. law, is secured through the university department and, quite often, through one's informal and personal networks (which raise important issues of equity of access and one's capacity to build or capitalise on social capital).

It is worth stating that there is also a website (www.vrespraktiki.gr) where companies can advertise and young people, including students, look for opportunities for gaining practical experience.²⁰ As stated on the site, the aim is to bring the world of education closer to that of employment by enabling students to acquire practical experience in real work settings. The search tool on the site allows one to look for traineeships by subject of study and/or city/region. It is not clear who is responsible for this website.

3.4 Profile/Patterns of traineeships

There is a wide range of traineeships in Greece, some of which like the ones linked to the mandatory professional training of certain liberal and technical professions, e.g. law, medicine, architecture, engineering, education/teaching, etc., have a long-standing tradition. These traineeships (called 'praktiki askisi') are undertaken either as a compulsory part of the undergraduate studies, or immediately after graduation. Others, such as those linked to studies at TEIs, although more recent (since 1983), are well established, while those linked to studies at HEIs have a more patchy track record depending on the study subject and department/HEI.

Specifically, as mentioned earlier, since 1983 6-month traineeships are a compulsory part of study curricula at TEIs. As far as university study curricula are concerned, these started to introduce traineeships in a more organised way since mid-1990s. The importance of such traineeships was stressed by the latest HEI Reform Law (4009/2011).

Another type of traineeships which have been used widely in Greece are the so-called 'stages'. These aim at familiarising young people with the world of work across the board and were first introduced in 1998. Since then, they have acquired a chequered history and questionable reputation (see relevant section).

²⁰ <http://www.vrespraktiki.gr/>

3.5 Recruitment process of and equity of access to traineeships

The recruitment process, including its transparency, as regards traineeships varies according to the type of traineeships. Not surprisingly, traineeships linked to study curricula (either HEI or TEI) are characterised by a well-organised and relatively transparent recruitment process. For example, the recruitment process of TEI Traineeships is quite structured and organised at the level of each of TEI's Faculty/Department where there is a Committee²¹ supervising the Traineeships Programme and overseeing/monitoring the entire process ('Epitropi Praktikis Askisis'). TEI students submit at his/her Faculty Secretariat a traineeship application and the Committee supervising the Traineeships Programme is responsible for assigning the student to a specific work placement. At TEI level there is a Co-ordinating Body²² of the Traineeships Programme overseeing the entire programme ('Syntonistiko Organo Praktikis Askisis').

Equally, the new Work Experience Programme for New Labour Market Entrants (as opposed to the old STAGE programme which was bedevilled by accusations of lack of transparency and political patronage) is open to all 16-24 unemployed young people who can access it through OAED. Crucially, OAED inspectors will also vet the companies which express an interest in taking part in the programme by providing an initial assessment and undertaking on-going in situ quality assurance visits.

In contrast, the recruitment process (and its transparency) of traineeships linked to professional training of certain professions, e.g. law, is less clear. Access to such traineeships (as well as to employment opportunities more general) relies heavily on one's informal and/or family networks and connections (Karamessini, 2010). This, in turn, raises serious issues about equity of access concerning such traineeships.

3.6 Evolution of traineeships over time and impact of recent economic crisis on traineeships

The number and types of traineeships have increased over time. A key catalyst has been the policy push (supported by ESF co-funding) in promoting a better and closer link of the world of education with that of work through the incorporation of traineeships in study curricula, both at the tertiary (and tertiary-technical) and non-tertiary sectors, since the mid 1990s. Moreover, again with ESF support, there has been a major policy push in promoting traineeships as an effective way of easing the school-to-work transition through other programmes, notably the old STAGE programme and its successor, the Work Experience Programme for New Labour Market Entrants. Indeed, it is worth noting that the succession of STAGE programmes introduced the concept of the 'trainee-stagiaire' which was quite novel for the Greek labour market because the young person concerned was undertaking a traineeship not as part of their studies, or as part of the mandatory professional post-graduate training associated with certain professions, e.g. law, medicine, education, etc.

However, as explained in other sections, the old STAGE programme was subject to serious deviations from the initial aim of supporting traineeships in the private sector and led, especially in the period 2005-2009 to a massive expansion of traineeships in the public and municipal sectors. For example, in January 2005, 12,237 trainees were appointed in a number of public sector organisations, including the Ministry of the Environment, the Gender Equality Secretariat, the social security organisations, notably the IKA which is by far the largest, and the regions (Kopsini, 2009).

More recently, in response to the crisis and because of the proven effectiveness of schemes which link education with the world of work, Greece also introduced or expanded training

²¹ This Committee comprises three Members from the TEI's Scientific staff and two student representatives

²² This Co-ordinating Body comprises 4-6 members, including one student representative and one employer representative, eg Hellenic Federation of Enterprises (SEV), <http://www.sev.org.gr/>

schemes which promoted workplace learning experiences (e.g. traineeships). In particular, such schemes were extended in Greece to cover high skilled young people, including students and graduates who were hit hard by the crisis (European Employment Observatory, 2010; Employment Committee, 2011).

Recent figures related to the new Work Experience Programme for New Labour Market Entrants mentioned earlier, show that employers are reluctant to take on trainees, even when there is a heavy (70-100 per cent) subsidy of the relevant social security contributions. Indeed, this new programme is characterised by the lowest absorption rate of all programmes aimed at employment and training. Specifically, since the start of the programme on 29th October 2010 and until mid March 2011, companies have taken on only 1,217 trainees out of the total of 10,000, i.e. 12.2 per cent.²³

According to the President of OAED which is responsible for running this programme, there are two main reasons for this low take-up by employers. One is the severe economic crisis and ensuing depression which makes employers reluctant to take on trainees, not least because the volume of business is much reduced and they do not want to have to pay even the lower minimum wage (foreseen in the new programme). The second reason is the high degree of undeclared or 'unsecured' labour in Greece which, in some sectors, can be as high as 50 per cent, which means that the subsidization of trainees' social security contributions does not constitute a strong incentive for employers. In addition, employers may wish to eschew the robust quality assurance/control procedures linked to such programmes which, *inter alia*, involve quarterly in situ inspections by OAED inspectors.

3.7 Financing of traineeships

Most forms of traineeships available in Greece have been co-financed by national and European, notably ESF, sources. Significantly, all the traineeships which are linked to study curricula are supported by such co-funding. Significantly, as the current Operational Programme *Education and Lifelong Learning 2007-2013* stipulates, because of the importance of creating closer links between education and the labour market, for which traineeships play a crucial role, the second most important Community contribution (23.6 per cent) will be channelled to relevant actions (Ministry of Education, 2007). For example, this Operational Programme which is co-funded by 80 per cent by the ESF, is providing a subsidy of up to €1,200 per student for the duration of traineeship (if undertaken in Greece) and up to €1,800 per student for a traineeship in another Member State (Ministry of Education, 2010). IVET traineeships undertaken on a voluntary basis by IEK graduates are also co-financed by ESF.

Apart from traineeships linked to studies, European sources, notably ESF, have also been used to co-finance other forms of traineeships. Since their introduction in 1998 all the STAGE programmes and its successor in Greece have been co-funded by the ESF and national funding sources. The total funding available for the period 2010-2012 for the new Work Experience Programme for New Labour Market Entrants (launched in October 2010) is €53,940,400 and is broken down as follows:

²³ <http://www.enet.gr/?i=news.el.article&id=258900>

Table 3.6: Total funding available for the new Work Experience Programme for New Labour Market Entrants 2010-12

Year	Funding (€)
2010	9,058,500
2011	26,481,900
2012	18,400,000
Total	53,940,400

Source: Government Gazette of the Hellenic Republic (FEK), Vol 2, No 1655, 18.10.2010

It is worth noting that this programme (as well as its predecessor, is STAGE programmes) is supported as part of OP Human Resources Development 2007-2013 (Thematic Priority Axis 3: 'Facilitating Access to Employment') (Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare, 2006). Most of the funding (80 per cent) comes from the ESF.

In the table below we present the breakdown of the funding available for various types of traineeships (as part of actions aimed at linking education with the labour market) for the period 2007-2013.

Table 3.7: Breakdown of the funding available for various types of traineeships, 2007-13

OP Education & LLL Programme	ESF funding (€)	National Funds (€)	Co-funded Public Expenditure
<i>Priority Axis 4:</i> Upgrading the systems of initial vocational training & vocational education & linking education with the labour market in 8 Convergence Objective Regions	187,198,437	26,472,460	213,670,897
<i>Priority Axis 5:</i> Upgrading the systems of initial vocational training & vocational education & linking education with the labour market in 3 Phasing-Out Regions	142,196,482	112,255,938	254,452,420
<i>Priority Axis 6:</i> Upgrading the systems of initial vocational training & vocational education & linking education with the labour market in 2 Phasing-In Regions	10,341,562	7,075,175	17,416,737
TOTAL	339,736,481	145,803,573	485,540,054

Source: OPS, http://www.ops.gr/Ergorama/index.jsp?menuitemId=pp1_2&tabid=0

Table 3.8 and Table 3.9 below show the Erasmus budget and Leonardo da Vinci grants for mobility actions in Greece since 2007.

Table 3.8: Erasmus Budget for Mobility Actions in Greece (€)

2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
9,486,480	10,224,830	11,446,000

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc/stat/0910/countries/greece_en.pdf

Table 3.9: Leonardo Da Vinci Grants for Mobility Actions in Greece (€)

2007	2008	2009	2010
3,432,740	4,585,696	4,718,127	4,593,779

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/doc/stat/greece_en.pdf

3.8 Public perceptions about traineeships

As mentioned earlier, some forms of traineeships, notably the ones associated with the STAGE programmes and, to some extent, those linked to the mandatory professional training concerning certain professions, e.g. legal traineeships have attracted a lot of criticism. Indeed, the issue of traineeships as stages has been the subject of intense public debate in Greece. For example, the old STAGE programme, first introduced in 1998, acquired since then a chequered history and questionable reputation, especially as regards the potential for trainee exploitation. In many instances, these were also 'trapped' in a series of renewable 'stage' contracts, each lasting for about 18 months with an interruption of ten days between each renewal. The upshot of this was that there were young people ('stagers' or 'stagiaires') employed under these contracts for years.

Their monthly gross earnings were very low (€430-€450), they were not insured for pension and were not entitled to holiday or sickness pay. They only had medical/ hospital coverage, for which the contribution was 7.45 per cent. Ironically, a large number of such trainees, i.e. with no social security/pension contribution coverage, were employed by IKA, which is by far the largest Social Security Organisation in Greece (Kopsini, 2009). Moreover, in contravention to the original aim of the programme which was to familiarise young people with the world of work in the private sector, these trainees were mostly employed in the public sector and municipalities.

Crucially, the way trainees were deployed in the public sector also contravened the spirit of the STAGE programme which was to familiarise young people with the world of work and contribute to their learning. Instead of learning work-related norms and routines and applying their knowledge in a field relevant to their own area of study/expertise, trainees were used to cover staff shortages due to budget constraints and a recruitment freeze in the public sectors (EEO/Karadinos, 2010). For example, according to data from the INE-GSEE Employment Institute, in 2007 of the 35,000 new public sector recruits, 18,000 were either on temporary or 'stage' contracts. In contrast, for the same period out of 49,000 new private sector recruits, only 5,000 were on temporary or 'stage' contracts.

Even more controversially, the recruitment process of stagiaires was prone to political patronage, which meant that those with access to politicians, including MPs and mayors, could hope to secure a 'stage' in the public sector. The expectation was that, once in the public sector even as a trainee, in due course and on the basis of successive contract renewals, one would eventually become a permanent public sector employee (until recently this was the dream of many young people thanks to the employment security and tenure combined with relatively good pay and working conditions of such an appointment).

Because of the large number of trainees who were undertaking these 'stages' for years and their poor learning content (they were filling in vacant posts of regular staff) and working conditions (e.g. no social security coverage, low pay, no entitlement to holiday or sick pay, etc), a social movement of trainees emerged, with the help of social media. As has been mentioned, the way the old STAGE programme was implemented which used trainees for work activities normally undertaken by regular staff compromised (if not minimised) the learning dimension of its original aim. This, in turn, blurred the boundaries between the status of 'trainee/student' and that of 'employee' and created a need among trainees ('stagers' or 'stagiaires') to fight for their rights as employees and not as 'trainees'. At the

same time, it created the need among them to look for a professional identity and for recognition of their work (as opposed to the training they received) (Fakou, 2010).

Indeed, the extent of the phenomenon of the deployment of trainees ('stagers' or 'stagiaires') in the public/municipal sector has been so great that it has led to the emergence of a very active and vocal social movement which was expressed, *inter alia*, through protests, strikes and legal prosecutions in the Greek Courts (Fakou, 2010).

Moreover, because of the large number of trainees ('stagers' or 'stagiaires') working in specific public and municipal sector organisations all over Greece, 'stagers associations' have also been set up, with the aim to fight for the rights of trainees, including the right to become a permanent public/municipal sector employee in due course (on the basis of legal precedent and length of service).²⁴

Such associations have been set up at both organisational/institutional level, e.g. Association of Stagers at the Hellenic Manpower Employment Organization (OAED), Association of Stagers at IKA, the largest Social Security Organisation, etc., and at regional level, e.g. Association of Stagers in Karditsa Region, Association of Stagers in Thessaloniki's Municipalities, etc. These associations are very vocal and active in fighting for the rights of trainees, while they have also been involved in a number of court cases and protests in relation to such issues. Since the abolition of the old STAGE programme in November 2009, and the attendant loss of employment and the prospect of securing a permanent job in the public/municipal sector, these associations are particularly active in both debates around the rights and future of trainees and related protests.

The way the old STAGE system was implemented over a long period in Greece also attracted the opprobrium of the European Commission following a number of interventions by concerned Greek MEPs.²⁵ In view of the above severe criticisms, including the intervention of the Commission, in November 2009 it was decided not to renew the contracts related to the STAGE programme.

In addition, it has been the subject of lively debate among all political parties in Greece. It has also been highly criticised by the trade unions, including the Greek Confederation of Greek Workers (GSEE). For example, GSEE criticised the old STAGE programme for employing trainees with no social security coverage. As its President pointed out (cited in Kopsini, 2009):

'It's a scandal that IKA, the largest Social Security Organisation, itself employs 1,100 trainees who themselves have no social security coverage.'

Even worse, according to the President of the IKA's own Employee Association, out of the 3,500 vacant 'organic' positions at IKA, 1,500 were covered by trainees performing work-related tasks usually undertaken by regular staff.²⁶

In summary, although the initial specification of the old STAGE programme was to provide young people with initial work placement experience (in the private sector) for a limited period of time, its operation over time was severely distorted and even politicised. As has been pointed out (Matsaganis, 2009):

²⁴ Association of Stagers at the Hellenic Manpower Employment Organization (OAED), <http://stageoaed.blogspot.com/>; Association of Stagers at IKA, the largest Social Security Organisation, <http://ikastage.blogspot.com/>; Association of Stagers at the Farmers' Insurance Organisation/OGA, <http://someteostageoga.blogspot.com/>; Association of Stagers in Karditsa Region, <http://stagekarditsas.blogspot.com/>; Association of Stagers in Achaia Region, <http://achaiastage.ning.com/>; Association of Stagers in Thessaloniki's Municipalities, <http://agonistikiprotovoulia.wordpress.com/tag/stage/>

²⁵ European Parliament, 30.10.2009, <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=WQ&reference=P-2009-5452&language=EL>

²⁶ European Parliament, 9.2.2009, <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=WQ&reference=E-2009-0643&language=EL>

'The European logic of stages was the acquisition of work experience by young people through work placements for a limited period of time in the private sector. The Greek adaptation meant that stages were subsidised under-employment in the public sector of young people who were selected with non-transparent criteria. All these young people had the expectation of becoming permanent public sector employees in due course.'

4. Practices and Content of Traineeships

Depending on the specific type of traineeship their practices and content varies significantly. Not surprisingly, the ones linked to study curricula (both in HEIs and TEIs) and to mandatory professional training concerning certain professions, e.g. law, medicine, etc. are well specified and, in the case of traineeships linked to study curricula, closely monitored and co-ordinated by the educational institutions.

For example, the legal traineeship of a trainee lawyer should involve his/her familiarisation with the way law is practiced under the close supervision of a fully qualified lawyer who has been practicing law for at least five years; his/her involvement in legal cases of increasing complexity (starting from relatively simpler ones and gradually moving on to more complicated ones); his/her personalised guidance and mentoring by the supervising lawyer, including guidance linked to the handling of specific cases; being accompanied and supported by the supervising lawyer at court when cases handled by the trainee lawyer are judged; the issuing by the supervising lawyer of certificates required for his/her legal training and participation in exams; etc. Crucially, the supervising lawyer has also to commit that he/she will assign to the trainee lawyer only tasks which are strictly related to the practice of law (as opposed to tasks and activities which are irrelevant to the legal profession). That said, there is a lot of anecdotal evidence of exploitation of trainees undertaking traineeships linked to mandatory professional training associated with certain professions, notably trainee lawyers.

As mentioned earlier, the practices and content of traineeships linked to study curricula are also well specified. Because such traineeships are linked to the specific study curricula, their practice, content and duration vary in relation to the study subject.

That said, it is worth stressing that universities increasingly introduce traineeships linked to their entire study curriculum, i.e. in all Departments, Schools and Faculties, while in the past such traineeships were confined to certain curricula, notably health, education, all variants of engineering, architecture, law, etc. For example, at the Athens University of Economics and Business, all Departments and Faculties have introduced traineeships as part of their respective study curricula which should take place after students complete the second year of their studies. The AUSB traineeships can take the form of either part-time employment for two days a week during the third or fourth year of study, or full-time employment during the summer break (AUSB, 2010). At the University of Piraeus, since the first semester of their studies all students are given the opportunity to undertake, a traineeship lasting two to six months, which can also be renewed. The trainees receive compensation which is paid by the participating employers.²⁷ At the University of Aegean 2-month study-related traineeships are organised during the summer break (summer traineeships) and trainees are closely supervised and supported by one member of the University's scientific staff and a supervisor at the participating company.²⁸ The actual focus, scope and content of the traineeship are jointly decided by these two. Although student participation in this scheme is optional, those who take part have to compile at the end of the traineeship a Technical Report which is marked.

²⁷ http://carrer.unipi.gr/ypires/diasyndesh/prakt_ask/4_3.html.

²⁸ <http://www3.aegean.gr/aegean/greek/people/students/stpract.htm>

Moreover, the way traineeships are organised at HEIs is not uniform because each HEI is an autonomous entity. As a result, each university department organises study-related traineeships according to own 'Traineeship Guide' ('Odigos Praktikis Askisis'), Statute of Operation ('Kanonismos') and the educational needs related to study subject (EEO Group, 2009). That said, there are certain general common principles in the way these traineeships are organised, especially since with the support of successive CSF which included ESF funding, HEIs have set up 'Offices for Traineeships' ('Grafeia Praktikis Askisis'). These are headed up by a scientific member of staff at both the departmental and HEI levels. The latter is responsible for the co-ordination and supervision of the work of all the other 'Offices for Traineeships' which operate at departmental levels.

The duration for traineeships linked to HEI study curricula is 2-4 months. The conditions for student participation in traineeships are defined by each department and usually include the year/semester of study, number of students who apply for traineeships, their grades, etc. In particular, the selection criteria for allowing students to take part in traineeships are primarily one's grades (in terms of average grade, student performance in the specialist subjects, collection of necessary educational points) and one's year of study when requesting to do a traineeship. There is variation between HEIs as to whether one uses a multiplicity of criteria, or a single criterion, to select students for traineeships.

The 'Office for Traineeships' ('Grafeio Praktikis Askisis') which operates at department/Faculty/School level is responsible for vetting the suitability of participating companies in line with the Ministry of Education guidelines (EEO Group, 2009). If the traineeship is undertaken in the private, as opposed to the public sector, there is a special written traineeship contract ('eidiki symvasi ergasias'). Trainees receive compensation and are insured at IKA against occupational risks and accidents. While doing the traineeship, they are supervised jointly by a member of the scientific staff in the relevant department and by a manager in the company providing the placement.

The way traineeships are organised in both HEIs and TEIs can be divided in four stages (EEO Group, 2009):

- i. Stage A: Initial Communication/Awareness Raising – (Students and Companies)
- ii. Stage B: Selection and Allocation of Students and Companies
- iii. Stage C: Undertaking and Supervision of Traineeships
- iv. Stage D: Completion and Assessment of Traineeships

In the Box below we describe these stages in greater detail.

HEI Traineeships

Stage A: Initial Communication/Awareness Raising – (Students and Companies)

At this stage, awareness raising activities take place in order to attract both students and companies in the scheme. Scientific members of staff inform students about the benefits of and opportunities for traineeships through seminars, websites, formal announcement of the traineeship programme, etc. Students who are interested can then submit an application.

The way companies can take part in such traineeships is as follows:

1. names of companies are put forward by both scientific staff and students. Indeed, students are encouraged to be proactive in identifying and contacting relevant companies, working together with scientific staff and the 'Office for Traineeships' ('Grafeio Praktikis Askisis');

2. companies interested in participating contact the 'Office for Traineeships' ('Grafeio Praktikis Askisis EPEAEK');
3. the suitability of these companies is checked by the relevant HEI departments and the 'Office for Traineeships' ('Grafeio Praktikis Askisis EPEAEK'). The main company selection criterion is the relevance of the company to the study subject;
4. once approval is given, a contract of co-operation is signed between the departments and the participating companies.

In relation to the way students are included in the programme is as follows:

1. there is contact of students with scientific staff and companies;
2. students submit traineeship applications in the Secretariat of their respective departments;
3. selection of students who can take part in the HEI traineeship programme EPEAEK;
4. students who have been selected to take part contact the 'Office for Traineeships' ('Grafeio Praktikis Askisis EPEAEK') for further guidance and documentation.

Stage B: Selection and Allocation of Students and Companies

At this stage, the selection of students for traineeships and allocation to specific companies takes place. Once selected for a traineeship and allocated to a specific company, the student/trainee signs a special traineeship contract, called 'special employment contract' ('eidiki symvasi ergasias') which covers the duration of the placement (2-4 months). He/she opens a bank account where the traineeship-related compensation will be paid. Crucially, he/she receives the 'Traineeship Diary' ('Imerologio Praktikis Askisis') which he/she has to update on a weekly basis during the traineeship. Following this, the participating company must register the recruitment of the trainee at both the Hellenic Manpower Employment Organization (OAED) and the IKA (the largest social security organisation in Greece). Medical and accident insurance of trainees is compulsory for the duration of the traineeship.

Stage C: Undertaking and Supervision of Traineeships

In order to ensure the smooth operation and greatest effectiveness of the traineeship, each trainee is subject to joint supervision by one member of the university department's scientific staff and one company representative, who has to have a scientific background relevant to the focus and subject of the traineeship. The company representative, who liaises with the 'Office for Traineeships' ('Grafeio Praktikis Askisis EPEAEK') and the relevant member of scientific staff, is responsible for setting the traineeship-related tasks and activities and for supervising the trainee in the company. He/she also checks the weekly 'Traineeship Diary' ('Imerologio Praktikis Askisis') and prepares bi-monthly progress reports. The scientific member of staff assigned to supervise a particular trainee is responsible for determining, in collaboration with the company representative, the content and focus of the traineeship which should be relevant to the trainee's studies; visiting the trainee in the company while doing the traineeship; liaising regularly with the company representative, e.g. by telephone; and assessing the traineeship and the weekly 'Traineeship Diary' ('Imerologio Praktikis Askisis'). At this stage, the research reports linked to the traineeship are also compiled. Trainees should have active participation in all the tasks and activities assigned to them by the company as part of the traineeship and must be given an overview of the entire production process. In the weekly 'Traineeship Diary' ('Imerologio Praktikis Askisis') they have to record the work-related tasks and activities they have been involved in on a daily basis, e.g. data collection and analysis, compilation of reports, etc. Depending on the study subject and department, trainees may have to compile a report summarising

their learning and experience acquired through the traineeship. This may include a description of how the company where they completed their traineeship in is organised and operates.

Stage D: Completion and Assessment of Traineeships

Once the traineeship is completed, the trainees submit their weekly 'Traineeship Diary' ('Imerologio Praktikis Askisis') for assessment and return the IKA insurance card. Their own assessment of their traineeship is usually conducted through the use of questionnaires. On the other hand, the person responsible for traineeships at HEI/institutional level compiles all the necessary final reports by department, while the scientific member of staff responsible for traineeships compiles a synthesis report concerning the traineeships organised by all departments.

Source: EEO Group, (2009). Evaluation of OP Education and Lifelong Learning 2000-2006 supported Actions which continued in OP Education and Lifelong Learning 2007-2013, http://www.epeaek.gr/epeaek/sitecontent/paradoteo_final_axiolAP2_Jan-09.pdf

As far as TEI traineeships are concerned, these are organised by each department according to the requirements and focus of the specific study curriculum. All aspects of traineeships are defined in the 'Traineeship Guide' ('Odigos Praktikis Askisis') which is compiled for each specialism. The trainee, while doing the 6-month traineeship, is supervised by a member of the Faculty. For this supervisory task Faculty members are given two hours per week (as part of their teaching responsibilities). A Faculty member can supervise 10-15 trainees. In order to monitor progress and quality assure the TEI traineeship, the supervising Faculty member has to visit the TEI trainee in situ six times during the placement and compile progress reports after each such visit. Crucially, for the duration of the traineeship, the TEI trainee has to keep a diary ('Biblio of Praktikis Askisis/Book of Practical Experience') where he/she records on a weekly basis the work tasks and activities he/she has been involved with.

5. Trainee's Rights and Terms and Conditions

The trainee's terms and conditions vary widely depending on the type of traineeship. As expected, such conditions are much better defined in traineeships linked to study curricula, both in the tertiary, including technical tertiary, sectors (TEIs).

For example, the terms and conditions of a young person undertaking a 6-month TEI traineeship are as follows:

- There is a special contract, called 'special employment contract for the undertaking of a traineeship by TEI students' signed by all relevant parties. The aim of this contract is to outline the specific roles and responsibilities of the parties involved; to enable the improved organisation and supervision of the traineeship; and to specify the trainee's terms and conditions.
- TEI trainees undertaking a traineeship are entitled to compensation, the level of which depends whether the work placement is in the public or private sector. Specifically, if the traineeship is in the private sector, publicly-owned enterprises or municipalities the trainee is entitled to a daily compensation of 80 per cent of the wage of an unskilled worker (as defined by the National General Collective Agreement (EGSSE). For example, in July 2011 this wage was €33.57, which means that the daily pay for a TEI trainee was €26.86 (in total €671.50 per month). This is paid by the employer which offers the traineeship opportunity. At the end of the 6-month traineeship, the employer is entitled to a 50 per cent subsidy of the trainee's pay which is given by OAED. If the TEI trainee is un-

undertaking a traineeship in the public sector, his/her pay, which is determined by a ministerial decision, amounts to €176.08.

- TEI trainees are insured at IKA²⁹ against illness or accident related to occupational risks (1 per cent of trainee compensation).³⁰ The responsibility for paying this insurance lies with the employer who offers the traineeship. As TEI students, they are already covered by full medical and hospital insurance. Apart from being entitled to receiving some compensation and to be insured (in line with Article 24 of Law 1404/83) for the duration of the traineeship, TEI trainees do not acquire any other employment and/or pension-related entitlement.
- During the 6-month traineeship the TEI trainee can be 'justifiably' absent (leave) for 5 working days in total.

Similarly, the terms and conditions for traineeships linked to university study curricula are usually specified at HEI level, and more specifically at Faculty/department level. For example, the traineeship programme of the University of Athens allows students to undertake a work placement in either private or public sector companies for up to three months (under the status of full employment).³¹

That said, article 12 of Law 1351/83 (issued in 1983) stipulates that students who are doing a traineeship as part of the professional training required are entitled to compensation equalling with the basic wage which corresponds to the lowest grade of someone with secondary education as well as occupational health and accident insurance at IKA (for the duration of the traineeship). The insurance contributions and wage payment lies within the responsibility of the employment services or the educational establishment where the student is based. The actual level of this compensation is determined by a joint decision between the Minister of Education, the Minister of Finance and the Minister relevant to the study subject of the student.

Those who are doing a traineeship as part of their university study curricula are also entitled to some compensation and social security coverage. Specifically, those who are undertaking such a traineeship within Greece are entitled to receive compensation of up to €340/month for the duration of the traineeship, while those who opt for a traineeship abroad can receive monthly compensation of up to €600/month (Ministry of Education, 2010). In addition, for the entire duration of the traineeship, trainees must be insured against accident, the cost of which is covered by the Operational Programme *Education and Lifelong Learning* (which is co-funded by ESF). The working hours and other working conditions of the trainee are agreed between the participating employer, the trainee and member of scientific staff who is responsible for co-ordinating the traineeships at Department/Faculty/School level.

The new Work Experience Programme for New Labour Market Entrants, the successor to the old STAGE programme, launched in 2010 by Law 3845/2010 Article 2 paragraph 8, foresees the following:

1. the signing of a 'traineeship/work placement' contract;
2. 100 per cent subsidization of both employer and employee social security contributions;
3. the payment of trainees of 80 per cent of the National Minimum Wage (as defined by the General National Collective Agreement, i.e. €591);
4. the work placement should take place only in private sector companies;
5. its duration should be 6-12 months.

Crucially, the new programme also provides strong incentives for companies to keep on the trainees by continuing to offer employers subsidised social contributions (70 per cent) if

²⁹ IKA (Social Insurance Institute) is the largest Social Security Organisation in Greece and covers over 5,500,000 workers and employees, <http://www.ika.gr/>

³⁰ This amounts to €40,45×25 days × 1% = €10,11/month

³¹ internship.cs.aueb.gr

they convert the initial 12-month 'traineeship/work placement' contract into a proper/ordinary employment contract for another 18 months.³²

In relation to Erasmus work placements abroad Greek students in 2008-2009 were entitled to a monthly compensation of €618 (IKY, 2010).

6. Quality Assurance of Traineeships

The specific quality assurance mechanism depends on the particular type of traineeship. Not surprisingly, the ones linked to the (HEI and TEI) study curricula which are usually organised, co-ordinated and monitored centrally by the educational institutions (though their 'Offices for Practical Work Experience' and/or 'Offices for Employment and Links with the Labour Market/DASTA'), have formal quality assurance procedures. For example, as far as TEI Traineeships are concerned, the TEI trainee, while doing the traineeship, is also supervised by a member of the Faculty. For this supervisory task Faculty members are given two hours per week (as part of their teaching responsibilities). A Faculty member can supervise 10-15 trainees. In order to monitor progress and quality assure the TEI traineeship, the supervising Faculty member has to visit the TEI trainee in situ six times during the traineeship and compile a progress report after each such visit.

Similarly, the HEI traineeships are subject to quality assurance procedures, some of which are similar to those of TEI traineeships. There is a vetting procedure of companies which express a wish to take on trainees, where one key selection criterion is the relevance of the company to the study subject. Moreover, trainees are closely supervised by a member of the scientific staff and a company representative assigned to support and guide them during the traineeship. The fact that trainees have to keep a weekly 'Traineeship Diary' ('Imerologio Praktikis Askisis') where they have to record the tasks and activities they have performed on a daily basis can also act as a quality check as regards the learning content and focus of traineeship.

The new Work Experience Programme for New Labour Market Entrants, the successor to the old STAGE programme, also outlines clear and regular quality assurance procedures. Specifically, the Hellenic Manpower Employment Organization (OAED) which is the Intermediary Management Agency and Co-ordinating body of this programme is responsible for its quality assurance, including the vetting of the participating private sector companies and the regular in situ inspection for the duration of the traineeship. Indeed, in order to follow the way traineeships are implemented by companies, OAED staff will compile a dossier for each of the participating companies where, *inter alia*, they will keep the regular in situ reports prepared by the OAED inspectors.

7. Overall Assessment as regards Traineeships

7.1 Benefits and drawbacks of traineeships

The benefits of traineeships as an effective way of linking the world of education to that of work have long been recognised in Greece, especially in relation to creating closer ties between educational establishments and employers (in both private and public sectors) (Ministry of Education, 2010). As mentioned earlier, traineeships ('practical work experience' or 'praktiki askisi') have been an integral part of HEI and TEI study curricula for

³² The 70 per cent social contribution subsidy last for the first 12 months, while the employer receives no such subsidy for the remaining 18 months

some time, albeit with great variations and mixed results. The bridge to the world of work which traineeships provide is particularly important within the context of the Greek youth labour market which has historically been characterised by very weak links between the two.

To this end, successive Operational Programmes (co-funder under CSF II 1994-1999, CSF III 2000-2006 and now the NSRF 2007-2013) have promoted the concept of traineeships as part of study curricula and provided support and guidance for the necessary structures which have to be in place for the effective operation and quality assurance of such traineeships. For example, they have encouraged the creation of offices (at university/TEI and/or School/Faculty/Department levels) specifically tasked with the organisation and co-ordination of traineeships linked to study curricula ('Grafea Praktikis Askisis').

Within this context, the benefits of traineeships are considered to be the following:

1. the acquisition of a first work-related experience linked to one's study subject and/or one's integration into the work environment;
2. the more meaningful and comprehensive in-depth understanding of the scientific knowledge acquired as part of the studies through its practical application in a work context;
3. the opportunity for the trainee to show his/her abilities, knowledge and competences as well as to develop a proper sense of professionalism;
4. the smoother transition of students from the world of education which prepares them for the world of work into the world of production and employment through both their early familiarisation with the demands, norms and routines of the work environment and their exposure to employment relations, working conditions and salary levels of Greek private and public sector organisations;
5. creating favourable conditions for inter-disciplinarity and encouraging young people to be both autonomous and creative as well as to take the initiative;
6. the creation of a two-way communication and exchange of information channel between HEIs/TEIs and employers with a view to promoting a closer and fruitful liaison between the two; and
7. the incorporation of new and emerging labour market trends and requirements into study curricula so that these are more relevant and responsive to the skills and knowledge requirements of employers (Ministry of Education, 2010).

In addition, in Greece there is a long tradition of traineeships linked to mandatory professional training associated with certain liberal and technical professions, e.g. law, medicine, education/teaching, etc. The benefits of these schemes are similar to the ones described above. In addition, such traineeships are a pre-requisite for securing a licence to practice, thus providing access to, a particular profession, e.g. lawyer.

7.2 Effectiveness of traineeships

Existing evidence suggests that traineeships undertaken during undergraduate studies have a positive impact on one's employment prospects and levels of earnings. Specifically, according to recent research findings Greek graduates with continuous work experience during their undergraduate studies are 84 per cent more likely to be employed and 69 per cent more likely to be well-paid than medium or low paid 5-7 years after graduation (Karamessini, 2010). In contrast, continuous work experience during undergraduate studies does not seem to have a statistically significant impact on the likelihood of being in permanent vs. temporary employment, or in having a job which matches or not the graduates' subject of study 5-7 years after graduation.

That said, a recent evaluation undertaken as part of the OP Education and Lifelong Learning, of traineeships linked to university studies, both in HEIs and TEIs, has highlighted

a number of issues (EEO Group, 2009). As regards HEI traineeships one key issue is the lack of a uniform legislative/regulatory framework about traineeships. This, in turn, means that there is wide variation on how these are organised, supervised, quality assured and assessed, not only between HEIs, but also between departments within the same HEI. For example, there is variation as to whether traineeships form an integral part of the department's study curriculum; whether they are a compulsory part of the studies; whether there is a specific 'Office for Traineeships' ('Grafeio Praktikis Askisis') at HEI/institutional and/or departmental level, etc. In addition, there are gaps in the provision of traineeship opportunities.

Survey results of those involved in HEI traineeships also highlighted issues related to the way traineeships are promoted by and organised in HEIs. Crucially, although there is a multiplicity of awareness raising activities ranging from traineeship-related information sessions to website posting and active promotion by the 'Office for Traineeships' ('Grafeio Praktikis Askisis'), overall students are not well informed as regards traineeships. Second, the fact that the number of trainees supervised by the same member of scientific staff can, in some cases, be 40 or even more, raises concerns about the quality and robustness of supervision. Third, the element of co-funding and related bureaucratic and cumbersome procedures means that, in many instances, there are severe delays in paying compensation to trainees. Fourth, even before the current severe crisis, survey respondents mentioned difficulties in finding companies willing to offer traineeships. Fifth, the supervision and quality assurance of traineeships are not always as robust as they should. Sixth, survey respondents also reported difficulties in the co-operation between scientific staff and the 'Office for Traineeships' ('Grafeio Praktikis Askisis') (EEO Group, 2009).

As regards TEI traineeships, the evaluation highlighted the following issues. First, TEI students (like their HEI counterparts) do not seem to be as well informed about traineeships, despite these being a compulsory part of their studies. Second, the supervision and quality assurance of traineeships show great variation. In particular, instead of close and personal supervision of the trainee by a Faculty member, in many instances, trainees do not have any personal contact or meaningful communication with him/her. They just submit the 'Traineeship Diary' ('Book of Praktikis Askisis') without any other interaction. Moreover, in situ inspections do not always take place (as they should), while the close collaboration between TEIs and companies takes, in many instances, the form of signing co-operation agreements and completing questionnaires (as opposed to a more meaningful form of collaboration and two-way exchange of information and views). In addition, although it is compulsory for the trainees to have illness and accident insurance, various audits have shown that this is not always the case, i.e. TEI trainees are not always insured (EEO Group, 2009).

Finally, as regards the old STAGE programme, this has been widely and comprehensively criticised (see relevant section), while it is too early to assess the new Work Experience Programme for New Labour Market Entrants, which started in Autumn 2010. In relation to the old STAGE programme, one key criticism has been that, instead of providing young people with the opportunity to become familiar with and apply their skills and knowledge in a real work setting, preferably in the private sector, its trainees were used as 'cheap' substitute for regular staff in the public and municipal sectors, with low pay of €430-€450/month, no social security coverage or holiday/sickness pay (Fakou, 2010; Kopsini, 2009).

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Greek Case Study Report

Focus for this case study on traineeships:

In early 2000s, **the STAGE programme** (co-funded by ESF) was introduced which offered work experience placements of up to 18 months to secondary and tertiary education graduates. The explicit aim was to enable young people, through traineeships ('stages'), to develop links with the labour market; become familiar with the world of work; and acquire work experience as an effective way of easing their transition to employment. The expansion of public sector placements led to accusation of abuses by public bodies which, allegedly, were using STAGE trainees as cheap labour when budget constraints meant that they were unable to recruit full-time members of staff. As a result, the programme was replaced in 2010 by a new one, called '**Work Experience Programme for New Labour Market Entrants, aged 16-24**' which restricts traineeships only to the private sector.

Policy Framework

The issues of high youth unemployment, including high graduate unemployment, and the poor integration of young people into the labour market have bedevilled Greece for some time and have been considerably exacerbated by the severity and duration of the current economic crisis. Indeed, the issue of youth unemployment, including graduate unemployment and/or under-utilisation or precarious employment, has been at the forefront of government action by successive governments. These have introduced a number of youth measures, including traineeships, in their effort to address youth unemployment and under-employment (see below).

Young people in Greece have historically faced a number of challenges in relation to their fast and smooth entry into the labour market. For example, the school-to-work transitions, including graduate transitions to employment, have historically been long and difficult in Greece (Mitrakos et al., 2010; Politis et al., 2010). According to the OECD, after leaving education young people in Greece take on average 24 months to find their first job, compared to the European average of 17 months and 6 months in the US (OECD, 2010). This, in turn, reflects the historically very weak links between the education system and the labour market as well as the fact that opportunities for work-based learning have been limited to date (OECD, 2010; 2011). That said, it should also be noted that the speed and ease of labour market transitions vary according to one's study subject. In other words, certain groups of graduates, e.g. engineers, have historically faced far fewer difficulties in entering the labour market than others, notably arts and humanities graduates (Mitrakos et al., 2010; Politis et al., 2010).

As with other Mediterranean countries in Greece, holding a tertiary/higher education qualification has, for some time and reflecting structural labour market deficiencies and an over-supply of graduates, not necessarily been a guarantee for sustainable employment (Scarpetta et al., 2010; Higgins, 2010; CoE, 2011). Moreover, again in line with other Southern European countries, notably Italy and Spain, the extent of over-qualification among young people is considerable, and a large number of young people work in jobs requiring lower skills than those they possess (vertical skills mismatch). Indeed, both the vertical and, increasingly, horizontal skills mismatch are significant among Greek young people.

Interestingly, education/qualifications do not provide a guarantee against unemployment and/or precarious employment, with young graduates showing the highest unemployment and temporary employment rates among the 20-29 year-olds of all educational attainment levels. To this one should add the chronic inability of the Greek economy, notably the

private sector, to generate sufficient numbers of high skilled jobs which could absorb the growing number of graduates. According to the OAED's President, the private sector in Greece can create jobs for only 15 out of 100 graduates. As a result, a growing number of graduates are either unemployed, under-employed or accept jobs requiring lower level skills.

In summary, the Greek youth labour market is characterised by the following features which are typical of the so-called Southern European model:

1. very lengthy job search or long wait at initial career stage;
2. low mobility between jobs combined with stability once employment is secured;
3. positive correlation between labour market experience and likelihood of employment (but not between the latter and education, at least in the first few years after graduation);
4. strong educational effects on occupational attainment (Karamessini, 2010).

To these one should add the, until recently, very weak links of the education system with the labour market and employer requirements; the lack of parity of esteem between academic and vocational education with the concomitant very poor image of vocational training; and the provision of few work-based learning opportunities.³³

In view of the above discussion, successive Greek Governments have pursued policies aimed at addressing the major issue of youth unemployment, under-employment and precarious employment as well as at making school-to-work transitions smoother, shorter and more stable. Traineeships, in their various forms, have constituted a critical tool in the pursuit of these goals. Crucially, most of these traineeships have been promoted as part of Operational Programmes implemented in Greece as part of the successive Community Support Frameworks, notably CSF II, CSF III and CSF IV, which have also provided part of the funding for certain schemes, e.g. those linked to university study curricula, STAGE programmes, etc. It is worth stating that the current Operational Programme *Education and Lifelong Learning*, which is part of the Greek National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) 2007–2013, makes explicit reference to and foresees actions aimed at forging closer links between the educational system and the labour market, not least through the promotion of traineeships as part of university curricula (Priority Axis 4).³⁴

More recently, in response to the crisis and because of the proven effectiveness of schemes which link education with the world of work, Greece also introduced or expanded training schemes which promote workplace learning experiences (e.g. traineeships). In particular, such schemes were extended in Greece to cover high skilled young people, including students and graduates who were hit hard by the crisis (European Employment Observatory, 2010; Employment Committee, 2011).

Regulatory Framework

A particular type of traineeship in Greece has been the 'stage' which was associated with a succession of STAGE programmes whose explicit aim was to familiarise young people with the world of work across the board. These programmes, first introduced in 1998, acquired over time a chequered history and questionable reputation. The initial aim was to allow young people to develop links with the labour market and acquire work experience as an effective way of enhancing their employability, and thus, combating youth unemployment (Fakou, 2010). In particular, such traineeships were defined in Article 20 of Law 2639/1998; were co-ordinated by Hellenic Manpower Employment Organization (OAED); and were financed by both national and European (ESF) sources. The initial target groups of these schemes were primarily HEI and TEI graduates. Over the years, there were successive

³³ Historically, in Greece one has placed a much higher value on university as opposed to vocational education. For example, according to Cedefop, about 7 out of 10 apply for university entry each year (Cedefop, 2003)

³⁴ This OP's total Co-funded Budget from the EU amounts to €2,058,000,000, of which €1,440,000,000 is from Community Resources (ESF) and €618,000,000 from National Resources

STAGE programmes and encompassed a wider number of target groups, including those with upper-secondary education. Their duration initially ranged between six and 36 months, the first of which was devoted to their familiarisation with the working environment and theoretical training, while the remaining ones were devoted to the acquisition of knowledge and practical work experience in the chosen field of studies. The trainees (called 'stagers' or 'stagiaires') were covered in terms of social security contributions.

In the face of mounting criticism, and legal action, in November 2009 the programme was discontinued and a new one with similar aims was launched in 2010 ('*Work Experience Programme for New Labour Market Entrants, aged 16-24*'). This programme, the successor to the STAGE programme, was introduced by Law 3845/2010 Article 2 paragraph 8 and was officially launched by the Hellenic Manpower Employment Organization (OAED) on 29th October 2010.³⁵ This new programme seeks to address the plethora of criticisms which were levelled at the previous generations of STAGE programmes. For example, it restricts traineeships only to the private sector and provides full social security protection and minimum pay for trainees (more details are given in the relevant Section).³⁶

Case/Soft Law in relation to Case Study Traineeships

It is worth noting that a growing volume of case or soft law has started to accumulate as regards certain types of traineeships, most notably traineeships undertaken under the old STAGE programme. Specifically, the successive renewals of traineeship contracts which took place in many cases under this programme, meant that the length of one's traineeship (stage) in the public and municipal sectors could last for years (instead of a limited period of up to 18 months as initially foreseen). In a number of court cases brought in by trainees and their associations, Greek courts, e.g. The Athens Court of First Instance (Department of Temporary Measures Procedure) have decreed that, if one is employed as a trainee for a significant period of time, this cannot be considered a traineeship with a learning focus but proper employment. For example, as was mentioned in the first STAGE-related Court Decision (No 6920/2010):³⁷

'It is not possible to regard as a traineeship the lengthy period of employment of trainees who were assigned tasks normally performed by regular staff and met fixed and permanent needs of the employer. Instead, such appointments should be regarded as employment proper and, as a result, be accompanied by all the necessary provisions in relation to compensation, pensions, health insurance, etc.'

In passing this judgement the Court also drew on the decision of the European Court of Justice of 23 April 2009 which ruled on a controversial issue regarding contract workers in the Greek public sector. More specifically, it decided, contrary to the previous Greek Supreme Court jurisprudence, that the courts do have the jurisdiction to decide on the true nature of an employment contract, including fixed-term contracts.³⁸ Following the 2010 Court Decision, there have been a number of other similar court decisions, which made a clear distinction between work-related practical experience ('traineeship' or 'mathiteia') and work, e.g. Court Decision 862/2011³⁹, Court Decision 2019/2011, etc. A number of other Court Decisions have focused on particular aspects of traineeships, e.g. pay, social security contributions, etc.

It is worth outlining the main demands of individual trainees and/or their associations who have sought judicial review, which is currently creating case/soft law:

³⁵ www.oaed.gr/Repository/FI_2026.file

³⁶ According to Law 32046/1032 (FEK B' 2343/16.11.2009) no young people could take part in the STAGE programme as implemented in the public sector and municipalities (Fakou, 2010)

³⁷ http://www.argolidablogs.gr/Peter_Pan/2010/09/10/%CE%A3%CF%85%CE%BC%CE%B2%CE%AC%CF%83%CE%B5%CE%B9%CF%82_stage_%CF%83%CF%84%CE%BF_%CE%94%CE%B7%CE%BC%CF%8C%CF%83%CE%B9%CE%BF

³⁸ <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/2009/10/articles/gr0910039i.htm>

³⁹ <http://www.perpataris.gr/?p=519>

1. request to receive social security and insurance coverage (and the relevant contributions to be paid to the relevant bodies), both retrospectively (i.e. since they started their traineeship) and for as long as they are employed as trainees;
2. the need to have their length of employment (as trainee) in the public sector recognised, especially since many had been working as trainees for years;
3. request, by those who had been working for over 24 months, to receive special points ('moria') which would allow them to be appointed as permanent employees in the public sector (since if they had been working for over 24 months, this could mean that they covered standard work-related needs and were not there for learning purposes – there were numerous precedents about this);
4. request to receive compensation based on the national minimum wage (as opposed to the STAGE-related compensation which was lower).⁴⁰

The above discussion notwithstanding, it is worth adding that, according to some of our informants, the case law relating to this type of traineeships has recently started to change, in that it is now less certain that the judges will find in favour of trainees, especially those recruited after 2003. Before 2003, if one was employed for more than 18 months, one was entitled to a permanent contract. As a result of Laws passed in 2004 and 2005 (and in conjunction with Peponis Law of 2190/1994), for one to secure a permanent position as a civil servant, one has to successfully pass the civil service exams administered by the Supreme Council for Civil Personnel Selection (ASEP).⁴¹

Organisation of Traineeship under Study, Relevant Stakeholders and their Role

Both the old (STAGE) and the new Work Experience programmes are co-ordinated by the Hellenic Manpower Employment Organization (OAED) which is the national public employment services body. OAED is the Intermediary Management Agency and Co-ordinating body of this programme and has a tripartite structure. Its Administration Board (Board of Governors) is responsible for deciding the ways in which the Greek government's employment and social security policies will be implemented and for approving the decisions of LAEK (Special Fund for the Employment and Vocational Training).⁴²

Although the tripartite structure has been praised, some of our informants raised concerns that the need for compromise as regards the terms and conditions associated with the new Work Experience programme may have led to some inflexibility, cumbersome procedures and/or relatively onerous employer eligibility conditions. For example, because of concerns expressed by social partners, notably the trade unions, the previous programme had much stricter firing limits requirements, i.e. eligible employers should not have fired any staff for at least the preceding 12 months. In contrast, in the new Work experience programme this limit has come down to 3-6 months, which increases the number of eligible employers.

Funding & Resource Allocation

Since their introduction in 1998 all the STAGE programmes in Greece have been co-funded by the ESF and national funding sources. Indeed, with considerable ESF support, there has been a major policy push in promoting traineeships as an effective way of easing the

⁴⁰ <http://e-elftheria.com/?p=2418>

⁴¹ ASEP is an independent authority responsible for verifying the proper and impartial implementation of the provisions on civil service staff hiring, www.asep.gr

⁴² The formation of the Administration Board which is based on the principle of the tripartite representation aimed at facilitating the dialogue between the State and the social partners. To this end, OAED's Administration Board comprises the OAED President; five representatives of the Government; four representatives of salaried employees (Greek General Confederation of Labour workers) from whom one is appointed as a Vice President; two OAED employee representatives; and five representatives of the employers (Federation of Greek Industries, National Confederation of Greek Trade, General Greek Confederation of Craft Producers), from whom one takes the other place of the Vice President of the Administration Board, <http://pesmonitor.eu/Database/DatabaseNew.aspx?Lang=EN&PES=10&Topic=3&Content=10>

school-to-work transition through a number of programmes, notably the (both old and new) STAGE programmes. It is worth noting that the succession of STAGE programmes introduced the concept of the 'trainee-stagiaire' which was quite novel for the Greek labour market because the young person concerned was undertaking a traineeship not as part of their studies, or as part of the mandatory professional post-graduate training associated with certain professions, e.g. law, medicine, education/teaching, etc.

The total funding available for the period 2010-2012 for the new Work Experience Programme for New Labour Market Entrants (launched in October 2010) is €53,940,400 and is broken down as follows:

Year	Funding (€)
2010	9,058,500
2011	26,481,900
2012	18,400,000
TOTAL	53,940,400

Source: Government Gazette of the Hellenic Republic (FEK), Vol 2, No 1655, 18.10.2010

It is worth noting that this programme (as well as its predecessor) is supported as part of OP Human Resources Development 2007-2013 (Thematic Priority Axis 3: 'Facilitating Access to Employment') (Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare, 2006). Most of the funding (80 per cent) comes from the ESF.

Description Of Traineeship Under Study

Content and Practices related to the Traineeship under Study

As mentioned earlier, there has been a succession of STAGE programmes. For example, the previous government introduced a STAGE programme (now discontinued) which offered placements of up to 18 months to secondary and tertiary education graduates. Secondary education graduates received an allowance of €25, while higher education graduates received an allowance of €30. Participants received some medical insurance, but not full social insurance coverage. Most of the funding (80 per cent) came from the ESF and around 30,000 to 35,000 trainees ('stagers' or 'stagiaires') were on the scheme in any given year.

According to this scheme, a contract between the organisation employing the young person and the Hellenic Manpower Employment Organization (OAED) was signed detailing respective obligations. Interestingly, the STAGE programme used to initially involve both public and private sector placements. Although its initial aim was to provide traineeship opportunities primarily in the private sector, it ended up employing trainees mainly in the public sector, including the health sector and tax authorities, as well as regional and local authorities (in contravention to the original plan). This was due to the fact that, due to budgetary constraints and the lengthy public sector recruitment process, these sectors recruited trainees to quickly address the issue of staff shortages (Karadinos, 2010; Kopsini, 2009; SYSDEM expert, 2008). This expansion of public sector placements led to accusation of abuses by public bodies which were, allegedly, using STAGE trainees as cheap labour when budget constraints meant that they were unable to recruit full-time members of staff.

As a result, this programme was discontinued in 2009 and replaced by the new Work Experience Programme for New Labour Market Entrants which, launched in 2010, sought to address all the deficiencies of the old STAGE programme. Indeed, OAED's President, who was responsible for terminating the old STAGE programme, stressed the fact that the way

the new programme was designed deliberately sought to put a stop to the abuses and exploitation which characterised the old programme. First, under the new programme, work experience placements can take place only in the private sector. Second, their duration is strictly defined, i.e. 6-12 months and they cannot be renewed. Third, there is a formal 'work placement/traineeship' contract which both clearly delineates the role and responsibilities of all parties involved and specifies the terms and conditions for the participating young people. As was pointed out by some informants, because there is no overarching traineeship-related legislative framework as such, this contract is a special form of employment or service contract (as opposed to being a pure 'traineeship' contract). Fourth, as far as trainee's terms and conditions are concerned, young people are now entitled to full social security coverage and to compensation equal to 80 per cent of the National Minimum Wage.

Finally, the new programme also outlines clear and robust quality assurance procedures, so that contrary to the old STAGE programme, young people are placed in quality work experience placements as opposed to being exploited and used as 'cheap' labour. Specifically, OAED is responsible for the quality assurance of the programme, including the vetting of the participating private sector companies and the regular in situ inspection for the duration of the work placement (see relevant section below).

Traineeship Contract and Trainee's Terms and Conditions

As mentioned earlier, the new Work Experience Programme for New Labour Market Entrants, aged 16-24, launched in 2010 by Law 3845/2010 Article 2 paragraph 8, seeks to address the plethora of criticisms of the previous generations of STAGE programmes by introducing specific legal provisions aimed at setting and safeguarding some minimum trainee-related terms and conditions. Specifically, it foresees the following:

1. (the signing of a 'traineeship/work placement' contract;
2. 100 per cent subsidization of both employer and employee social security contributions⁴³;
3. the payment of trainees of 80 per cent (€591 gross earnings) of the National Minimum Wage (as defined by the General National Collective Agreement, i.e. €740);
4. the work placement should take place only in private sector companies;
5. its duration should be 6-12 months;
6. the traineeship contract cannot be renewed (but companies are given specific incentives to offer the trainee an employment contract at the end of the traineeship – see below).

Crucially, the new programme also provides strong incentives for companies to keep on the trainees and convert the work experience contract into an ordinary employment contract by continuing to subsidise 70 per cent of both employer and employee social security contributions for another 12 months, provided that the company keeps the trainee on for extra 6 months after this subsidy runs out. In other words, the private sector employer receives 100 per cent subsidy of the trainee's social security contributions during the 6-12 months of the traineeship and 70 per cent of the trainee's social security contributions for another 12 months, if the trainee is given a proper employment contract and is also kept on for another 6 months after the 6-12 month traineeship and the extra 12 months.

Significantly, the new programme also seeks to safeguard against the risk of employers laying off existing staff and replacing them with 'subsidised' trainees. Specifically, companies which have reduced their staff in the last six months before expressing an interest to participate in the programme are not eligible to do so. In addition, in order to benefit from this programme, employers should maintain all existing staff. Finally, the maximum subsidies a single employer can receive over the three years of the programme should not exceed €200,000.

⁴³ These include contributions related to pensions, health insurance and occupational health and safety – IKA ETAM

The specific target group of the programme are unemployed young people aged 16-24 who, *inter alia*, have not worked in the company in the last 12 months before that particular organisation joined the programme. In addition, they should not have accumulated social security contributions corresponding to more than 150 days. As part of the new pensions provisions, the 12-month duration of traineeship will be included in one's pensionable years.⁴⁴ This last provision is a direct response to a major STAGE-related criticism, where young people would undertake traineeships in the public and municipal sector for years, but without this protracted period being recognised as pensionable time.

Quality Assurance Mechanisms

The new Work Experience Programme for New Labour Market Entrants, the successor to the STAGE programme, outlines clear and rigorous quality assurance procedures. Specifically, the Hellenic Manpower Employment Organization (OAED) which is the Intermediary Management Agency and Co-ordinating body of this programme is responsible for the quality assurance of the programme, including the vetting of the participating private sector companies and the regular in situ inspection for the duration of the traineeship. Indeed, in order to follow the way traineeships are implemented by companies, OAED staff will compile a dossier for each of the participating companies where, *inter alia*, they will keep the regular in situ reports prepared by the OAED inspectors. These inspections take place every quarter.

Although the quality assurance mechanisms for the new programme are quite comprehensive, they have also given rise to some criticism. Specifically, according to some informants, the cumbersome and bureaucratic administrative and quality assurance procedures associated with the programme may account, at least in part, for its low employer take-up.

Related to this is the fact that, according to some informants, the OAED quality assurance inspection involves not only the young person in the work placement, but also all the staff working for that particular employer. In other words, OAED inspectors check that the employer complies with all labour law regulations, including the payment, as appropriate, of social security contributions for all staff (not only for the trainee). According to some of our informants, this may, in turn, act as a disincentive for employers.

Numerical/Quantitative Data

As far as the STAGE programme is concerned, available figures vary wildly. In its initial inception it was expected that in any given year there would be 30,000-35,000 young people (called 'stagers' or 'stagiaires') undertaking a stage. However, estimates published in various documents, including the press and other grey literature material, put the number of trainees between 60,000 and 100,000 (Kopsini, 2009). According to the SYSDM expert, during 2008 and 2009 the numbers of trainees in some of the various STAGE programmes in operation in the public and municipal sectors were as follows:

1. 12,000 trainees in the STAGE programme in local authorities and in public services;
2. 1,182 trainees in the STAGE programme in Social Security Organisations, including IKA;
3. 1,500 trainees in the STAGE programme in the Ministry of Health and in social care units;
4. 569 trainees in the STAGE programme in public libraries (Karadinos, 2010).

The latest estimates put the number of trainees at 40,000 university graduates who, until the programme was discontinued in late 2009, were employed in public sector organisations and local authorities (Matsaganis, 2011).

⁴⁴ Kathimerini, 2/7/2010, http://news.kathimerini.gr/4dcgi/w_articles_economy_2_02/07/2010_406521

The new Work Experience Programme for New Labour Market Entrants, the successor to the STAGE programme, aims to provide, between 2010 and 2012, traineeships in the private sector to 10,000 young people aged 16-24.

Current Debate

Traineeships associated with the old STAGE programmes and, to some extent, those linked to the mandatory professional training concerning certain professions, notably legal traineeships have attracted a lot of criticism. Indeed, the issue of traineeships/ stages has been the subject of intense public debate in Greece. For example, the old STAGE programme, first introduced in 1998, acquired over time a chequered history and questionable reputation, especially as regards the potential for trainee exploitation. In many instances, these were also 'trapped' in a series of renewable 'stage' contracts, each lasting for about 18 months with an interruption of ten days between each renewal. The upshot of this was that there were young people employed as trainees under these contracts for years.

Their monthly gross earnings were very low (€430-€450), they were not insured for pension and were not entitled to holiday or sickness pay. They only had medical/ hospital coverage, for which the contribution was 7.45 per cent. Ironically, a large number of such trainees, i.e. with no social security/pension contribution coverage, were employed by IKA, which is by far the largest Social Security Organisation in Greece (Kopsini, 2009). Moreover, in contravention to the original aim of the programme which was to familiarise young people with the world of work in the private sector, these trainees were mostly employed in the public sector and municipalities.

Crucially, the way trainees were deployed in the public sector also contravened the spirit of the STAGE programme which was to familiarise young people with the world of work and contribute to their learning. Instead of learning work-related norms and routines and applying their knowledge in a field relevant to their own area of study/expertise, trainees were used to cover staff shortages due to budget constraints and a recruitment freeze in the public sectors (EEO/Karadinos, 2010). For example, according to data from the INE-GSEE Employment Institute, in 2007 of the 35,000 new public sector recruits, 18,000 were either on temporary or 'stage' contracts. In contrast, for the same period out of 49,000 new private sector recruits, only 5,000 were on temporary or 'stage' contracts.

Even more controversially, the recruitment process of trainees was prone to political patronage, which meant that those with access to politicians, including MPs and mayors, could hope to secure a 'stage' in the public sector. The expectation was that, once in the public sector even as a trainee ('stager' or 'stagiaire'), in due course and on the basis of successive contract renewals, one would eventually become a permanent public sector employee.

In addition, according to some of our informants, being a STAGE trainee entitled one to collect more points ('moria') which could then count in one's favour as part of the civil service exams ASEP exams. Specifically, compared to other civil service candidates, STAGE trainees would be awarded 50 per cent more points for the ASEP exams. It is worth pointing out here that, until recently, a public sector job was the dream of many young people thanks to the employment security and tenure combined with relatively good pay and working conditions of such an appointment.

Because of the large number of trainees who were undertaking these 'stages' for years and their poor learning content (they were filling in vacant posts of regular staff) and working conditions (e.g. no social security coverage, low pay, no entitlement to holiday or sick pay, etc), a social movement of trainees emerged, with the help of social media. As has been mentioned, the way the old STAGE programme was implemented which used trainees for work activities normally undertaken by regular staff compromised (if not minimised) the learning dimension of its original aim. This, in turn, blurred the boundaries between the

status of 'trainee/student' and that of 'employee' and created a need among trainees ('stagers' or 'stagiaires') to fight for their rights as employees and not as 'trainees'. At the same time, it created the need among them to look for a professional identity and for recognition of their work (as opposed to the training they received) (Fakou, 2010).

Indeed, the extent of the phenomenon of the deployment of trainees ('stagers' or 'stagiaires') in the public/municipal sector has been so great that it has led to the emergence of a very active and vocal social movement which was expressed, *inter alia*, through protests, strikes and legal prosecutions in the Greek Courts (Fakou, 2010).

Moreover, because of the large number of trainees ('stagers' or 'stagiaires') working in specific public and municipal sector organisations all over Greece, 'stagers associations' have also been set up, with the aim to fight for the rights of trainees, including the right to become a permanent public/municipal sector employee in due course (on the basis of legal precedent and length of service).⁴⁵

Such associations have been set up at both organisational/ institutional level, e.g. Association of Stagers at the Hellenic Manpower Employment Organization (OAED), Association of Stagers at IKA, the largest Social Security Organisation, etc., and at regional level, e.g. Association of Stagers in Karditsa Region, Association of Stagers in Thessaloniki's Municipalities, etc. These associations are very vocal and active in fighting for the rights of trainees, while they have also been involved in a number of court cases and protests in relation to such issues. Since the abolition of the old STAGE programme in November 2009, and the attendant loss of employment and the prospect of securing a permanent job in the public/municipal sector, these associations are particularly active in both debates around the rights and future of trainees and related protests.

The way the old STAGE system was implemented over a long period in Greece also attracted the opprobrium of the European Commission following a number of interventions by concerned Greek MEPs.⁴⁶ In view of the above severe criticisms, including the intervention of the Commission, in November 2009 it was decided not to renew the contracts related to the STAGE programme.

In addition, it has been the subject of lively debate among all political parties in Greece. It has also been highly criticised by the trade unions, including the Greek Confederation of Greek Workers (GSEE). For example, GSEE criticised the old STAGE programme for employing trainees with no social security coverage. As its President pointed out (cited in Kopsini, 2009):

'It's a scandal that IKA, the largest Social Security Organisation, itself employs 1,100 trainees who themselves have no social security coverage.'

Even worse, according to the President of the IKA's own Employee Association, out of the 3,500 vacant 'organic' positions at IKA, 1,500 were covered by trainees performing work-related tasks usually undertaken by regular staff.⁴⁷

In summary, although the initial specification of the old STAGE programme was to provide young people with initial work placement experience (in the private sector) for a limited period of time, its operation over time was severely distorted and even politicised. As has been pointed out (Matsaganis, 2009):

⁴⁵ Association of Stagers at the Hellenic Manpower Employment Organization (OAED), <http://stageoaed.blogspot.com/>; Association of Stagers at IKA, the largest Social Security Organisation, <http://ikastage.blogspot.com/>; Association of Stagers at the Farmers' Insurance Organisation/OGA, <http://someteiostageoga.blogspot.com/>; Association of Stagers in Karditsa Region, <http://stagekarditsas.blogspot.com/>; Association of Stagers in Achaia Region, <http://achaiastage.ning.com/>; Association of Stagers in Thessaloniki's Municipalities, <http://agonistikiprotovoulia.wordpress.com/tag/stage/>

⁴⁶ European Parliament, 30.10.2009, <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=WQ&reference=P-2009-5452&language=EL>

⁴⁷ European Parliament, 9.2.2009, <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=WQ&reference=E-2009-0643&language=EL>

'The European logic of stages was the acquisition of work experience by young people through work placements for a limited period of time in the private sector. The Greek adaptation meant that stages were subsidised under-employment in the public sector of young people who were selected with non-transparent criteria. All these young people had the expectation of becoming permanent public sector employees in due course.'

Effectiveness of Case-studied Traineeship: Outputs and Results

According to our informants, there is a dearth of robust evaluation studies about the real impact of active labour market and youth-related policies in Greece. In contrast, because of the significant ESF co-funding associated with public employment and training programmes, existing evaluation studies are primarily monitoring and implementation reports focusing on inputs (e.g. number of participants at the start), budget absorption, policy process, etc.

In any case, according to our informants, recent figures related to the new Work Experience programme mentioned earlier, show that employers are reluctant to take on young people, even when there is a heavy (70-100 per cent) subsidy of the relevant social security contributions. Indeed, the new Work Experience Programme for New Labour Market Entrants is characterised by the lowest absorption rate of all programmes aimed at employment and training. Specifically, since the start of the programme on 29th October 2010 and until mid March 2011, companies have taken on only 1,217 young people out of the total of 10,000, i.e. 12.2 per cent.⁴⁸ More recent figures provided by the office of the OAED's President after the case study interview showed that, as of 9th November 2011, 1,688 companies had applied and 448 young people were recruited.

According to the President of OAED which is responsible for running the new Work Experience programme there are a number of reasons for this low take-up by employers. One is the severe economic crisis and ensuing depression which makes employers reluctant to take on young people, not least because the volume of business is much reduced and they do not want to have to pay even the lower minimum wage (foreseen in the new Work Experience programme). Indeed, all informants stressed that one of the major factors which has had an adverse impact on the programme's take-up is the disastrous economic situation in Greece which has led to a total recruitment freeze (despite the wage and/or social security subsidisation).

The second reason is the high degree of undeclared or 'unsecured' labour in Greece which, in some sectors, can be as high as 50 per cent. This, in turn, means that the subsidisation of a young person's social security contributions does not constitute a strong incentive for employers. In addition, employers may wish to eschew the quality assurance/control procedures linked to such programmes which, *inter alia*, involve quarterly in situ inspections by OAED inspectors. Crucially, these inspections are not restricted only to the trainee(s), but can cover all the staff employed in the participating company, i.e. the organisation's compliance with labour law regulations, including social security contributions.

According to the informant from one of the major private employment agencies, one of the reasons for the low take up lies in the extensive conditionality associated with the programme's terms and conditions. In her view, the various conditions imposed on the participating employers, including the requirement that they have not fired staff in the last six months and to keep on all existing staff, can act as a major impediment in encouraging greater employer take-up. As was explained, the requirement that participating employers should not have fired staff over a period of months preceding their participation in the programme acts as a disincentive as does the requirement to keep the young people on for a period of time after the subsidy is removed. In particular, the no firing requirement in the preceding period is seen as quite unreasonable especially within the context of the severity of the current economic crisis in Greece.

⁴⁸ <http://www.enet.gr/?i=news.el.article&id=258900>

Finally, a number of informants mentioned the actual Greek economy and labour market profile can also account for the low take-up of this programme, with SMEs, notably micro and family businesses, dominating the economy. Specifically, the overwhelming majority (98 per cent) of firms in Greece employ fewer than 10 employees.⁴⁹ Yet, SMEs account for about 85 per cent of total employment (Ntotsika, 2011). Given the fact that SMEs are generally more reluctant to take on trainees across the EU, the low take-up of this traineeship programme may be attributed to their dominant role in the Greek economy. Related to this is the large proportion of family-run businesses which, if required, would recruit/train a family member, as opposed to taking part in the programme.

As far as the old STAGE programme is concerned, despite the large numbers of young people involved, because of the deviation from its original aims and its faulty implementation, it has been widely and comprehensively criticised, and even, discredited. Instead of providing young people with the opportunity to become familiar with and apply their skills and knowledge in a real work setting, preferably in the private sector, stagiaires were used as 'cheap' substitute for regular staff in the public and municipal sectors, with low pay of €430-€450/month, and no social security coverage or holiday/sickness pay (Fakou, 2010; Kopsini, 2009).

The above criticism of the STAGE programme notwithstanding, it is worth adding feedback from some of our informants which pointed to some positive aspects of that programme. Specifically, a number of interviewees felt that the fact that trainees were given tasks associated with regular employment was not necessarily to the detriment of the trainee, since such tasks were directly relevant to work requirements. As such, their learning content was rich and helped equip the young people with valuable work-related skills and knowledge. That said, they were all critical of the poor trainee terms and conditions as well as with the successive renewals of 'stage' contracts associated with the old programme.

Conclusions

Although the evaluation results of these programmes are mixed, our informants identified a number of programme features which are more likely to contribute to their success and effectiveness. These include the following:

1. the combination of 'real' work experience with training which can effectively ensure a smooth transition into the labour market;
2. the opportunity they provide to adapt the knowledge and skills of young people to actual employer requirements;
3. the provision of a well-organised and structured company placement which combines an individualised action plan and on the job training and is also quality assured rigorously by OAED;
4. the effective combination of different interventions (training and wage subsidies); etc.

They also pointed out some features of the new programme which sought to address the weaknesses of the old STAGE programme, and thus, mitigate the risks of exploitation, substitution and deadweight. For example, the need to safeguard against employers firing existing staff and replacing them with 'cheaper' subsidised young people has led to the programme requiring that participating employers should not have fired staff in the preceding six months and should keep on all existing staff.

⁴⁹ Of these, 96 per cent employ less than 5 employees and a further 2 per cent employ 5-9 employees

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National Report on Traineeships Spain

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1. Traineeships as part of Member State's Youth Policy Measures

1.1 Overview of current situation of young people and traineeships as part of youth policy measures

1.1.1 Young people in the labour market

Spain's labour market situation is currently strongly influenced by the economic crisis, which hit the overall population and especially the young generation. The employment situation after the economic crisis (but not only since then) is characterised by high levels of part-time, temporary contracts, low wages, undeclared work and unpaid extra hours, leading to a vulnerable position especially among the young who have difficulties gaining stable and fairly paid jobs. Furthermore, in recent years Spain has moved towards introducing further flexibility in the labour market in order to combat unemployment, which especially affects new entrants, while the adult employed are more protected.¹

Statistical data indicate a general negative trend for employment and unemployment of young people, characterised by a massive youth unemployment, which does not only affect marginalised groups, but is relevant for all educational levels and in all young age groups. Since the beginning of the crisis the employment rate of young people (15-24 age group), already at a low level compared to other European Member States, decreased from 36 per cent in 2008 to 24.9 per cent in 2010. Most of the job losses due to the crisis were recorded among workers in temporary jobs, and many of them were young. Nearly half of 29 year olds are employed with a temporary contract. From 2008 to 2011 the total unemployment rate of the 15-24 age group increased from 24.6 per cent (2008) to 41.6 per cent (2010), and to 46.4 per cent at the end of 2011².

The economic crisis has also significantly worsened the prospect of the young generation through an increase in part-time work, which is less protected against unemployment. Young people neither in employment nor in any education or training (NEET) account for 11.4 per cent of the 15-19 age group and 17 per cent in the age group of 20-24 year olds (2008). As indicated in a survey by the Spanish Statistical Institute most of those people are however motivated to work (76 per cent), but are unemployed or do not expect to find a job.³

The full minimum wage (*Salario Mínimo Interprofesional*) is paid from the age of 16, which is also the age at which compulsory education ends. However, for those on training schemes for the unemployed a reduced minimum wage can be paid, which is 75 per cent of the full rate⁴.

Overall, Spain also faces problems in educational attainment, as the school drop-out rate is high and the numbers of graduates in secondary school and medium-grade vocational training are lower than the EU27 level. Participation in education for the age group 15-24 is lower in Spain (56.3 per cent) than in the EU27 (60.1 per cent), about 32 per cent of 18-24

¹ ILO (2010), The impact of the economic and financial crisis on youth employment: Measures for labour market recovery in the European Union, Canada and the United States. By Niall O'Higgins, Employment Working Paper No. 70.

² EUROSTAT http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/employment_unemployment_ifs/data/database

³ European Commission (2011), Youth employment measures 2010.

⁴ Croucher, Richtard (2011), The Impact of minimum wages on the youth labour market. <http://www.lowpay.gov.uk/lowpay/research/pdf/CroucherWhiteFinal.pdf>.

year olds have not completed secondary education (compared to 15 per cent in the EU)⁵. However, an obstacle is high early-school leaving, which is among the highest in the EU. In 2010 about 28.4 per cent left school (compared to 30.8 per cent in 2005), while in the EU 27 it was 14.1 per cent in 2010 (15.8 in 2005). Participation in formal and non-formal education and training in Spain is also much lower than the overall EU27 level, 30.9 per cent compared to 34.9 per cent, while it was 39.7 per cent for the age group 25-34 (2007).

1.1.2 Measure/tools for young people

In the face of the long-standing high levels of youth unemployment in Spain, including graduate youth unemployment, a number of measures have been introduced in recent years.

In order to reduce the drop-out rate, the Plan to Reduce Early School Leaving (*Plan para reducir el abandono escolar*) was launched at the end of 2008. This plan foresaw the increase of regular vocational training places by 80,000 per year (up to 2012) to create new vocational training programmes, facilitate access, implement new certificates (which recognise informal knowledge) and provide guidance for the young⁶.

In the last decade more effort has been made to support entry-level vocational preparation programmes, such as the **Declaration for Social Dialogue** in July 2004, between the Government and social partners, or to improve vocational and educational training through the implementation of a National Qualifications and Professional Training System to better adopt international comparability of professional levels. The most important step however was the implementation of **National Vocational Training** programmes, lasting four years, to promote a variety of initiatives. The reformed system (starting in 2002 and especially since 2006) of vocational training aimed to better include those students who did not complete lower secondary school and have difficulty integrating into the labour market.

In Spain there are programmes and specific labour contracts to link education with work experience.

The *Escuelas Taller y Casas de Oficios* (Workshop School and Crafts Centre) programme offers training for young unemployed people under 25 years of age, followed by a work placement stage. For those over 25 years of age, there is a variety of programmes labelled *talleres de empleo* (Employment Workshops), which follow the same methodology.

There are specific labour contracts which link education with work experience: the training contract (*Contrato para la Formación*) and the traineeship contract (*Contrato en Prácticas*). Training contracts are for students who work in jobs related to their studies and they require that part of the working day must be devoted to training activities (apprenticeship), while the traineeship contracts are for recent graduates.

Currently, reforms to ensure that the education system meets the qualification needs of the labour market are being made in universities and in the VET system. Over the past three years a reform to help Spanish universities better adapt to the needs of the private sector has been taking place. The main elements of the reform focus on teaching methodology and learning content.

In recent years, the *becas* (*grant/internship*) has become a significant form of participation in the labour market as a result of their proliferation for providing access to the labour market among young graduates. They are mainly (but not only) devoted to university students or graduates. Numerous types of *becas* have been classified (see Table 1.1).

Spain is also very actively promoting traineeships abroad. The largest number of outgoing Erasmus students (studies and placements/traineeships) in 2009/2010 was from Spain.

⁵ http://www.forumlibertas.com/frontend/forumlibertas/noticia.php?id_noticia=15983.

⁶ González Gago, Elvira / del Río Hernández, Fernando (2010), EEO Review: Youth Employment Measures, 2010.

Spain is also participating in the Leonardo da Vinci (LDV) programme that promotes transnational mobility by helping people to gain a working or learning experience abroad. These have been expanded over the past years, for example through the Argo programme, which was extended from European to global level in 2009. Moreover, some Spanish regions and universities have introduced programmes promoting traineeships for young people as way of easing their entry into the labour market. These traineeships are often organised without an employment contract and are paid through a scholarship. An example is the Finnova Programme, in the region of Madrid, which aims at organising and financing traineeships for VET and university graduates in research departments of universities and other institutes.

The importance of participating in a vocational or traineeship activity abroad for Spanish young people is confirmed by the recent Eurobarometer survey. One in five (19 per cent) young people has stayed abroad for education and training purposes, compared to 14 per cent of the total (EU27 + Croatia, Iceland, Norway and Turkey). Of the Spanish respondents, 45 per cent said they had studied abroad as part of their higher education studies (43 per cent in total), while 21 per cent had lived abroad for a traineeship in a company or similar organisation during their higher education studies (26 per cent in total). As far as vocational education or training in a company or similar organisation is concerned, the figures is 14 per cent (21 per cent in total)⁷.

Participation in traineeship and education activities abroad is also considered important by employers, whereas the main asset for the new recruits is already having work experience. According to the recent Eurobarometer Survey, in Spain, graduate recruiters emphasised the importance of new employees having work experience. Moreover, about 27 per cent agreed considered it very important that new recruits had completed a traineeship abroad. The cooperation with higher education institutions is also considered to be very or rather important for the 56 per cent of the respondents in all companies considered. The survey also sought opinions about the best ways of cooperating with higher education institutions on recruitment. Roughly one in three (65 per cent) graduate employers said that one of the best ways of cooperating with higher education institutions on recruitment was their participation in traineeship programmes (52 per cent in total) and about a third (34 per cent) selected direct recruitment from schools (32 per cent in total)⁸.

Terms for traineeships for mandatory professional training vary by profession. Table 1.1 shows a description of the different types of *prácticas formativas*, who they are targeted at and the legislative framework (which is envisaged) for each of them.

⁷ Flash Eurobarometer (2011) 319b: *Education and Training, Mobility, Employment And Entrepreneurship. Youth On The Move* http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_319b_en.pdf

⁸ Flash Eurobarometer (2010) Employers' perception of graduate employability. http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_304_en.pdf

Table 1.1: Summary of main Traineeship Programmes - *prácticas formativas* (traineeship/internship) and subsidies (*becas*) in Spain

Traineeship Programme	Brief Description
<i>Traineeships which form an optional or compulsory part of academic and/or vocational study curricula</i>	
Traineeships in upper secondary school <i>Prácticas formativas en los ciclo formativo de grado medio y superior</i>	Mandatory traineeships in working centres (<i>Formación en Centro de Trabajo</i>) are those within formal education courses which are necessary to complete the programme and obtain the qualification (<i>ciclo formativo de grado medio y superior</i>). They are undertaken by young people aged 16-18 attending Intermediate Vocational Training (<i>Ciclos formativos de grado medio y superior</i>).
Traineeships in higher education <i>Traineeships in agreement of educational cooperation</i> <i>(Becas de Convenios de Cooperación educativa)</i>	Traineeships that are convened under an agreement between an educational institution, usually a university, and a firm or an organisation of companies, without a labour contracts (Grants (<i>becas</i>) provided by the firm (<i>Becas profesionales, Becas en empresa, Becas de formación</i>). The target is University students with at least 50% of the scholar credits acquired
<i>Research Traineeships</i> <i>(Becas de investigación)</i>	Stages, training or practice in research centres and companies, including all programmes for training in technical and scientific activities financed by MEC, Autonomous Community, universities, Public bodies, and devoted to graduate students. These traineeships are devoted to Research staff (<i>Formación de personal investigador – FPI</i>), University professors (<i>Formación de profesorado universitario – FPU</i>) and post doctorates.
<i>Traineeships as part of active labour market policies for unemployed (and in many cases low-skilled) people</i>	
<i>Traineeships as part of vocational and educational training (VET)</i>	Traineeships included in Vocational training courses aim at vocational preparation for the workplace. They are attended by the unemployed, included in the target of the Training for Employment Plans (<i>Plan de Formación para el Empleo</i>). Mostly attained in the Training Centre, but also in private firms (all economic sectors).
<i>Traineeships as part of vocational and educational training (VET)</i>	Traineeships included in Workshop School and Craft Centre (<i>Escuela taller y Casa de Oficios</i>). The target of these kind of traineeships are unqualified young unemployed people, aged 16-24, registered with the PES (Public Employment Service) with the same requirements as for the training contract (<i>Contrato para la formación</i>)
<i>Traineeships as part of vocational and educational training (VET)</i>	Traineeships included in Employment Workshop (<i>Talleres de empleo</i>), devoted to unqualified young unemployed people, aged over 25, registered with the PES with the same requirements as for the training contract (<i>Contrato para la formación</i>)

Traineeship Programme

Brief Description

<i>Traineeships in the open market</i>	
<i>Unilateral traineeship of private firm</i> <i>(Becas unilaterales de empresas privadas - sin convenios)</i>	Unilateral offers from private companies or their foundations to graduate students without an educational cooperation agreement with the academic centre and no labour contract (Becas profesionales, Becas en empresa, Becas de formación).
<i>Traineeship in Public Administration</i> <i>(Becas de Administraciones Pùblicas)</i>	Traineeship financed by the Public Administration for graduates (central administration, regional and local levels), without agreement with their university and no labour contract.
<i>Traineeship of collaboration</i> <i>(Beca de colaboración)</i>	Traineeship with Grants (Becas) for university students in the last year who, during the academic year, develop some form of work at university (Becas of MEC (Ministry of Education and Science) and Becas of University)
<i>Traineeship as part of mandatory professional training</i>	
<i>Mandatory Internship</i>	Stages, training or practice aiming at familiarisation & practical training within some professions, eg lawyers, teachers, architects, doctors, etc., devoted to young graduates in law, medicine, architecture, etc.
<i>Transnational Traineeship</i>	
<i>Erasmus</i>	Student mobility for placements enables university students at higher education institutions to spend a placement (traineeship/internship) of between 3 and 12 months in an enterprise or organisation in another participating country.
<i>Leonardo da Vinci</i>	Mobility actions enable people to travel abroad to have a learning or training experience in order to promote vocational education and training mobility in the European Union.
Trainees in initial vocational training	
Workers, freelance workers and the unemployed, graduated VET professionals	

2. Legislative Framework for Traineeships

2.1 Legal framework for and governance of traineeships

Spain has established a system of vocational training that is targeting those who did not complete lower secondary school, have difficulties in accessing VET or integrating into the labour market. The 2002 reform of the educational system, implemented through the Law on Vocational Education and Skills (*Ley Orgánica de Cualificaciones y de la Formación*

Profesional 5/2002, of 19 July – LOCE)⁹ aimed to better adapt vocational training to current needs. It especially aimed to address early school leavers, reduce the number of school dropouts among young people between 16 and 25 years of age and increase the number of young people in science, technology and 'new' professions¹⁰.

The legal framework of reference for the Spanish education system, as it is now in place, is the 2006 *Ley Orgánica de la Educación*, LOE (Act on Education), which after a five-year period of gradual implementation was completely in force by the academic year 2009/10. This law regulates the pre-university and university levels of vocational training. According to the law, education for adults should particularly pay attention to those in specific need of educational support. Professional training in the education system is also regulated by this law.

The programmes included in the **Training for Employment Plans** (*Formación para el Empleo*), which aim to foster the professional entry and re-entry of employed and unemployed people into the labour market by providing training and enterprise-promotion courses are regulated by the Royal Decree 395/2007.

Vocational Training falls under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education for IVET (initial vocational education and training) and the Ministry of Labour and Immigration for CVET (continuous vocational education and training), while the implementation is the responsibility of the Autonomous communities.

Central government is responsible for applying the National Plan for Workshop Schools, Craft Centres and Employment Workshops (organisation and management, subjects, accreditation or recognition of professional certificates). The government is also responsible for programming and managing the specific programmes set up by the National Public Employment Service (*Servicio Público de Empleo Estatal*) to train people with special training needs or who have difficulty finding employment. The implementation is carried out by the Autonomous Communities (except for the Basque Country and the cities of Ceuta and Melilla), which are in charge of establishing the curricula guidelines for each qualification¹¹. The direct management of the different types of vocational training is carried out through the local education departments (initial vocational training) and the local employment department (training for employment, both for employed and unemployed workers).

The **teaching centres** are then responsible for implementing this curriculum, drawing up annual programmes, contents, evaluation criteria and establishing the methodology. These are reviewed by the government, in order to guarantee that they are in line with the actual need for professional qualifications. The Autonomous Communities are responsible for assessing the vocational training modules.

2.1.1 Traineeships which form an optional or compulsory part of academic and/or vocational study curricula

Mandatory traineeships within formal education courses to complete education and obtain the qualification are present in the educational system of Spain (*ciclo formativo de grado medio y superior*).

Professional training in the education system is organised into three levels: Initial Professional Qualification Programmes which fall within the Mandatory Secondary Education; the Medium-Level professional training cycles, associated with the Second Stage of Secondary Education; and the Higher Professional Training Level, associated with university

⁹ <http://www.educacion.gob.es/mecd/legislacion/files/formacionprof.pdf>.

¹⁰ https://www.redtrabaja.es/es/portatrabaja/resources/pdf/informacion/publicaciones/monogra/TO5-EN_noviembre_2007.pdf.

¹¹ CEDEFOP (2009), VET in Europe – Country Report Spain. Refernet Spain.

studies¹². Within Vocational Educational Training (VET) the initial professional qualification programmes, intermediate level courses (medium-level training) and advanced level courses (higher-level training) include a **workplace training module** for a traineeship in a company or another organisation (**Formación en Centros de Trabajo, FCT**) during the last year. The contents are part of the plan designed jointly by the tutor from the education centre and the tutor from the workplace.

Education and work authorities, in collaboration with the local corporations and the social and economic agents, organise the Vocational Training provision. Intermediate Vocational Training provision is organised in 80 training cycles (*ciclos formativos*) classified into 22 trade sectors. These *ciclos formativos* consist of vocational modules with both theoretical and practical content, and can be of two types: those associated with a skill unit (the most specific modules) or those cross-curricular or basic (aimed to develop basic cross-curricular skills for professional competence in the corresponding training cycle). Furthermore, all cycles include a module on Vocational Training and Labour Guidance and another On-the-Job Training module. In addition, Vocational Training schools can offer, with the concerning authority's permission, training programmes made up from modules included in Vocational Training degrees or in the authorized vocational certificates (*certificados de profesionalidad*).

With the aim of making them more flexible, intermediate Vocational Training studies can be offered in a complete or partial manner, and be developed on-site or at a distance, or blended, in such a way that training can be combined with work activity or other responsibilities¹³.

To promote the mobility of students and improve their employment prospects Spain is currently designing and putting into effect a **national qualifications** framework for **higher education** to improve comparability of qualifications at the European level and take account of professional competences. To this aim, the higher educational system has been reformed, by also integrating programmes for traineeships abroad. The governmental 'National Agency for the Evaluation of Quality and Accreditation' (*Agencia Nacional de Evaluación de la Calidad y Acreditación, ANECA*)¹⁴ is supervising and evaluating this reform process within the Universities.

Traineeships in agreement of educational co-operation (*Becas de Convenios de Cooperación educativa*) are convened under an agreement signed between an educational institution, usually a university, and an organisation or private enterprise, in order to provide *external academic practices*. The first legislative act for the establishment of these agreements was the Royal Decree 1497/1981 on Educational Co-operation Programmes (updated in 1994 by Royal Decree 1845). Recently, the new R.D. 1707/2011 has regulated this kind of traineeship. In this case, the intention of the legislator was to establish links between the various universities and the labour market. The objective was to establish effective schemes to increase the training of a practical nature, with special attention to the work experience that people would be able to acquire, thereby facilitating a smooth transition between the education system and the labour market.

2.1.2 Traineeships as part of Active Labour Market Policies for unemployed (and in many cases low-skilled or even unskilled) young people

There are also traineeships that are included in activities of *Vocational Training For Employment*, with the aim of obtaining a corresponding qualification. These are vocational activities included in the **National Programme for Vocational Training and Entry into the Job Market** (*Plan Nacional de Formación Profesional e Inserción Laboral – Plan FIP*)

¹² http://formacion2020.net/webfoodfit/files/National_report_Spain_ENG.pdf.

¹³ Eurydice, National system overview on education systems in Europe – Spain, 2011 Edition (September 2011).

¹⁴ <http://www.aneca.es>.

and, since 2007, the **Training for Employment Plans** (*Formación para el empleo*), which are included in the training courses on offer in the initiative regulated by Royal Decree 395/2007.

Traineeships are also part of the **Workshop School and Craft Centre Programmes** (*Programas de Escuelas Taller y Casa de Oficios*) which target **young unemployed** people (aged 16 to 24 years old), and the **Employment Workshop** (*Talleres de empleo*) which addresses **young unemployed** people over 25 registered with the Public Employment Services and who meet the requirements to participate in a training contract (*Contrato para la Formación*).

These programmes are part of the **Training for Employment Plans** (*Formación para el empleo*), which aim to foster the professional entry and re-entry of unemployed people into the labour market by providing training and enterprise-promotion courses. The aim is to better address groups with greater difficulties integrating, such as the long-term unemployed, at the age of 18 (or with parental permission 16) by giving them the chance to obtain professional competencies (level 1 qualifications in the current structure of the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications - *Catálogo Nacional de las Cualificaciones Profesionales*, CNCP).

2.1.3 Traineeships in the open market

There are specific employment contracts which link education with work experience: the **Training Contract** (*Contrato para la Formación*) and the **Traineeship Contract** (*Contrato en Prácticas*). They are regulated by law and strictly connected with a labour contract, defined and regulated by law, with obligations by the employer to pay pension contributions. The obligations of the trainee and the company are formalised in the contract, as published by the Public Employment Service.

Training contracts are for students who work in jobs related to their studies and they require that part of the working day must be devoted to training activities (apprenticeship), while the traineeship contracts are for recent graduates.

The recent **Labour Market Reform** includes some measures to further promote the use of training contracts by extending the age limit for such contracts from 21 to 25 years old. Young workers will be entitled to unemployment benefit after a training contract job, while companies which offer such contracts are exempt from employer social security payments. According to available figures, the number of young people under traineeship and training contracts aged 16-29 has dropped from 167,900 in 2007 to 110,300 in 2010¹⁵. However, it is expected that, following the recent Labour Market Reform, numbers of young people on these contracts will increase.

The *traineeship* accompanied by a *grant* (*beca*) has become a significant form of participation in the labour market. They are mainly (but not only) devoted to university students or graduates. Numerous types of *becas* have been classified (see paragraph 2).

Unilateral traineeship of private firms (*Becas unilaterales de empresas privadas – Becas no convenidas*) are offered by private companies or their foundations to graduate students without an educational co-operation agreement with the academic centre. It is the company or the private organisation that unilaterally decides on both the offer of the traineeship and the associated working conditions.

Traineeships in Public Administration (*Becas de Administraciones Pùblicas*) are financed by the Public Administration (central administration, at regional and local levels) and are designed for graduates. Also in this case, an agreement with any educational

¹⁵ Gonzalez-Gago, E. et al. (2010). *EEO Review: Youth Employment Measures, 2010: Spain*, October.

institution is not envisaged. It is the Public Administration that unilaterally establishes and decides on both the offer of the traineeship and the associated working conditions.

These kinds of traineeships are offered by Public Administration and private firms according to specific regulatory norms or with no specific legislation. The Royal Decree 1543/2011¹⁶ regulates traineeships without labour contracts (*prácticas no laborales*) in firms for the first time. In particular, it specifies that traineeships without labour contracts will be solely for young unemployed people aged 18-25, registered at the Public Employment Services, with an official university degree or an intermediate or higher vocational training qualification. They must not have had a labour contract or other type of professional experience lasting more than three months in the same activity. These traineeships will be included in the R.D. 1493/2011 for inclusion in the RGSS (*Regime General de Seguridad Social*). This allows the trainees to accumulate limited pension contributions.

Depending on the type of practice offered, the legislation is different, but the traineeships have a common feature of a lack of clear legislative constraints. These gaps allow the traineeships to be used as a major tool for the job placement of young people and the main entry point into the labour market for groups with higher qualifications.

2.1.4 Transnational Traineeships

In recent years European Mobility projects have been extended to encourage people to gain practical work experience abroad. The National Public Employment Service (*Servicio Público de Empleo Estatal*, SPEE) also supports the Europass system, which has become quite extensive in Spain, especially among apprentices and recent graduates who are seeking employment abroad.

International traineeship programmes are also offered by the universities of different regions. These can be part of the Erasmus or Leonardo da Vinci (LDV) programmes, regulated by EU directives and managed by universities or national agencies.

2.1.5 Training as part of mandatory professional training

A number of professions require members to spend a period of time in practical work (*pasantía/interndado/práctica profesional*) as part of their qualifications, in particular lawyers, doctors, and architects are all required to undertake a period of work experience to obtain a qualification which allows them to practice. Regulation of professional traineeships is largely undertaken by professional bodies.

Definition of traineeships and trainees

There is no uniform legal definition of traineeship or trainee in Spain. The term *apprenticeship* is no longer used in Spain, as a result of legislative changes. Generally speaking, a trainee is considered to be a young person who is applying the skills and knowledge he/she has acquired from his/her studies in a work setting, thus gaining valuable work experience and adapting their skills and competences to actual employer and labour market requirements. The term used to denote all forms of work experience related to training, both vocational training in higher education and at university is ***práctica formativa***, which could be translated as *traineeship* or *internship*. There are different kinds of traineeship, depending on the different education entry levels or pathways for entering or connecting with the labour market.

Traineeships for young people can be strictly regulated by law, using a contract labour form (*contrato en práctica* or *contrato para la formación*) or can be integrated into specific formal

¹⁶ Real Decreto 1543/2011, de 31 de octubre, por el que se regulan las prácticas no laborales en empresas. <http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2011/11/18/pdfs/BOE-A-2011-18062.pdf>

education programmes (upper secondary school or at university level) or as part of vocational training programmes.

There are also a large number of *traineeships* offered by universities, Public Administration and private firms with specific regulatory norms or with no specific legislation. These kinds of traineeships can be accompanied by some form of subsidy or grant (*beca*). The term *beca* has to be considered as a type of connection or link between a person and any organisation (company, government, association, etc.) under which an exchange of labour occurs without any contractual relationship between both parties. These *traineeships* (*becas*) are work activities that are established through some form of subsidy, and not through an employment contract that results in a wage. These traineeships have a formative character in the sense of acquisition and improvement of professional skills at an early stage of entry into the labour market.

2.2 Legal provisions about aspects of traineeships

Traineeship-related legislation and/or regulations are aimed at specific target groups. There exists a distinction between compulsory and voluntary traineeships and these are subject to different regulations. Legal provisions for regulated traineeships envisage in particular the length of traineeships, the remuneration of traineeships and a written contract (*convenios*) setting out the formal obligations for the parties involved. The target groups are young people in vocational education or in higher education who undertake a traineeship, or those who have completed vocational training or university courses.

2.2.1 Traineeships which form an optional or compulsory part of academic and/or vocational study curricula

The Guidelines of the Organic Law for qualification and Vocational Education (*Líneas generales de la Ley Orgánica de Cualificaciones y de la Formación Profesional*) regulates and establishes the basic framework for professional training. According to this, the initial vocational education and training (IVET)¹⁷ for middle-level vocational training lasts between 1,300 and 2,000 hours (one and a half or two academic years) and includes a training in the workplace module of 300 and 700 hours¹⁸. This training is spread over one and a half or two academic years, although it commonly takes one and a half years. The training is made up of training courses for the different professional families established in the National Catalogue of Qualifications.

2.2.2 Traineeships as part of active labour market policies for unemployed (and in many cases low-skilled or even unskilled) young people

Training offered in the **Workshop schools and craft centres** (*Escuelas taller y Casas de oficios*) last one to two years, in the case of workshop schools, and one year in the craft centres. In both cases, the training modules are divided into two stages: a first stage of 6 months for training and a second stage until the end of the project duration, of 6 to 18 months for workshop schools, and 6 months for craft centres. For both, training contracts are applied (*contrato para la formación*)¹⁹.

Training offered in the **Employment Workshop** (*Talleres de Empleo*) lasts 6 months to one year. It is devoted to unemployed workers over 25 involved in work experience. This type of training involves completing work activity associated with occupational training, in order to obtain a professional qualification and supports labour market inclusion work. At the start of the Employment Workshop, participants sign employment contracts (*contrato para la*

¹⁷ ISCED 1, 2 and 3.

¹⁸ https://www.redtrabaja.es/es/portalttrabaja/resources/pdf/referNet/instit_framework.pdf.

¹⁹ http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/eu/pub/cedefop/vetreport/2009_CR_ES.pdf.

formacion) with the provider of the training and receive a wage equivalent to one and a half times the minimum wage.

2.2.3 Traineeships in the open market

The obligations of the trainee and the company are formalised in the terms of the Traineeship contract (*contrato en práctica*), as published by the Public Employment Service. This requirement is relevant for all forms of traineeship: those for universities, technical engineers, architects, technicians, and equivalent educational titles, where this experience was acquired no more than four years ago. This regulation establishes the requirements for formalising the traineeship contract, its duration, remuneration etc.

According to these requirements, the contract should include the name of the employment to be carried out, the duration of the contract and working activities to be carried out during the traineeship. This should be communicated to the Public Employment Service. The duration of the contract is from six months to a maximum of two years, according to the collective sectoral agreements. It is also possible to transform the contract into an unlimited working contract. Regarding remuneration, the contract states that payment, based on the collective agreements, are 60 per cent of the full salary (in the first year) to 75 per cent (in the second year) and will not be less than the minimum inter-professional salary²⁰. For workers with university degrees or medium to high vocational training, employers must provide training and certificates of professional achievement. The obligations of the trainees are related to the fulfilment of the working norms in the company, including working hours.

As far as the Training Contract (*Contrato para la formacion*), the duration of the contract is from six months to a maximum of two years, but may be extended to three years according to the collective sectoral agreements. The contract should include the name of the employment to be carried out, the duration of the contract and the work activities to be carried out during the traineeship. The firm must provide a tutor for the entire duration of the traineeship. This contract also envisages the participant carrying out a mandatory vocational activity in work time, preferably not in the work place, and certified at the end of traineeship by the firm itself. Remuneration is envisaged of not less than the minimum salary.

As far as the **traineeship** accompanied by grants (*becas*), the duration of the contract and the included conditions may vary greatly according to the various types of agreement (*convenios*), regulated by national laws (where minimum requirements are specified) but developed and improved according to the internal regulation of each school/university.

The *traineeships* offered by individual firms **are not regulated by law**, and the conditions are included in classified advertisements. These kinds of trainees do not have a specific recognised legal status in Spain and there is no mechanism acting as a financial incentive for the employment of young workers (such as autonomy allocation or employment bonus).

2.2.4 Training as part of mandatory professional training

The traineeships linked to **mandatory professional training** of certain liberal, technical and other professions, e.g. law, medicine, architecture etc. are also characterised by certain legal provisions which differ depending on the specific profession.

²⁰ <https://www.redtrabaja.es/es/portalttrabaja/resources/pdf/contratos/12practicass.pdf>
<https://www.redtrabaja.es/es/portalttrabaja/resources/pdf/contratos/12practicass.pdf>

2.2.5 Transnational traineeship

Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci (LDV) programmes enable students to spend a placement (traineeship) period in enterprises, training centres, research centres and other organisations in another participating country.

Erasmus placements enable students at higher education institutions to spend a placement (traineeship/internship) period between 3 months and 12 months in an enterprise or organisation in another participating country²¹. Prior to their departure, students are provided with a placement agreement (grant agreement) covering the placement period and signed between the student and his or her home higher education institution; a 'Training Agreement' regarding the specific programme for the placement period and a 'Quality Commitment' setting out the rights and obligations of all parties specifically for placements abroad. LDV mobility actions enable people to travel abroad to gain learning or training experience, through various types of actions:

1. People in Initial Vocational Training ('IVT') can do work-related training abroad. Participants can still be at school or college or in alternative VET schemes (apprentices).
2. People in the labour market ('PLM') actions enable people who have graduated in vocational training or higher education to complete work-related training abroad in order to improve their employment potential.
3. Professionals in vocational education and training ('VETPRO') can gain exchange experience abroad to improve their skills and knowledge.

Contents and duration differ among actions, but they are regulated by a quality framework and managed by National Agencies²².

3. Availability of and Access to Traineeships

3.1 Statistical data

The number of students in post-compulsory secondary education programmes (ISCED 3) in 2006 was about 1.11 million, of which 43 per cent (or 473,750) participated in the professional programme. In 2006/2007 the number of students in compulsory secondary education amounted to 1,834,685, while students in *bachillerato* were nearly 600,000.²³

In 2005/2006 the number of students participating in upper-level specific vocational education was 217,160 compared to 147,875 in 1999/2000. Data for 2003/2004 shows that about 588,000 people participated in some form of adult education, including 117,000 people in secondary education, 18,512 in the Workshop classrooms and 234,066 in non-formal learning activities. The age group 16-19 made up 21 per cent, the age group 20-24, 14.2 per cent, and 25-29 year olds 10.3 per cent (total 45.4 per cent).²⁴

The number of participants in advanced levels of vocational training increased until 2002/2003. While in 1997/98 the total number amounted to 79,900 pupils, it reached 230,900 in 2002/2003. Since then, the number of participants has slightly decreased, reaching approximately 215,230 in 2007/2008.

²¹ http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc894_en.htm.

²² http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/what_en.htm

²³ http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/eu/pub/cedefop/vetreport/2009_CR_ES.pdf

²⁴ Ministerio de Trabajo e inmigración (2007), Thematic overview of vocational education and training systems in Spain.

According to the National Statistical Institute in 2009 the total number of participants (aged 16 to 24) who finished their education in the employment workshops (*Escuelas Taller*) accounted to 2,761, of which most were aged 16 or 17 (1,363). The majority of participants were young men (2,012 or 72.8 per cent), while about one quarter (749) were young women.

An interesting trend, despite increasing unemployment during the years of the crisis, is the decline of the number of participants in **vocational training for the unemployed**. Data indicate that the number of participants aged up to 29 years declined from 122,356 in 2007 to 109,497 in 2008 and 94,901 in 2009. The decline was especially high for female and male participants below 20 years old, with a decline of more than 4,000 participants, with only 8,848 girls in 2009 (compared to 14,611 in 2007) and 12,730 young men (compared to 16,214 participants in 2007)²⁵.

As far as traineeship that takes place outside formal education, quantification is very difficult. As these are not characterised by a labour contract, they are not monitored and quantified by central government or statistical institute.

Nevertheless, a recent research report quantified some kinds of traineeship as previously defined. The most important and widespread kind of traineeship is the one envisaged by the **Agreement of educational co-operation** (*Becas de Convenios de Cooperación Educativa*) that has reached 150,000 people; and the **Unilateral offers from private firms** (*Becas non convenidas*), estimated around 36,000 in 2005²⁶, and are estimated around 30,000 per year. The **traineeships in Public Administration** are carried out by approximately 400 people per year.

International mobility is also becoming more popular in recent years. The total number of outgoing Erasmus student for studies and placements combined in 2009/10 was 31,158, an annual increase of 13.7 per cent on the previous year, and double the total number of Erasmus students in the 32 participating countries (7.4 per cent). From 2000/01 to 2009/10 almost 222,000 Spanish students have benefited from the Erasmus programme. Spain was also the most popular destination for Erasmus students in 2009/10 with 35,389 incoming students. As far as traineeships abroad, a total of 3,710 Spanish students undertook placements in 2008/09. This was an increase of 23.4 per cent on the previous academic year. On average, placements represented 11.7 per cent of all Erasmus student mobilities. Spain also received the highest number of incoming students for placement (6,061). The average duration of Erasmus student placement was 3.4 months, while the average monthly EU grant, decreased from €509 per month the previous year to €376 per month²⁷.

Spain is also participating in the Leonardo da Vinci (LDV) programme that promotes trans-national mobility by helping people to gain a working or learning experience abroad. The programme particularly supports initial vocational training for trainees, apprentices and students in vocational education and training; mobility in the labour market, with an emphasis on learning mobility for people with a vocational degree or university graduates, and mobility for vocational education and training (VET) professionals²⁸. In the period 2007-2009 Spain had 14,910 mobility projects planned, 9,610 of which had already been realised by the beginning of 2011. For the period 2010/11 a further 10,751 mobility projects were envisaged. Of the 2010/11 mobility projects 64.6 per cent referred to people in the labour market, 25.5 per cent related to people completing initial vocational training and the remaining 9.8 per cent were for VET professionals²⁹.

²⁵ Instituto nacional de Estadística (INE), Formación profesional para el empleo (FPE) <http://www.mtin.es/estadisticas/ANUARIO2009/FPE/index.htm>.

²⁶ MTAS, Estudio sobre el sistema de becas en la primera inserción y su relación con el empleo, 2006.

²⁷ http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc920_en.htm

²⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc82_en.htm

²⁹ http://ec.europa.eu/education/pub/pdf/vocational/leonardo15_en.pdf
http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/doc/stat/spain_en.pdf

3.2 Sectors where traineeships are prevalent

The type, range and profile of sectors where **traineeships** are more prevalent differ, to some extent, according to the specific type of traineeships (see Table 1.1 above).

Overall, the most common sectors in which traineeships can be found are business administration/management; engineering and construction; banking/accountancy; media/journalism; the public sector/administration and not for profit/third sector/NGOs.

Mandatory professional training through traineeships (either as part of the final years of studies, or immediate after graduation) is prevalent among the liberal and/or regulated professions, notably medicine, law, education/teaching, architecture, social work, etc.

3.3 Profile/Patterns of traineeships

There is a great variety of traineeships in Spain, ranging from those linked to the acquisition of practical work experience as part of study curricula or higher education institutions, and mandatory professional training in liberal and technical professions (see Table 1.1).

3.4 Recruitment process of and equity of access to traineeships

To gain entry to advanced level vocational training, a Bachillerato or a test is needed. The test is regulated by the Autonomous Communities and the social partners who are responsible for determining the content. This requirement is needed to prove that applicants are prepared and have the abilities related to the professional field which they will be entering. If students already have professional experience in this field no test is needed. The proportion of places in vocational training can be set by the Autonomous Communities, and if not enough places are available, students with Bachillerato are preferred.

The traineeship recruitment process, including its transparency, varies according to the type of traineeship. Traineeships linked to study curricula are characterised by a well-organised and relatively transparent recruitment process.

The type of traineeships which have been used widely in Spain are the *Unilateral traineeship of private firms*. There are concerns about how such traineeships are being accessed and how trainees are treated, the evidence about questionable employer practices refers mainly to traineeships taken up by young people on a voluntary basis in the open market, without any form of labour contract and/or agreement with university (e.g. *Unilateral traineeship of private firms* and the *Traineeship in Public Administration*).

As stated above, similar instruments are still widely used for the integration of young people into the labour market (*contratos para la formacion* and *contratos en practica*). However, for graduates and university students, take-up of these contracts is relatively low. For *contratos en prácticas*, this may be due to the fact that they are in direct competition with non-formal grants for university graduates (*becas no-convenidas*) that have been increasingly used in Spain as a way to fill regular job vacancies. For employers, it is likely that non-formal grants provide a more flexible screening device than training contracts – since they do not have a legal foundation, employers do not have to pay social security contributions and are not subject to employment protection legislation (unlike training contracts, which are subject to both).

There are cases where a young person might prefer a *beca* to a *contrato en práctica* because the former confers a higher *status* than the latter. While *contratos en prácticas* can be used to hire young people holding any tertiary qualification, *becas* are only open to young people who have followed the academic route and are assigned after a competitive selection process.

In contrast, the recruitment process (and its transparency) for the mandatory professional training of certain professions, eg law, medicine, architecture, is less clear. Access to such traineeships (as well as to employment opportunities more generally) relies heavily on one's informal and/or family networks and connections. This, in turn, raises serious issues about equity of access concerning traineeships.

3.5 Evolution of traineeships over time and impact of recent economic crisis on traineeships

Spanish young people under the age of 25 are still those most affected by increased unemployment as a result of the current financial crisis.

Because of the proven effectiveness of schemes which link education with the world of work, in addition to a major policy push for more apprenticeships, Spain has expanded training schemes which promote workplace learning experiences, notably traineeships. In particular, some of these schemes were extended to cover highly skilled young people, including students and graduates, who were hit hard by the crisis.

The use of traineeships in the Spanish labour market has begun to spread in the last 15 years. This is seen in all economic sectors and also in the Public Administration. These are forms of working activities that do not appear in the national statistics, because they are not regulated by a labour contract.

At the beginning of the nineties, traineeships were a phenomenon closely linked and almost limited to university research. The evolution and the characteristics of labour demand have led to their extension in all areas of the labour market, most of the time with the allocation of a grant (*beca*) as compensation.

Due to the high rates of youth unemployment of the eighties, the society of Spain has tended to justify any kind of tool that brings young people work, even an unqualified job or if the job becomes just a professional training activity.

The economic crisis has increased the use of temporary contracts, and therefore the use of traineeships (*becas*), mainly in the open market and without regular contracts in all economic sectors and also the public sector.

Today, traineeships in the open market are one of the **main ways of inclusion for young people** with university degrees, which constitute almost one third of young people in our country.

That is, they are subject to a 'selection process' for months, or even years, perhaps in response to the long-standing demand of employers to increase the trial period for young people.

3.6 Financing of traineeship

In Spain provision of public funding to finance and support traineeships is envisaged. This is particularly important for the traineeship at the end of university (financed by **Ministry of Education** or by the university).

Other funds are aimed at lowering the cost of higher education through provision of financial support in vocational education, supporting the unemployed to undertake vocational traineeships, supporting professionals into post graduate training, and enhancing the participation or return to training amongst disadvantaged groups.

The vocational training system is financed by the public funds of the Spanish **Ministry of Education** from the Spanish government and is supported by the **European Social Funds (ESF)**.

Initial vocational training is financed from public funds and supported by private institutes, while the National Public Employment Training Programme (the Workshop schools and also the Apprenticeship Centres) are supported by the vocational training dues and the ESF through the Employment Promotion multi-regional operative programmes.³⁰ The funds are managed by the Autonomous Communities.

Equally, the **Workshop School and Craft Centre** (*Escuela Taller y Casa de Oficios*) and the **Employment Workshops** (*Talleres de empleo*) are co-financed by ESF.

There are several sources for financing traineeships for university graduates. These include the Leonardo da Vinci programme, ARGO, FARO, and INTEGRANTS. INTEGRANTS is financed by the Ministry of Education and Science. ARGO is an international traineeship placement project - '*Programa ARGO Global de Movilidad para Graduados 2009*', on which students receive financial support. The support depends on the area, ranging from six months in Europe to ten months in the United States and Asia. From 2009-2012 about 840 traineeships were supported (100 in the USA, 60 in Canada and 100 in Asia). This includes insurance costs and a monthly sum to cover expenses.³¹ The FARO global programme, also aimed at university students during their last year of studies, provides support for international traineeships in companies, foundations or institutions.³²

Some traineeship programmes are also financed **by the Autonomous Communities**. For instance, the Programme CLAVE from the Authority Castilla y Leon provides financing to young students at risk of social exclusion. These are co-financed by the European Social Fund, and are provided by the Public Employment Services. This programme is targeted at students of engineering, advocacy or architects at the regional universities, who are currently unemployed.

Financial support is given to unemployed people who participate in vocational training activities. They can receive assistance for transport, meals and accommodation, as well as support to care for children under 6 years of age or dependents³³.

Transnational mobility within the Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci (LDV) programmes are financed by the respective programmes and co-ordinated by the National Agency, and not paid for by the employer. Most of the outgoing students finance their mobility from grants offered by their educational institution.

As far as the Erasmus programme, the budget for 2009/10 was €43,192,000, a slight reduction on 2008/09 (€50 million)³⁴.

Spain was also granted €36,831,000 for the Leonardo da Vinci programme in 2007-2009, while in the 2010 the total planned for mobility projects reached €15,616,000.³⁵

3.7 Public perceptions about traineeships

In Spain, in view of the high unemployment rates of the young population groups, in recent years special labour contracts for young people (such as fixed-term, with lower wages and firing costs, etc.) have been expanded, in order to facilitate labour market inclusion and create employment, which has resulted in a polarised labour market. While older workers still are highly protected, the younger generation faces increasing unstable employment situations.

³⁰ Servicio Público de Empleo Estatal, Institutional framework in Spain – Provision of learning opportunities – Theme 3.

³¹ <http://www.becasargo.es/portal/web/quest/app-call-2009-2012>.

³² <http://www.becasfaro.es>.

³³ http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/thematic_reports/128EN.pdf.

³⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc/stat/0910/countries/spain_en.pdf

³⁵ http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/doc/stat/spain_en.pdf

The *Unilateral traineeship offered by firms* has been used frequently (although there are no precise data), both at the Autonomous Community and at National level. They are considered a very useful tool to facilitate the practice of youth work (and in particular those with medium/high qualifications) and then to facilitate their integration into the world of work. Nevertheless, *Unilateral traineeship offered by firms (becas non convenidas)* and, to some extent, the traineeship in the Public Administration has attracted a lot of criticism.

It is worth adding that the Youth sectors of the Spanish trade unions have criticised the abuse of traineeships by employers. As they have pointed out, although these were initially designed to make students specialise in very specific training fields, at present they have been extended to all sectors. The upshot of this development is that, according to the trade unions, many firms are using this type of contract to avoid paying any sickness insurance as well as the other social payments normally due to young trainees.

'Unions in Spain have raised profound concerns about how the existing labour market legislation and structure creates and reinforces inequality for young workers. Their specific concern relates to the use of fixed-term contracts which allow jobs to be shed in periods of recession. Young workers are particularly vulnerable to this dynamic and unions argue that this is one of the central reasons for the extraordinarily high youth unemployment rates in Spain. As a consequence, they are campaigning to regulate the use of fixed-term contracts in future'.³⁶

In recent years there has been an expansion of traineeships which young people have to undertake after graduation and/or completion of mandatory professional training. This is the type of traineeship which has attracted most criticism since it tends to be unregulated and, in some cases, has been associated with reports of trainee exploitation, the replacement of regular staff by trainees who are used as cheap or even free labour, poor terms and conditions, including lack of social security coverage, low or non-existent learning content, etc.

Similarly, in Spain most graduates undertake one (or even a series of) traineeships in order to gain practical, work-related experience while looking for a job. This is quite a wide-spread phenomenon and there is growing concern about questionable employer practices and the potential for trainee abuse and exploitation. Moreover, it has arguably led to a dual youth labour market, with a large proportion of young people being caught in an endless series of traineeships and precarious jobs. Indeed, young people access the labour market predominantly through flexible contracts. Although in Spain traineeships are a common way of employing young people, such traineeships seldom result in a job for the trainees.

4. Practices and Content of Traineeships

4.1 Traineeships as part of education and/or labour market entry and integration for young people

The traineeship system in Spain has become a very important tool for young people entering into the labour market. The labour market in Spain, characterised by high unemployment and an extensive level of temporary recruitment, has been promoting access to the labour market for a wide range of young people (graduates in particular) through traineeships. Although this can have a significant potential impact related to labour flexibility, it also has clear risks associated with job insecurity.

³⁶ Simms, Melanie (2011), *Helping young workers during the crisis: contributions by social partners and public authorities*. Eurofoundation. http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/studies/tn1101019s/tn1101019s_3.htm.

It is worth stressing that the traineeship system in Spain has become a gateway for access to the labour market of outstanding importance to young people. Access to labour segments that characterise both university and firms seem to require the use of the traineeship to complete a functional entry into the labour market for the people involved.

Teaching and research careers, as well as a large number of occupations within private businesses and organisations, are increasingly linked to the professional training activity provided by the traineeship (*becas*) system.

5. Trainee's Rights and Terms and Conditions

When a traineeship is regulated (that is to say it is implemented under the conditions prescribed by law), trainees have their own rights and terms and conditions are well specified.

Traineeships which form an optional or compulsory part of academic and/or vocational study curricula, or as part of active labour market policies for unemployed young people, are also regulated by law and envisage some forms of agreement between the parties with regard to rights and duties.

Trainees can expect some general characteristics of their course and traineeship to be defined, according to the different types of traineeship. In particular:

- The duration of the training course and the traineeship (definition of minimum and maximum duration).
- The total amount of hours per day for training and/or work activities.
- The percentage of training versus working activities during the period of the agreement/contract.
- Any fees concerned with the employee's participation in the training and traineeship directed by the employer, are paid by the employer.
- An assessment and certification procedure or written confirmation of the employee's completion of the course identifying the level of employee attainment against objectives.
- The certification of skills acquired and/or knowledge expected to enhance the work performance of the employee at the end of the course.
- The supervision of the trainee during workplace training (tutor).
- The remuneration, in case of the presence of a labour contract (e.g. training contract – *contrato para la formacion*).

The biggest problem in Spain is the use of traineeship in an illegal manner, even outside of the minimum legal requirements. This is particularly a concern with the traineeships offered by private firms in the open market, with the absence of a regulatory framework at national level. At the moment negotiations are underway to implement this tool to offer more forms of protection, as for other types of contracts.

6. Quality Assurance of Traineeships

Management and certification of the three vocational training systems was organised separately, but these have been integrated in a single system through legal reform.

The management refers to the definition of the contents and certificates of the VT courses, as defined in the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications (***Catálogo Nacional de Cualificaciones Profesionales***), which lays down the general training content. They are specified in the Modular Catalogue of Vocational Training (***Catálogo Modular de Formación Profesional***).

The implementation of the National System of Qualifications and Vocational Training (*Sistema Nacional de Cualificaciones y Formación Profesional, SNCFP*) helps to evaluate and accredit the corresponding professional skills.

The National Institute of Qualifications (*Instituto Nacional de las Cualificaciones, INCUAL*), under the Ministry for Education and Science, defines, develops and maintains both the 'National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications' and the 'Modular Catalogue of Vocational Training'. The OBINCUAL Observatory, within this institute, supports this process through information and exchange.

Mandatory traineeships, both at vocational and at academic level, are often defined and monitored by the school and study regulations of colleges and universities. As far as the **traineeships which form an optional or compulsory part of academic and/or vocational study curricula**, the ongoing monitoring and final results are carried out jointly by the companies and institutions (schools, universities) involved.

As far as the **traineeships in the open market** (*Unilateral traineeship offered by firms – becas no-convenidas*), there is a specific office of the Ministry of Labour in charge of inspections and infringement cases, but the inspections are still deemed to be insufficient.

Traineeships as part of study curricula or mandatory professional training, e.g. medicine, law, architecture, etc., are also regulated and monitored.

As a general framework for quality assurance at European level, a specific regulatory framework regarding transnational placements is overarched by the EU regulatory context. The most important at this stage is the European Charter for Mobility³⁷. It constitutes a reference document for stays abroad in order to ensure that participants, both young people and adults, have a positive experience. Its scope covers stays by young people and adults for the purposes of both formal and non-formal learning and hence for their personal and professional development. The Charter provides a framework for free movement of people in the field of education and training.

Moreover, ECVET and EQAVET form part of a series of European initiatives aiming at better recognising skills and competencies acquired by learners in different countries or learning environments

The European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) aims to give people greater control over their individual learning experiences and make it more attractive to move between different countries and different learning environments. The system aims to facilitate the validation, recognition and accumulation of work-related skills and knowledge acquired during a stay in another country or in different situations. It should ensure that these experiences contribute to vocational qualifications. ECVET also aims for better compatibility between the different vocational education and training (VET) systems in place across Europe and their qualifications³⁸.

The European Quality Assurance Reference Framework (EQAVET) has been established to promote and monitor continuous improvement of national systems of vocational education and training (VET). EQAVET, which was adopted by EU Member States in June 2009, is a

³⁷ http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/education_training_youth/lifelong_learning/c11085_en.htm

³⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc50_en.htm

reference tool for policy-makers based on a four-stage quality cycle that includes goal setting and planning, implementation, evaluation and review³⁹.

The Erasmus University Charter (EUC) provides the general framework for the European cooperation activities. As a general framework, the Erasmus Student Charter sets out a student's rights and obligations with respect to his/her period abroad. In particular, the Charter says that each student/trainee will be given an Erasmus Student Charter by their home university or higher education institution before departing on their study or placement period abroad. It informs Erasmus students about what they are entitled to and what is expected of them during their secondment for studies or for a placement. Moreover, the Erasmus Student Charter outlines the basic entitlements of the Erasmus students, such as free tuition and full recognition of studies or placements abroad. The Charter also specifies the main obligations of the Erasmus students, providing them with a concise idea of their duties with regard to both their home and host higher education institutions⁴⁰. Moreover, at the end of the period abroad, full recognition must be given by the home higher education institution for the period spent abroad as agreed in the Training Agreement, preferably by using ECTS credits. Recognition should be based on the training agreement which was approved by all parties before the placement/study abroad period started. In the particular case of a period of placement that is not part of the curriculum of the student, the sending institution should provide recognition by at least recording this period in the Diploma Supplement or, if not possible, in the student's transcript of records.

The Leonardo da Vinci programme also has a quality framework setting out the student's rights and obligations of the trainee and of the host organisation⁴¹.

7. Overall Assessment as regards Traineeships

7.1 Benefits and drawbacks of traineeships

The analysis of the traineeship system in Spain emphasises the relevance of developing actions that increase the knowledge of the phenomena and, where appropriate, of modifying dysfunctional situations, such as:

- Delimiting and formalising the functions associated with traineeship (*becas*), in order to avoid the situation worsening further.
- Analysing and defining the characteristics that differentiate the set of functions and responsibilities associated with traineeship to the functions that characterise a job. In this way it would be possible to consider traineeship as a job replacement.
- Defining the status associated with people who participate to traineeship.
- Improving working conditions.
- Modifying the conditions of employment. It would be necessary to limit the duration of the traineeship to what is strictly necessary for the fulfilment of the training function of the traineeship. Thus, it would be possible to reduce the incidence of job insecurity among young people, by avoiding this instability becoming a substantive way of entry in the labour market.

³⁹ http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc1134_en.htm

⁴⁰ http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc1057_en.htm

⁴¹ http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/doc/quality_en.pdf

- Preventing the recruitment of students under non-formal grants (*becas no-convenidas*), but recognising at the same time the need for a flexible screening device.

Employers have been hiring young graduates on *becas no-convenidas*, thus showing interest in flexible screening devices. While *becas no-convenidas* should be outlawed as they do not have a legal contractual basis, thereby leading to abuses, the need for a way of testing young people's skills must be recognised. A longer trial period, within the framework of reforming employment protection legislation, could well serve this purpose.

In summary, it can be noted that it is necessary to redefine the social and occupational status of trainees participating in non-regulated traineeships (*becas no convenidas*), with the aim of facilitating a proper entry into the labour market for a significant number of young people, and to provide them with a high level of qualification.

7.2 Good practice examples

The **FINNOVA** Programme is one of the schemes designed to improve and promote employment for jobseekers from formal training. It operates through the implementation of labour practices in public research institutions of the Community of Madrid, and provides grants (*becas*) to graduates so that they can participate in traineeships in different research areas of the Universities of Madrid. FINNOVA grants are an opportunity for participants to perform labour practices in public research institutions of the Community of Madrid.

The main objectives of the programme are:

- To improve the employability of people from vocational training, through the acquisition of specific expertise in areas of applied research and technological development programmes linked to research contracts, university-enterprise conjoint projects and all those initiatives involving research and development activities.
- To provide a knowledge of innovative techniques that require particular skills which are difficult to acquire through standardised training offers, by adapting the researcher's profiles to the new professional activities.

The Programme is devoted to unemployed people resident in the Community of Madrid who have completed university studies no more than four years before. Participation in the Programme requires the signature of a traineeship contract (*Contrato en Prácticas*).

ARGO GLOBAL is a mobility programme funded by the Spanish Ministry of Education. The aim is to promote practical traineeships for Spanish university graduates in **companies in Europe, USA, Canada and Spanish companies with offices in Asia**.

The basic objective of ARGO GLOBAL is to provide financial support to new graduates from Public or Private Spanish Universities who would like to carry out a professional traineeship in companies in Europe, the USA, Canada and Spanish companies with offices in Asia. More specifically, ARGO GLOBAL allows young university graduates to:

- acquire their first professional experience in an international company
- get closer to the world of business in an international context and to improve their professional skills
- complete their academic grounding
- improve their language abilities
- increase their job opportunities.

As for companies, ARGO GLOBAL offers the opportunity for them to test out potential workers with high-level qualifications, academic updated knowledge and wide language skills. This experience could contribute to their internationalisation, as well as improve the

human resources of the companies involved. Lastly, it would allow the creation of new business opportunities in foreign markets.

The average length of the traineeships is six months for Europe, ten months for USA, seven months for Canada and ten months for Asia. All the traineeships must start on the 1st or the 15th of every month.

To be eligible for an ARGO GLOBAL grant you have to meet the following requirements:

- hold a university degree in any public or private Spanish university
- not to have benefited before from any mobility grant: Leonardo Da Vinci, ARGO grant, FARO GLOBAL grant or INTEGRANTS.

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Faro Global Mobility Program - Programa Internacional de Becas, <http://www.becasfaro.es/>

Spanish Case Study Report

The focus of the case study is on three specific forms of traineeship aimed at young graduates, or completed the end of university studies:

1. **Unilateral traineeship of private firm (*Becas unilaterales de empresas privadas – Becas no convenidas*)** offered by private companies or their foundations to graduate students without an educational co-operation agreement with their academic centre.
2. **Traineeship in Public Administration (*Becas de Administraciones Pùblicas*)**, financed by the Public Administration (central administration, regional and local levels), to provide practical training for graduates, particularly university students.
3. **Traineeship in agreement of educational co-operation (*Becas de Convenios de Cooperación educativa*)**, convened under an agreement between an educational institution, usually a university, and a company or an organisation of companies, as a compulsory or optional part of the academic study curricula (see National Report, Table 1.1).

Policy Framework

The labour market in Spain, characterised by high unemployment and outstanding temporary recruitment, has been developing access to the labour market for a wide range of young people, through training schemes which promote workplace learning experiences, notably *traineeships*. Some of these schemes were extended to cover high skilled young people, including students and graduates. In general, these are young graduates (or pre-graduates). They receive (although not always) economic aid from a company or institution to complete or expand their practical skills, and are within different sectors, such as Public Administration, private companies; with or without co-operation agreements (*convenios*) with Universities or research centres.

Due to the high rate of youth unemployment, the Spanish society has tended to justify any kind of tool that would bring jobs to young people, also where they were unqualified jobs; or when the jobs became just a professional training activity. Within this context the *traineeship* has become a significant form of participation in the labour market, particularly in the last twenty years.

At the beginning of the nineties, the use of *traineeships* was closely linked and almost limited to Universities. The evolution of the labour market and the characteristics of the labour demand have led to the extension in all areas of the labour market and productive sectors of training practices; mostly with the allocation of a grant (*beca*) as compensation.

The economic crisis has increased the use of temporary contracts, and therefore the use of *traineeships* in the **open market and without regular contract or co-operation agreement** in all the economic sectors. It has become one of the **main routes of inclusion for young people** with university degrees into the labour market.

The increased use of the traineeship on the open market is not to be considered as part of an effective labour market programme (LMP), whereas it is an instrument used by the firms to find qualified human resources at a low cost. Only to a lesser extent could it be considered as part of a strategy to increase the professional skills of young graduates.

The use of *traineeship* has a significant potential impact, and presents risks associated with job insecurity. However, it should be noted that there are some aspects that converge on the realities that form each type of traineeship. In the first place it may be noted that the traineeship system in Spain has become of outstanding importance to young people as a gateway for access to the labour market. In fact, access to labour segments that characterise both University and firms seem to require the use of the traineeship to complete an entry in the labour market for the people involved. Teaching and research careers, as well as a large number of occupations within private businesses and organisations, are increasingly linked to the professional activity training provided by the traineeship (*becas*) system.

Similar instruments are still widely used for the integration of young people into the labour market (*contratos para la formación* and *contratos en práctica*). However, for the graduate and university students, take-up of these contracts is relatively low. For *contratos en prácticas*, this may be due to the fact that they are in direct competition with non-formal grants for university graduates (*becas no-convenidas*) which have been increasingly used in Spain as a way to fill regular job vacancies. For employers, it is likely that non-formal grants provide a more flexible screening device than training contracts. As they do not have a legal foundation, employers do not have to pay social security contributions and are not subject to employment protection legislation (unlike training contracts, which are subject to both).

An important debate among social and political actors has developed about how to tackle the problems that face young graduates in terms of exploitation, illegal use of traineeships, the social security aspect, etc. (see section *Current debate* below).

The development of umbrella organisations of young trainees (or former trainees) is a significant element of the magnitude of the issue in the Spanish society. For example, *Asobecarios*⁴², the first association at national level, was established in 2009 in order to represent the graduate trainees and former trainees from the private and public sector.

The Royal Decree 1543/2011⁴³ regulates for the first time the traineeship without labour contract (*prácticas no laborales*) in organisations. Moreover, the Royal Decree (1707/2011⁴⁴) has recently renewed and regulated the traineeship as part of compulsory or voluntary academic curricula, that is the *Traineeship in agreement of educational cooperation (Becas de Convenios de Cooperación educativa)* (see par. *Content and practices related to traineeship*, below).

Also at the political level legislative interventions have been realised which are aimed at affording some significant urgent action in terms of social security, both for the present and future trainees and for the former trainees. The new Law 27/2011 on the Social Security system (*Ley 27/2011 - Actualización, adecuación y modernización del sistema de la Seguridad Social - RGSS*) sets out the inclusion in the social security system of the participants in training programmes funded by agencies or entities public or private. As a consequence, the Royal Decree 1493/2011⁴⁵ regulates the terms and conditions for inclusion in the General Scheme of Social Security for the people who participate in training programmes.

⁴² www.asobecarios.org

⁴³ Real Decreto 1543/2011, de 31 de octubre, por el que se regulan las prácticas no laborales en empresas.
<http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2011/11/18/pdfs/BOE-A-2011-18062.pdf>

⁴⁴ Real Decreto 1707/2011, de 18 de noviembre, por el que se regulan las prácticas académicas externas de los estudiantes universitarios.
<http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2011/12/10/pdfs/BOE-A-2011-19362.pdf>

⁴⁵ Real Decreto 1493/2011, de 24 de octubre, por el que se regulan los términos y las condiciones de inclusión en el Régimen General de la Seguridad Social de las personas que participan en programas de formación, en desarrollo de lo previsto en la disposición adicional tercera de la Ley 27/2011, de 1 de agosto, sobre actualización, adecuación y modernización del sistema de la Seguridad Social
<http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2011/10/27/pdfs/BOE-A-2011-16819.pdf>

Definition of traineeship

There is no uniform legal definition of *traineeship* in Spain. Generally speaking, the term *practica formativas* is used to denote all forms of work experience related to training, both in the vocational training in higher education and university, and which could be translated in *traineeship* (or *internship*). There are different kinds of *traineeship*, depending on the entry at different levels of education; or the pathway to entry or connection with the labour market (see National Report, Table 1.1).

The *traineeship* has to be considered as a work activity with a formative character in the sense of acquisition and improvement of professional skills at an early stage of entry into the labour market. *Traineeships* link a person and any organisation (company, government, association, etc.) without any contractual relationship and are established through some form of subsidy (*beca*). There are also a large number of *traineeships* offered by University, Public Administration, and private firms with specific regulatory norms; and accompanied by some form of subsidy or grant (*beca*). These are forms of working activities that do not appear in the national statistics, because they are not regulated by a labour contract.

Table A 1: Type of Traineeship (*becas*) for the Case Study (see National Report, Table 1.1)

Type	Description	Characteristics	Target	Legal references	Economic sector
<i>Traineeships which form optional or compulsory part of academic and/or vocational study curricula</i>					
<i>Unilateral traineeship of private firm</i> <i>(Becas unilaterales de empresas privadas – Becas no convenidas)</i>	Unilateral offers from private companies or their foundations to graduate students without an educational cooperation agreement with the academic centre	Traineeship in private firm without agreement with University and no labour contract Becas profesionales Becas en empresa Becas de formacion	Young graduated people	RD 1543/2011 Calls of private firms	All economic sector
<i>Traineeship in Public Administration</i> <i>(Becas de Administraciones Pùblicas)</i>	Becas financed by the Public Administration (central administration, regional and local levels), to provide practical training for graduates, particularly university students, although there are cases trainees participating in Vocational Training	Traineeship in the Public Administration without agreement with University and no labour contract	Young graduated people	No laws/regulations Calls published in official bulletins and newspapers	Public sector
<i>Traineeships which form optional or compulsory part of academic and/or vocational study curricula</i>					
<i>Traineeship in agreement of educational cooperation</i> <i>(Becas de Convenios de Cooperación educativa)</i>	Traineeships that are convened under an agreement between an educational institution, usually a University, and a company or an organization of companies. This type of practice is aiming at enabling students to combine academic knowledge (university) with the practical content (workplace) and improve their employability before labour market insertion	Agreement between University and firm, no labour contract Grants (becas) provided by the firm Becas profesionales Becas en empresa Becas de formacion	University students with at least 50% of the scholar credits acquires	RD 1497/1981 RD 1845/1994 RD 1707/2011 University regulations	Financial and administrative services Communication Construction Public Administration

Organisation of Traineeship under Study, Relevant Stakeholders and their Role

Traineeships in agreement of educational co-operation (*Becas de Convenios de Cooperación educativa*) are convened under an agreement signed between an educational institution, usually a University, and an organisation or private enterprise, in order to provide *external academic practices*. The first legislative act for the establishment of these agreements is the Royal Decree 1497/1981 on Educational Co-operation Programmes (updated in 1994 by Royal Decree 1845). Recently, the new R.D. 1707/2011 has regulated this kind of traineeship. In this case, the intention of the legislator was to establish links between the various Universities and the labour market. The objective was to establish effective schemes to increase the training of a practical nature, with special attention to the work experience that the people would be able to acquire, thereby facilitating a smooth transition between the education system and the labour market.

External academic practices are a compulsory or voluntary part of academic study curricula and are addressed to University students with at least 50 per cent of the credits the scholar acquires. They are supervised by the Universities, whose aim is to enable them to implement the knowledge acquired in their education, encouraging the acquisition of skills that prepare them for the professional activities; to facilitate their employability; and their ability to promote entrepreneurship. Given the formative nature of external academic practices, this traineeship must not lead to a labour contract, and must not be used as a substitute for a 'proper job'. The *external academic practices* are compulsory, as part of the academic study curricula; or are voluntary (extra-curricular), undertaken by students on a voluntary basis and, even with the same purpose as compulsory practices, are not part of the study curriculum.

Unilateral traineeship of private firms (*Becas unilaterales de empresas privadas – Becas no convenidas*) are offered by private companies or their foundations to graduate students without an educational co-operation agreement with the academic centre. It is the company or the private organisation that unilaterally establishes both the call for traineeship and the associated working conditions.

Traineeships in Public Administration (*Becas de Administraciones Públicas*) are financed by the Public Administration (central administration, at regional and local levels) and are addressed to graduates. Also in this case, an agreement with any educational institution is not envisaged, so that it is the Public Administration that unilaterally establishes both the call for traineeship and the associated working conditions.

Furthermore, unlike the *Traineeship in agreement of educational co-operation (*Becas de Convenios de Cooperación educativa*)*, the potential candidates of the **Unilateral traineeship of private firm (*Becas unilaterales de empresas privadas – Becas no convenidas*)** and **Traineeship in Public Administration (*Becas de Administraciones Públicas*)** are not University students, but rather young people who have obtained recently a university degree.

From this point of view, the use of this type of traineeship in the framework of the labour market is at least problematic. In fact, though this type of traineeship is not used to complete the training of young people at University, it is to incorporate highly qualified young people into the labour market. Although there are concerns about how such traineeships are being accessed and trainees treated, the evidence about questionable employer practices refers to traineeships taken up by young people on a voluntary basis in the open market, and without any form of labour contract and/or agreement with University (e.g. *Unilateral traineeship of private firm and Traineeship in Public Administration*).

The Royal Decree 1543/2011⁴⁶ regulates for the first time the traineeship without labour contract (*prácticas no laborales*) in the firms. In particular, it specifies that traineeship without labour contract will be solely for young unemployed people aged 18-25, registered at the Public Employment Services, with an official university degree or an intermediate or high vocational training qualification. They must not have had a labour contract or other type of professional experience of more than three months in the same activity. They will be included in the R.D. 1493/2011 for inclusion in the RGSS. That is to say, will be quoted and will have a protective (although limited) action of the Social Security.

Depending on the type of practices offered, the legislation is different, but with a common feature of a lack of clear legislative constraints. This is the reason for allowing these traineeships to be the major tool for job placement of young people, and the main entrance to the labour market for groups with higher qualifications.

Funding & Resource Allocation

Concerning the **Unilateral traineeship of private firm** (*Becas unilaterales de empresas privadas - Becas no convenidas*), no financial resources have been established at National level to support young people or firm in this kind of activity. On the contrary, **Traineeship in Public Administration** (*Becas de Administraciones Pùblicas*), are financed by the Public Administration (central administration, regional and local levels). The Public Administration, instead of mobilising a part of its budget for staff, use the financial resources destined as aid in order to cover their need for human resources. A provision of public funding to finance and support traineeships is particularly important for the **Traineeship in agreement of educational co-operation** (*Becas de Convenios de Cooperación educativa*), financed by the Ministry of Education or by the University.

Description of Traineeship Under Study

Content and Practices related to the Traineeship under Study

The **Unilateral traineeship of private firms** (*Becas unilaterales de empresas privadas - Becas no convenidas*) offered to the labour market by singular firms **are not regulated by law**, and the conditions are included in public advertisements. These kind of trainees do not have a specific recognised legal status in Spain and there is no mechanism acting as a financial incentive for the employment of young workers (such as autonomy allocation or employment bonus).

As far as the **Traineeship in Public Administration** (*Becas de Administraciones Pùblicas*) are concerned, there is not a general framework, but each Public Administration (within its competence) convenes these traineeship under the General Law of Subsidies (*Ley Generale de Subvenciones*), which are published annually in the Official Law Bulletins of the State, Autonomous Communities and Municipalities.

Concerning the **Traineeship in agreement of educational co-operation** (*Becas de Convenios de Cooperación educativa*) the duration of the contract and the included conditions may deeply vary according to the various types of agreement (*convenios*), which are regulated by National laws or Ministry of Education provisions (where minimum requirements are envisaged) but developed and improved according to the internal regulation of each University.

⁴⁶ Real Decreto 1543/2011, de 31 de octubre, por el que se regulan las prácticas no laborales en empresas.
<http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2011/11/18/pdfs/BOE-A-2011-18062.pdf>

Traineeship Contract and Trainee's Terms and Conditions

Traineeships in agreement of educational co-operation (*Becas de Convenios de Cooperación educativa*) are regulated by law and envisage some forms of agreement between the parties with regard to rights and duties (see National Report p. 23). The recent R.D. 1707/2011 has specified in detail the rights and duties of the trainees; of the tutors (University and firm); and the contents of the agreement (*convenio*). In particular, the agreement establishes the regulatory framework for relations between the student, the firm, and the University. It will envisage, at least the:

1. purpose of the training project undertaken by the student
2. conditions of early termination of the practice in case of default of its terms
3. system of insurance and payment of accidents civil responsibility
4. guarantee of the protection of personal data
5. regulation of potential conflicts.

The biggest problem in Spain is the use of traineeships in an illegal manner, even outside of the minimum legal requirements. This is particularly focused on the **traineeship offered by private firms in the open market**, in absence of a regulatory framework at national level. The average duration of the collaboration is high. There are cases of traineeships of one year, but these are often renewed each year and can also reach five years. The monthly remuneration is normally around €3-400⁴⁷, and no guarantees from the point of view of social security (vacation or illness) are envisaged.

The **Traineeships in Public Administration** have similar characteristics to *Contractos en Practica*. The average duration of the collaboration is pretty high. There are cases of traineeship of six months to one year, but these are often renewed each year and can also reach five years. The monthly remuneration is normally around €900 euro⁴⁸, similar to that provided by *Becas de Investigaciones* (see National Report Table 1.1, p.6). Also the *Traineeship in the Public Administration* does not provide guarantees from the point of view of social security (vacation or illness).

In order to afford the issue of giving some guarantees to the trainees involved in this kind of traineeship, some legislative innovations have recently been introduced. As stated above, the Royal Decree 1493/2011 regulates the terms and conditions for inclusion in the *General Scheme of Social Security* for the people who participate in training programmes. Participants in training programmes financed by public or private organisations, which are linked to university studies or vocational training (excluding the purely academic traineeship); include work experience in a firm, institutions or entities; and leading to economic compensation, are assimilated as employed workers as far as their inclusion in the *General Scheme of Social Security*. The Social Security contributions by common and professional contingencies will be carried out by applying the listing rules relating to the *Contrato para la formación*. Moreover, it allows you to recover up to two years of trading with the traineeship made before RD 1493/2011, through the signing of a co-operation agreement with the Social Security system.

Quality Assurance Mechanisms

The traineeship recruitment process, including its transparency, varies according to the type of traineeship. Traineeships linked to study curricula are characterised by a well-organised and relatively transparent recruitment process.

⁴⁷ No data are available. Information taken from the interviews and by report (see Observatorio Joven de Empleo en Espana (2008), *El sistema de becas en Espana*. Pg 65-66).

⁴⁸ No data are available. Information taken from the interviews.

As far as the **traineeships in the open market** (*Unilateral traineeship offered by firms – Becas no convenidas*) are concerned, there is a specific office of the Ministry of Labour in charge of inspections and infringement cases, but the inspections are still deemed to be insufficient.

Mandatory traineeships, both at vocational and at academic level, are often defined and monitored by the school and study regulations of colleges and universities. As far as the **traineeships which form an optional or compulsory part of academic and/or vocational study curricula** (*Traineeships in agreement of educational co-operation – Becas de Convenios de Cooperación educativa*), the ongoing monitoring and final results are carried out jointly by companies and institutions (schools, universities) involved. These aspects are particularly stressed also in the recent R.D. 1707/2011, where duties of the University and firm involved in the traineeship are specified. For example, an academic tutor and firm's tutor are envisaged, in order to follow the activity of the trainee. The firm's tutor has the duty to produce an intermediate and a final activity report in which the practical experience is summarised and main achievements are reported.

Current Debate

The **Unilateral traineeship offered by firms** (*Becas non convenidas*), have been used frequently, both at the Autonomous Community and at National level. It is considered a very useful tool to facilitate the practice of youth work (and in particular those with medium/high qualifications) and to facilitate their integration into the world of work.

Nevertheless, **Unilateral traineeship offered by firm** (*Becas non convenidas*), and to some extent, the traineeship in the **Public Administration**, have attracted criticism since they tend to be unregulated and, in some cases, associated with reports of trainee exploitation; the replacement of regular staff by trainees who are used as cheap or even free labour; poor terms and conditions, including lack of social security coverage; low or non-existent learning content, etc.

Youth sectors of the Spanish trade unions have criticised the abuse of traineeships by employers. As they have pointed out, although these were initially designed to make students specialise in very specific training fields, at present they have been extended to all sectors. The upshot of this development is that, according to the trade unions, many businesses are using this type of contract to avoid paying any sickness insurance as well as the other social payments normally due to young trainees.

*'Unions in Spain have raised profound concerns about how the existing labour market legislation and structures create and reinforces inequality for young workers. Their specific concerns relate to the use of fixed-term contracts which allow jobs to be shed in periods of recession. Young workers are particularly vulnerable to this dynamic and unions argue that this is one of the central reasons for the extraordinarily high youth unemployment rates in Spain. As a consequence, they are campaigning to regulate the use of fixed-term contracts in future.'*⁴⁹

Similarly, in Spain most graduates undertake one (or even a series of) traineeships in order to gain practical, work-related experience while looking for a job. This is a fairly wide-spread phenomenon and there is growing concern about questionable employer practices and the potential of trainee abuse and exploitation.

It is also important to point out that employers are showing interest in flexible screening devices, as the increase in hiring young graduates on *becas no-convenidas*, shows. While

⁴⁹ Simms, Melanie (2011), Helping young workers during the crisis: contributions by social partners and public authorities. Eurofoundation. http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/studies/tn1101019s/tn1101019s_3.htm.

becas no-convenidas should be outlawed as they do not have a legal contractual basis (thereby leading to abuses) the need for a way of testing young people's skills must be recognised. A longer trial period, within the framework of reforming employment protection legislation, could well serve this purpose.

It has arguably led to a dual youth labour market, with a large proportion of young people being caught in an endless series of traineeships and precarious jobs. Indeed, young people access the labour market predominantly through flexible contracts.

Case-studies, Effectiveness of Traineeship: outputs and results

As far as the traineeships that take place outside of the formal education, the quantification is very difficult. As they are not characterised by a labour contract, they are not monitored and quantified by central government or a statistical institute.

Nevertheless, a recent research report quantified some kinds of traineeship as previously defined. The most important and widespread kind of traineeships are the one envisaged by **agreement of educational co-operation** (*Becas de Convenios de Cooperación educativa*) that has reached 150,000; and the **Unilateral offers from private firms** (*Becas non convenidas*), estimated around 36,000 in 2005⁵⁰, and are estimated around 30,000 per year. The **traineeships in the Public Administration** are approximately 400 per year.

The type, range and profile of sectors where **traineeships** are more prevalent differ, to some extent, according to the specific type of traineeships (see Table A 1 above). Overall, the most common sectors in which traineeships can be found are: business administration/management; engineering and construction; banking/accountancy; media/journalism; the public sector/administration; not for profit/third sector/NGOs.

Conclusions

The analysis of the traineeship system in Spain analysed in this report emphasises the relevance of developing actions which increase the knowledge on the phenomena and, where appropriate, of modifying dysfunctional situations, such as:

- Defining and formalisation of the functions associated with traineeship (*becas*), in order to avoid further worsening.
- Analysing and defining the characteristics that differentiate the functions and responsibilities associated with traineeship with respect to the functions that characterise a job. In this way it would be possible avoid and/or diminish the replacement of a job with traineeship.
- Defining the status associated with people who participate in traineeships.
- Improving working conditions, that are often extremely flexible (day and working hours, holidays and sickness), and not compatible with the working conditions in the context of the workers' Statute.
- Improving wage conditions, often deemed insufficient compared to actual workload.
- Modifying the conditions of employment. It would be necessary to limit the duration of the traineeship to what is strictly necessary for the fulfilment of the training function of the traineeship. Thus, it would be possible to reduce the incidence of job insecurity among young people, by avoiding that this instability becomes a substantive way of insertion in the labour market.

⁵⁰ MTAS, Estudio sobre el sistema de becas en la primera inserción y su relación con el empleo, 2006.

- Preventing the recruitment of students under non-formal grants (*becas no-convenidas*), but recognising at the same time the need for a flexible screening device.

In summary, it can be noted that it is necessary to redefine the social and occupational status of trainees participating in non-regulated traineeship (*becas no convenidas*), with the aim of facilitating a proper entrance into the labour market for a significant number of young people, and to provide them with a higher level of qualification.

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National Report on Traineeships Finland

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1. Traineeships as part of Member State's Youth Policy Measures

Among the Finnish youth the transition from school to the labour market may include several short periods of unemployment and moving away from the home town or home region in search of employment. Young people are also more mobile in the labour market than other age groups. Although the youth unemployment definition is challenging, the unemployment of a young person is considered serious when he cannot access the labour market due to low education level or a lack of work experience.¹

Measures aimed at preventing youth exclusion were an essential part of three national cross-ministerial policy programmes in 2007–2011; the Policy Programme for Employment, Entrepreneurship and Worklife, the Policy Programme for the Well-being of Children, Youth and Families, and the Policy Programme of Promoting Health and Well-being.² Special notice was given to secure young people's transitions to education and training and preventing social exclusion.

In 2009, the unemployment rate was 20.3 per cent among young people. The number of unemployed young people was the highest, at 69,000, compared with other ten-year age cohorts. In spring 2009, due to the increased unemployment rate amongst young workers, the government introduced wage subsidies targeted at young school leavers and those who could not find a job. The so-called *Sanssi* card was introduced, giving employers the right to have some of the employees' salary covered by the state. The idea was to lower the threshold for employing young people. The subsidy covers both normal jobs and apprenticeships.³

In 2010 a new Youth Law came into effect regulating every municipality to have a multi-sectoral and multi-professional coordinating body to ensure young people's transitions. The focus is in improving young people's opportunities to obtain the public services they need. This sort of early support is aimed at improving young people's access to education and work. The law especially alleviates the situation of young people who have dropped out secondary education.⁴

In autumn 2011, the Government launched a so called social guarantee for young people. This requires that each person younger than 25 and each recent graduate under 30 is offered work, a traineeship, or a study, workshop or ALMP placement, within 3 months of becoming unemployed. In addition, in apprenticeship training special attention will be given to young people with no qualifications. The guarantee will be launched in 2012 and will be fully operational as of 2013.⁵

In general, education is seen as the best way to prevent youth exclusion. The welfare of Finnish society is said to be built on education, culture and knowledge. All children are guaranteed opportunities for study and self-development according to their abilities, irrespective of their place of residence, language or financial status. The aim of the education system is to provide competent and high-quality education, guidance, a safe learning environment and well-being for everyone.⁶ In *Three decades of working conditions* Lehto and Sutela summarised the most essential findings of the Finnish Quality of Work Life

¹ Statistics Finland, concepts and definitions.

² Government Policy Programmes 2007–2011.

³ Finland: EIRO CAR on 'Helping young workers during the crisis: contributions by social partners and public authorities.'

⁴ Ministry of Education and Culture. Nuorisolain muutos parantaa nuorten varhaista tukea.

⁵ Ministry of Employment and the Economy: Nuorten yhteiskuntatakuu – työryhmä asetettu.

⁶ Ministry of Education and Culture. Education.

Surveys conducted by Statistics Finland between 1977 and 2008. The report indicates a very interesting trend related to age discrimination in Finnish working life. Discrimination based on being old appears to have decreased steadily at workplaces since the late 1990s, but discrimination against young workers has become more common and is even more common than discrimination against older workers.⁷

The Finnish education system is a Nordic one, with no tuition fees and with free meals served in comprehensive schools and upper secondary and vocational education institutions. Yet early school leaving, and transitions from one level to another and from education to the labour market, are a challenge in Finland. Student counselling services play a key role in preventing school drop outs. In higher education (HE), growing importance has been placed on career services that function as their own units in educational institutions.

The fiscal crisis in the autumn of 2008 increased the unemployment rate in Finland, and the youth unemployment rate was clearly higher than the overall unemployment rate. Although it has since decreased, it remains high and above the overall unemployment rate.

1.1 Overview of current situation of young people and traineeships as part of youth policy measures

In Finland, the Ministry of Education and Culture is responsible for coordinating public youth work and youth policy measures. The Youth Act provides for the improvement of young people's living conditions and services for the young. The aim is to support young people in their life management. The support consists of traditional youth work and some new forms of youth services, such as youth workshops, local youth councils, tele-democracy projects and after-school activities. The Youth Act mostly deals with youth exclusion prevention issues, but not directly with traineeship issues.

Youth services in Finland are provided by the government and local authorities. The Ministry of Education and Culture supports youth work done by local authorities and provinces. The Ministry subsidises youth and youth-work organisations, youth workshops, school children's morning and afternoon activities, international youth cooperation, substance abuse prevention work, national youth centres and youth facilities construction, youth information and advisory services, youth research and the development of new forms of activities for young people.⁸

The role of the government is to create a favourable environment for the work of youth organisations, but the government does not interfere with the content of activities. Young people participate in activities provided by youth and sport organisations, parishes, school hobby clubs and student bodies, and in informal groups in municipal youth facilities. Young people under 29 years of age constitute 36 per cent of the population of Finland.⁹

The Youth Policy Development Programme is prepared according to the Youth Act (72/2006)¹⁰ under which the Government adopts a youth policy development programme every four years. The programme includes national youth policy objectives and also outlines those objectives in which regional and local authorities are involved, for example, education, employment, health, active citizenship, social empowerment, housing, and entrepreneurship. The implementation of the development programme is evaluated annually by the Advisory Council for Youth Affairs. According to the Youth Act a young person is

⁷ Lehto, A-M & Sutela, H: (2009) Työolojen kolme vuosikymmentä: Työolotutkimusten tuloksia 1977–2008.

⁸ Ministry of Education and Culture. Youth work in Finland.

⁹ Ministry of Education and Culture. Youth work in Finland.

¹⁰ Ministry of Education and Culture. Youth Act (72/2006)

anyone under the age of 29 years, which implies that the youth policy programme is also concerned with small children.¹¹

The new Youth Policy Development Programme is presently being prepared and the Council of State will approve it in autumn 2011. The Youth Policy Development Programme 2007-11 was not prepared in view of the fiscal crisis and the increase in youth unemployment. As a consequence, the focus of the programme will be shifted from improving the living conditions of children and young people to reducing youth unemployment. Improving the cooperation among youth workers will also be one of the main focuses of the programme.

International mobility and activities are seen as essential tools in the development of education. Internationalism has been one of the priorities in the development plan 'Education and Research 2007-2012' adopted by the Government. International mobility in vocational education is hoped to increase by 30 per cent during the planning period.¹²

According to Statistics Finland's Labour Force Survey, the unemployment rate in July 2011 was 6.9 per cent; 0.6 percentage points lower than one year earlier. In July 2011, the unemployment rate among young people aged 15 to 24 was 20.1 per cent, which was 1.1 percentage points higher than in July of the previous year.¹³

According to a research by the Ministry of Employment and the Economy almost 60,000 young people were estimated to be outside the labour market and education in 2008 in Finland. Of this group 32,000 had only a basic education. Almost 40 per cent of them were still in the same position after a five-year follow-up period, 2003-08.

The group of youth outside the labour market and education does not include registered job seekers, pensioners, those who are undertaking military service or those on family leave. These young people fall outside the society's services in an early stage of their lives. Post-primary school education clearly reduces the risk of being unemployed and being categorised outside the labour market. Statistically, 90 per cent of those outside the labour market or unemployed at the age of 25 and who do not have post-primary school education will be left without further education.¹⁴

There are many different actors that promote international mobility of young people. The Centre for International Mobility CIMO is the most important promoter of transnational traineeships in Finland. CIMO is an organisation for international mobility and cooperation. CIMO was established in 1991 and is an independent agency under the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture.¹⁵ The activities of CIMO are regulated by the law¹⁶. The organisation's main task is to promote international cooperation and mobility with a specific emphasis on education, training, employment and young people.

¹¹ Ministry of Education and Culture. Development Programme for Child And Youth Policy.

¹² Ministry of Education and Culture. The development plan 'Education and Research 2007-2012'.

¹³ Statistics Finland. Unemployment rate 6.9 per cent in July.

¹⁴ Myrskylä, Pekka 2011.

¹⁵ Cimo in brief.

¹⁶ Act 2008/951

Table 1.1: Main traineeship programmes

Main traineeship programmes	Brief description	Web link
VET traineeship	Non-remunerated traineeship is mandatory in all vocational degrees. The length is at least 30 ECTS of the full 180 ECTS degree.	http://www.oph.fi/english/mobility/europass/finnish_education_system/vocational_education_and_training
Polytechnic (University of Applied Sciences) traineeship	The traineeship is mandatory in all polytechnic degrees. The degrees consist of 210-270 ECTS points and the traineeship equals to 30-85 ECTS. (In most study branches the length is 30 ECTS but in social and health sector degree 75-85 ECTS)	http://www.oph.fi/english/mobility/europass/finnish_education_system/higher_education_in_finland
University traineeships	The traineeships are voluntary and in most cases remunerated. Some universities offer scholarships for traineeships. The arrangement presumes that trainees are legally in employment. Without the university scholarship the trainees are usually not legally in employment. In the social, health and education fields the traineeships are usually mandatory.	http://www.oph.fi/english/mobility/europass/finnish_education_system/higher_education_in_finland
ALMP traineeship	Two different types of ALMP traineeships are offered by the Employment Offices. Both schemes are funded from public funds and are free for the employer. Trainees are not legally in employment (without formal job contract).	http://www.mol.fi/mol/fi/00_tyonhakijat/01_tyonhaku_suomessa/07_tyoharjoittelu_ja_tyoelamavalmennustuki/index.jsp

2. Legislative Framework for Traineeships

2.1 Legal framework for and governance of traineeships

Traineeships which are part of lower and higher university degrees are mentioned in the Government Decree on University Degrees (794/2004). The decree states that studies leading to a lower university degree may include '*work practice for professional development*'. Studies leading to a higher university degree may include '*internship*'.

improving expertise'. However the decree does not stipulate the legal status of the trainee, the content or traineeship regulations.¹⁷

The Government Decree on Polytechnic Degrees (15.5.2003/352) stipulates that all lower polytechnic degrees include work practice for professional development. The extent of the traineeship in each study curriculum is determined by the Ministry of Education and Culture.¹⁸ The traineeship arrangements vary greatly across polytechnic degree programmes; traineeships can be non-remunerated or remunerated, and the trainees may be officially in employment or not.

The Decree on Vocational Degrees (630/1998) stipulates that all vocational degrees include on-the-job-learning that would support the vocational studies.¹⁹ In 2005, the representatives of the state, municipalities and employer organisations agreed to a recommendation on the recognition of on-the-job learning and vocational skills demonstrations to strengthen the co-operation between VET and working life. The recommendation promotes the implementation and recognition of on-the-job learning, apprentice contracts and vocational skills demonstrations.²⁰ The aim of the recommendation is to improve the availability of skilled labour, to promote the employment of graduates, to secure a high level of professional education, secure work placement opportunities for young people, ensure opportunities for vocational skills demonstrations and strengthen the attractiveness and appreciation of vocational education.²¹

The Act on the Public Employment Service (1295/2002) regulates the application of ALMP traineeships. According to the public employment service law, the public employment services primarily promote employment to the open labour market, either directly or through training. Facilitating the youth transition to the labour market via ALMP traineeships is considered as a secondary measure of the public employment services. It is possible to undertake ALMP traineeships abroad if the administrative authority in question considers that the traineeship conditions and work environment can be supervised.²² The training which the public employment services promote as their primary service may include a traineeship period.

2.2 Definition of traineeships and trainees

In Finland, there is no legal definition of traineeships or a trainee. However, a practical training reform committee commissioned by the Ministry of Education in 1972 determined that *'a traineeship is by definition practical work which is part of the study requirements of an educational establishment or a study programme with the aim of enhancing knowledge, skills and gaining work experience in performing specific tasks under the guidance of an employer, or his representative, in a natural working environment'*.²³ Only one of the stakeholders interviewed for this study was aware of the preceding definition, the rest of the interviewees gave their own definition for traineeships, or used the brief citations from the Government Decree on University Degrees which were *'work practice for professional development'* or *'internship improving expertise'*.

¹⁷ Decree 794/2004

¹⁸ Decree 352/2003

¹⁹ Act 630/1998

²⁰ Ministry of Employment and the Economy. Ei-työsuhteisten aseman parantamista selvittävän työryhmän muistio. 2009.

²¹ Ministry of Employment and the Economy. Ei-työsuhteisten aseman parantamista selvittävän työryhmän muistio. 2009.

²² Finlex. Ohje työllistämistuista, yhdistelmämuistio, työharjoittelusta ja työelämävalmennuksesta.

²³ Stakeholder interviews in autumn 2011 for the Finland case study.

2.3 Legal provisions about aspects of traineeships

The length of a traineeship has been defined accurately in polytechnic and vocational degrees and in certain university degrees in which a traineeship is compulsory part of the degree. The traineeship length in most university degrees varies between two and six months, the average duration being roughly three months. Most of the formal obligations of a traineeship, e.g. remuneration, working hours, quality assurance, are set in the traineeship contract and the conditions vary among educational institutions and departments within an educational institution.

3. Availability of and Access to Traineeships

3.1 Statistics/Quantitative Information about traineeships

Transnational student mobility of the Finnish vocational institutions and HE has increased in the long term. However, the following figures from CIMO statistics consist of student mobility in general including student exchange and traineeships. The growth has been uneven, and at times even regressed. Transnational mobility of HE has strongly increased in the 2000s: the number of outgoing students from Finland has increased by nearly 50 per cent, and the number of incoming students in Finland has almost doubled. Growth has been particularly strong in the last couple of years. In 2010, there were over 10,000 outgoing students in HE.

The number of incoming students in Finnish HE grew strongly in the early 2000s, but the figures have stabilised during the last couple years. In vocational schools, the number of incoming students has risen steadily, but moderately in comparison with HE. The number of incoming students in vocational education was 2,749 and 8,990 in HE in 2010²⁴. The majority of the outgoing Finnish students and half of the incoming foreign students were undertaking a traineeship. In vocational education, the number of outgoing students from Finland undergoing on-the-job-learning in 2010 was 2,560. The number of incoming foreigners undertaking their on-the-job-learning in Finland in 2010 was 1,367.²⁵ The traineeship programme of these students can be found in the tables A 1–3 in the annex.

The existing data and statistics concerning traineeships in Finland are quite disassembled and the only statistics available on traineeships are educational institution-specific. However, the number of graduates in different education levels gives a picture of traineeship figures. In 2010 33,801²⁶ students graduated with a vocational degree and 21,899²⁷ with a polytechnic degree and 26,800²⁸ with a university degree (excluding doctoral degrees) in Finland. The traineeships are compulsory for the polytechnic and vocational students, but the number of traineeships per degree varies from one to various.

²⁴ These numbers include both student exchange and traineeships.

²⁵ Garam & Korkala: Kansainvälinen liikkuvuus ammatillisessa ja korkea-asteen koulutuksessa 2010.

²⁶ Statistics Finland. Opetussuunnitelmaperusteisen ammatillisen peruskoulutuksen tutkinnon suorittaneita oli 33 800 vuonna 2010.

²⁷ Statistics Finland. Ammattikorkeakoulututkinnot koulutuksen sijaintimaakunnan, ammattikorkeakoulun ja koulutustyyppin mukaan 2010.

²⁸ Statistics Finland. Yliopistokoulutus.

3.2 Sectors where traineeships are prevalent

In Finland, the main types of sectors offering placements within the EU-funded frameworks are health and healthcare, business administration/management and culture and art.²⁹ In polytechnic schools, most students undertake a traineeship of 30 ECTS points. In the degrees of social and health sector, traineeships equal to 75-85 ECTS points – basically one third of the study curriculum consists of traineeship periods^{30, 31}

3.3 Profile/Patterns of traineeships

In the degrees where the traineeship is compulsory the content may be less flexible than in voluntary traineeships. These compulsory and more regulated degrees are e.g. the degrees of Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy, Licentiate of Medicine, Licentiate of Dentistry and Licentiate of Veterinary Medicine, Master of Science in Pharmacy, Master of Science in Psychology, and social work studies in the field of social sciences.

For example, in the Licentiate in Medicine degree traineeship aims to familiarise students with activities of hospitals and health clinics, roles of occupational groups in health care, the application of studied skills in practice, as well as performing general practitioner level measures. The traineeship of the Licentiate of Medicine consists of clinical work experience, compulsory emergency duty training and health care clinic training. The traineeship equals to 35 ECTS points which correlates to four months of traineeship.³²

3.4 Recruitment process of and equity of access to traineeships

In general, the traineeship recruitment process could be described as transparent as any other recruitment. The employer chooses the person that they find most suitable for the tasks. When educational institutions are involved in the traineeship recruitment process, the procedure is usually more regulated and precise. In some cases, the employer has to prepare a list of tasks which the trainee will undertake, set goals for the traineeship and provide support and counselling for the student. Depending on education level of the trainee, the employer may also participate in an evaluation meeting with the educational institution representative and the trainee.

In general, the fact that education is free of charge gives the youth equal opportunities to educate themselves, which is why there are no major socio-economic imbalances among students or trainees. The CIMO statistics of international mobility (including student exchange and traineeships) show that the only major imbalance in the students' background seems to be that women are more active to take international studies or traineeships. In HE, the difference is clear and in vocational education even clearer.³³

There are no statistics on the total number of foreign trainees in Finland. However, the CIMO statistics show that 1,367³⁴ vocational education students came to Finland for the on-

²⁹ Study on a possible framework to facilitate transnational mobility for placements at enterprises.

³⁰ JAMK University of Applied Sciences. *Opiskele sairaanhoitajaksi!*

³¹ Mikkeli University of Applied Sciences. *Harjoittelupaikan tarjoaja on avainasemassa.*

³² University of Turku. *Lääketieteellisen tiedekunnan opinto-opas 2010–2011. Lääketieteen lisensiaatin tutkinto.*

³³ Garam & Korkala: *Kansainvälinen liikkuvuus ammatillisessa ja korkea-asteen koulutuksessa 2010.*

³⁴ This number only includes periods longer than 2 weeks.

the-job-learning periods in 2010.³⁵ Finding trainee placements in Finland is rather difficult for foreigners, even if they were degree students in Finland.³⁶

3.5 Evolution of traineeships over time and impact of recent economic crisis on traineeships

The impact of recent economic crisis has not been very significant on traineeships in Finland. It is common that the educational institutions have long traditions of cooperation with certain local employees, which is helpful in finding placements for students. The economic crisis has probably had most impact on ALMP traineeships. According to the Act on Public Employment Service, an employer who has denounced or dismissed temporarily employees during the last 9 months is not eligible for hosting an ALMP trainee.

3.6 Financing of traineeships

All the full-time degree students of Finnish citizenship are entitled to student allowance which they receive if a certain criterion is filled. The Social Insurance Institution of Finland is responsible for the allowance.³⁷ The Finnish citizen can receive student financial aid in three forms: Study Grants, Housing Supplements and government guarantees for student loans. Financial aid for students is intended to provide an income for full-time students whose parents are not under obligation to finance the studies and who are not eligible for aid under some other provisions.³⁸ When undertaking a traineeship as a part of study curriculum students receive the allowance and when undertaking a traineeship abroad, students may receive extra housing supplements if the traineeship is part of a study curriculum.

In addition, most universities and university departments offer traineeship scholarships for their students. If the university student receives the university traineeship scholarship it regulates the remuneration paid by employer. Scholarship may cover the salary for one or two months and the employer is responsible for the equal amount of monthly salary for the remaining months³⁹. In vocational education traineeships are usually non-remunerated. Polytechnic traineeships are remunerated or non-remunerated depending on the employer and the phase of the studies.

In transnational traineeships, most of the Finnish outgoing students finance their mobility from the grants offered by the educational institution. The most important mobility programme is the Leonardo da Vinci which purpose is to promote vocational education and training mobility in the European Union. The incoming students used fairly commonly other funding than mobility grants.⁴⁰ The remuneration of traineeships within Leonardo da Vinci and Erasmus programmes are usually paid from the programmes, and traineeships are completely free for the employer. In Finland, in some cases, the employer may provide an additional salary for the trainee.⁴¹ In 2010 the total grants admitted within Leonardo da Vinci programme was €2,330,407 (including Initial vocational training, People on the labour

³⁵ Garam & Korkala: Kansainvälinen liikkuvuus ammatillisessa ja korkea-asteen koulutuksessa 2010.

³⁶ The University of Helsinki has launched a project that promotes the employment opportunities for international degree students in Finland. The project is called VALOA.

³⁷ Kela-The Social Insurance Institution of Finland. Työharjoittelupalkka ja apurahat.

³⁸ Kela-The Social Insurance Institution of Finland. Financial aid for students.

³⁹ The amount of university scholarship varies but is roughly €500-1,000 per month

⁴⁰ Garam & Korkala: Fakta, Tietoa ja Tilastoja. Kansainvälinen liikkuvuus ammatillisessa ja korkea-asteen koulutuksessa. 2010.

⁴¹ Study on a possible framework to facilitate transnational mobility for placements at enterprises

market and VET professionals)⁴². The Erasmus budget for mobility actions in Finland in 2009/10 was €8,095,000 (including student exchange and company placements⁴³).

In the first ALMP traineeship scheme (työharjoittelu), the people entitled to labour market support are entitled to the full labour market allowance⁴⁴ during their traineeship. The Social Insurance Institution of Finland is responsible for this allowance. In the second ALMP traineeship scheme (työelämävalmennus), the unemployed are entitled to the same amount of unemployment allowances that they have received before the traineeship plus sustenance support which is €9-18 per day.⁴⁵

There are also traineeship schemes that combine the national above-mentioned ALMP schemes and ESF funding. One of these ESF funded projects is Innovaatioassistentti (innovation assistant) project that is carried out at North Karelia University of Applied Sciences.⁴⁶ Innovaatioassistentti project closely cooperates with another project that is carried out by the Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment in North Karelia. The traineeships that the students participating the project undertake are organised by the Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment which is locally responsible for organizing the ALMP traineeship scheme.⁴⁷

3.7 Public perceptions about traineeships

The demographic situation in Finland constantly raises the public debate of a shortage of the working aged population and tax payers. During his term of office 2003–2010, the Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen started to promote the issue of extension of careers and raising the retirement age as a solution for the problems accompanied with uneven age structure. Extension of careers creates pressure for speeding up the transitions of students to labour market. The traineeships and other work experience achieved during the degree are considered facilitating this transition.

The study curriculum in the vocational education have been extended to three years instead of the two years, in order to give the youth a possibility to gain work experience while completing the degree. The traineeships being a compulsory part of the many degrees, it is considered rather contradictorily that after graduation young people sometimes have to settle for poorly compensated work/traineeships to gain sufficient work experience. This may cause lack of motivation and in the worst case expose to a risk of being excluded from the working life.

There are several actors in Finland who represent trainees. Most traineeships are sought by students, and student unions in universities and polytechnics lobby traineeship issues. If the young graduate in a traineeship is a member of a trade union, the trade union can be considered their representative. In Finland, the membership rate of workers' trade union is relatively high compared to many European countries. About 75 per cent of workers belong to the unions.⁴⁸

A new organisation called Tasavallan tukityöllistetyt ja harjoittelijat ry (The subsidised workers and trainees of the republic) was registered in June 2011. The association has been

⁴² European Commission. Education & Training. Leonardo da Vinci Statistics.

⁴³ European Commission. Education & Training. Erasmus - Statistics.

⁴⁴ The Labour market allowance is subsidy aimed to support the unemployed job-seekers' placement into the labour market. The subsidy is dependent on the level of earning of the person in question, but also spouse's income as well as parents' income affects the subsidy if the person lives in the same household. The amount of subsidy is approximately €553 per month.

⁴⁵ The Employment and Economic Development Office. Työharjoittelu ja työelämävalmennus.

⁴⁶ Assisting innovation in Finland. European Social Fund.

⁴⁷ Project description for ESF funded project. Euroopan sosiaalirahaston (ESR) rahoittaman projektin kuvaus.

⁴⁸ The Employment and Economic Development Office. Yleistä Suomen työelämästä.

established for people in traineeships and subsidised employment, but its existence is still not common knowledge and their role among other actors and trade unions is still undefined. The association of subsidised workers aims at establishing rules and collective agreement for the workers who are not officially in employment.⁴⁹

4. Practices and Content of Traineeships

4.1 Traineeships as part of education and/or labour market entry and integration for young people

Employment Office offers two types of ALMP traineeships in Finland. The traineeship schemes are designed to familiarise the unemployed to the labour market and to promote employment, return to work and improvement of skills. Internships are paid out of financial aid (the Social Insurance Institution of Finland and Unemployment Funds). As described earlier there are basically two different schemes of ALMPs: People younger than 25 or those without vocational education can access the first scheme. The second scheme is for those who have completed vocational education or are older than 25.⁵⁰ Both internships can be described as a form of on-the-job training without formal job contract.⁵¹ Ministry of Employment and the Economy arranges insurances for all people undertaking ALMP traineeships. The traineeship contract in both schemes can be made for a period of six months in maximum. One person is entitled to the first type of ALMP internship for a period of 12 months in total.

Degree students in the Finnish Universities have the possibility to complete an internship as part of their studies and to apply for a scholarship from their department to cover the traineeship costs. Application procedures and selection criteria vary according to the department. In general, students apply for the University scholarship for traineeship usually months before they have planned to start the traineeship. At most departments, traineeship scholarships are distributed in the order of arrival of qualified applications or by means of lottery.

Practical training is an integral part of polytechnic studies, which is considered an asset that makes the polytechnic degrees more appealing to young people choosing educational institutions. Traineeship is also a recruitment channel to many students and organisations hosting the trainees. Traineeships aim to familiarise students with the work of the study field as well as develop basic skills in the workplace. Traineeship of good quality requires a considerable investment on behalf of all three parties – the student, the educational institution and the hosting organisation.⁵²

In the polytechnics, students independently search a suitable traineeship placement which has to be approved by the educational institution. Before starting the internship, the student makes a plan in which he contemplates the traineeship's role in his career plans. During the traineeship, the student writes a report which will be revised by the mentors in the educational institution and the employer representative. As a conclusion, there will be a feedback meeting after which the student receives corresponding credits to his transcript of records.⁵³ The degrees consist of 210–270 ECTS points and the traineeship equals to

⁴⁹ Tasavallan tukityöllistetyt ja harjoittelijat ry.

⁵⁰ The Employment and Economic Development Office. Työharjoittelu ja työelämävalmennus.

⁵¹ Nekby: Active labor market programs for the integration of youths and immigrants into the labor market. The Nordic experience.

⁵² Harjoittelupedia.Yleistä.

⁵³ Harjoittelupedia. Harjoittelun vaiheet.

between 30– 85 ECTS points. In most study branches, a traineeship corresponds to a value of 30 ECTS points which is 20 working weeks. In social and health sector degree traineeships equal to 75–85 ECTS points.⁵⁴

The disadvantage of Finnish vocational training is that it has been deemed too theory-driven; creating a risk of non-enrolment and discontinuation of studies for those pupils who would prefer more practically oriented vocational education. There are calls for more demand driven and regionally differentiated vocational training.⁵⁵ On-the-job learning in vocational training is target-orientated, guided studying that takes place at the workplace, where part of the skills set in degree requirements are learned. Study periods are carried out in cooperation between vocational institutions and the workplace. On-the-job-learning forms an essential part of all the Finnish vocational degrees. Traineeships equal to at least 30 ECTS of the full 180 ECTS degree in all study fields. In Finland, the average duration of the Leonardo da Vinci IVT (initial vocational training) traineeship is 4-6 weeks.⁵⁶

4.2 Issues about employer practices as regards traineeships

Could not find any evidence of questionable practices as regards to traineeships in Finland.

5. Trainee's Rights and Terms and Conditions

The national legislation does not include a set of conditions for traineeships and trainees do not have a specified legal status in Finland. The trainee's legal situation varies and depends whether the trainee is officially in employment or not. The trainee's status is determined in the trainee programme/scheme, and finally in the traineeship contract. When the trainee does not have an employee status the labour law is not applied, it follows that the Working Hour Act, Annual Holiday Act and Occupational Health Care Act are inapplicable to the traineeship. The traineeship contract may regulate the working hours, holidays etc. in these cases.

In most cases of university traineeships, the trainee is legally in employment, which means the labour law is applied. In polytechnic education the trainee status varies, the recommendation is that the trainees who receive salary should have the employee status. The vocational education trainees do not usually have an employee status. According to the recommendation of the representatives of the state, municipalities and employer organisations given in 2005, on-the-job learning and vocational skills demonstrations should be mainly carried out outside official employment and non-compensated.⁵⁷

According to the Act on the Public Employment Service (1295/2002), ALMP traineeship is not judicially employment but an arrangement between the trainee, employer and the Employment Office⁵⁸. The same act regulates the working hours and other circumstances of the ALMP trainees. The person undertaking an ALMP traineeship is still registered as unemployed during the traineeship and continues receiving unemployment allowance.⁵⁹

⁵⁴ Mikkeli University of Applied Sciences. Harjoittelupaikan tarjoaja on avainasemassa.

⁵⁵ European Employment Observatory, EEO Review: Youth Employment Measures 2010 Finland

⁵⁶ Study on a possible framework to facilitate transnational mobility for placements at enterprises

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Act 2002/1295

⁵⁹ See pages 291-292 for details.

The Young Workers' Act (998/1993)⁶⁰ applies to employees under the age of 18. The wages of minors and minimum wages of adults can be found generally from the collective agreement of each sector. The wages and salaries are on average 70–90 per cent of the lowest pay scale. For children over 15 years of age, working hours are the same as for the adults, also overtime is permitted. For children under the age of 15, the length of a working day must not exceed seven hours, and overtime work is prohibited. Also working in the evenings is limited and night work is prohibited.

In January 2008 the Ministry of Employment and the Economy set up a working group to define how to improve the legal position of the 'workers that are not officially in employment'⁶¹. The aim was to amend the legal position of the workers who are not officially in employment in a way that they would be covered by labour and social law.⁶² The working group memo was completed and delivered to the Ministry of Employment and the Economy in September 2009. The memo has contributed initiatives and development in many important issues.

6. Quality Assurance of Traineeships

According to some stakeholders interviewees the students, employee and the student should all be responsible for the quality assurance of university traineeship. But ultimately it comes down to the educational staff who works at the university departments who approve the traineeship placement beforehand and approve the traineeship report and admit the credits afterwards.

In vocational traineeships the workplace instructor is in key position in quality assurance. In vocational and polytechnic traineeships there are several concepts related to quality assurance. The follow-up and evaluation meetings with the trainee, workplace instructor and educational institution representative are part of the traineeship procedure unlike in the university traineeships. The trainees in all education levels usually write learning diary or report on the traineeship which is the ultimate quality assurance method if there are no contacts between the employer and educational institution representative.

All the Finnish polytechnics have access to a shared national system of student feedback, OPALA. The system collects feedback from graduating students about the quality of education, traineeships and counseling, as well as information about the transition to the labour market. OPALA survey questions have been prepared by the Ministry of Education and polytechnics together. The Ministry of Education uses the student feedback from OPALA for the evaluation of education and traineeships. The polytechnics use the feedback for the development of education, traineeships and student counseling.⁶³ Analysis of the OPALA feedback shows that in 2010 over 88 per cent of the respondents were of the opinion that the tasks done during the traineeships contributed to learning, and over 81 per cent of the respondents felt that counseling/support during the traineeship was sufficient^{64 65}.

In Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci traineeships there are quality documents that guide stakeholders in quality assurance. For example the Leonardo da Vinci quality commitment helps in getting the picture of the responsibilities of each stakeholder in the traineeship process⁶⁶.

⁶⁰ Act 1993/998

⁶¹ Traineeships and subsidized employment

⁶² Ministry of Employment and the Economy. Ei-työsuhteisten aseman parantamista selvittävän työryhmän muistio. 2009.

⁶³ Ministry of Education and Culture. Tietoa Opala-järjestelmästä.

⁶⁴ Ministry of Education and Culture. Opala.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Leonardo Da Vinci Mobility Quality Commitment Training Placements.

7. Overall Assessment as regards Traineeships

7.1 Benefits and drawbacks of traineeships

During traineeships, students gain work experience in their own field, which is considered the most important benefit of doing traineeships. Traineeships are also seen as a motivator for graduating and planning of the studies and career. There seems to be very few drawbacks in traineeships. Some trainees may be employed after the traineeship and consequently may drop out the school. This is not common, and it is more common that student may continue as a part-time employee after the traineeship and finish the degree despite the employment.

The fact that still many traineeships are not regulated by law in Finland is rather concerning. The issue has been raised and the understanding of the lack of legislation has been noted. In general there seem to be very few malpractices but the legal protection of the trainees' role should be assured. The trainees are usually young people who are vulnerable and do not know the working life practices which makes the legal protection even more significant.

7.2 Effectiveness of traineeships

In addition to skills related to study field, young people can learn general working life skills in traineeships. So even if the content does not significantly support degree related learning, working experience and working life skills are of great importance in the transition to working life.

The importance and effectiveness of traineeships in different study fields is variable. In the recruitment process employers appreciate work experience – whether it has been gained in a traineeship or otherwise is not very relevant. Unfortunately according to some stakeholder interviews the traineeship work experience is not always considered as real work experience by employers. Yet the stakeholders see the effectiveness of traineeships very relevant in the youth transition to labour market.

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Annex

Table A 1: The transnational mobility of vocational education students from Finland 2010 (Centre for international mobility CIMO)

Mobility Programme/Financier	On-the-Job-Learning	%	Other study-related activity	%
Leonardo da Vinci	1,080	42	34	40
Comenius/Grundtvig	21	1	47	2
Nordplus	59	2	8	2
The Finnish National Board of Education	146	6	13	6
Educational institution	1,034	40	97	41
Financed by the student	126	5	2	5
Other financing	94	4	33	4
Total	2,560	100	234	100

Table A 2: The transnational mobility of vocational education students to Finland 2010 (Centre for international mobility CIMO)

Mobility Programme/Financier	On-the-Job-Learning	%	Other study-related activity	%
Leonardo da Vinci	995	73	339	25
Comenius/Grundtvig	19	1	335	24
Nordplus	31	2	201	14
The Finnish National Board of Education	13	1	16	1
Educational institution	100	8	321	23
Financed by the student	19	1	37	3
Other financing	190	14	133	10
Total	1,367	100	1,382	100

Table A 3: Leonardo da Vinci participants in Finland⁶⁷

LLP 2007-2013 Leonardo da Vinci subprogramme Country: Finland

Mobility projects

Call	Target group	2007*	2008*	2009*	2010	2011*
Participants (*planned)	Initial vocational training	1,160	1,105	1,378	1,438	1,313
	People on the labour market	116	69	127	30	95
Participants Realised till 01.01.2011	Initial vocational training	1,160	1,140	785	n/a	n/a
	People on the labour market	116	63	52	n/a	n/a

⁶⁷ European Commission. Education & Training. Leonardo da Vinci statistics.

Finnish Case Study Report

Policy Framework

Traditionally the link between working life and university studies has not been very strong in Finland, especially in the generalist fields that do not prepare for a specific profession. In 2007 the Ministry of Education and Culture identified the promotion of working life contacts as one of the education development aims for HE in the Development Plan of Education and Research. This has been pursued by supporting students' working life orientation during their studies.⁶⁸

There have also been two major policy changes during the last few years that have affected the Finnish university scene in general: the new Universities Act and the new guidelines regarding the recognition and accreditation of prior learning.

The new Universities Act, that came into effect 1.1.2010, replaced the Universities Act of 1997. The university reform had seven key impacts:

1. Universities became independent legal bodies and they were separated from the State. They now have the choice of becoming either corporations subject to public law, or foundations subject to private law.
2. The autonomy of universities enlarged further and universities were given more authority by reducing the steering of universities by state administration.
3. Universities took the place of the State as employers, so university staff are no longer employed by the State.
4. Universities now have more latitude in the management of their finances so that they have better opportunities for making the best use of their income from capital and supplementing their financing with donations and business activities.
5. Universities now have full financial liability, which emphasises the importance of strategic management.
6. Government continues to guarantee sufficient core funding tied to the rise in costs for the universities.
7. The position of students continues to be regarded as full members of the university community. At the same time, the universities' management and decision-making system was reformed.⁶⁹

The changes related to university funding are the ones that have most impact on the university traineeship scholarship system. Also section 44 in Universities' Act addresses assessment and recognition of study attainments issues⁷⁰. These issues are relevant in accreditation and recognition of traineeships and were not addressed in the former Universities Act.

The other relevant change in Finnish universities is the implementation of new guidelines regarding the recognition and accreditation of prior learning. In March 2009 the Finnish Council of University Rectors and the Rectors' Conference of Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences published their working group report on the guidelines regarding the recognition and accreditation of prior learning (APEL/RPL) for institutions of higher education. The

⁶⁸ Penttilä, Johanna: 'Kyllä sitä osaa ja pärjää'. Yliopisto-opiskelijoiden harjoittelukokemukset yleisillä akateemisilla aloilla.

⁶⁹ Ministry of Culture and Education. University Reform.

⁷⁰ Universities Act 558/2009. Unofficial Translation.

report gives both university-specific and degree-specific recommendations, and each HE institution will decide how to put them into practice.^{71 72} The RPL guidelines are seen as an important part of the Lifelong Learning Programme and the Bologna process. The transition to know-how-based thinking in study curriculums, as well as the quality assurance and internationalization of HE, have been important background for the RPL reform in Finland.⁷³

The introduction of RPL guidelines also affects traineeship issues at universities. The Ministry of Education and Culture states in the Development Plan for the years 2007–2012 that by improving RPL processes, study times will be shortened in HE and the mobility between education and working life will be more flexible.⁷⁴ Although the accreditation is not a new thing in Finnish HE, the introduction and implementation of these guidelines has given the RPL process more congruity and transparency. The strong autonomous position of Finnish universities has made the process challenging but the guidelines have been implemented in Finnish universities in 2011.

So far there is not much experience of how much the reform has affected the traineeships at Finnish universities. The stakeholder interviewees stated that the changes will mostly affect those degrees where the traineeship is compulsory. In some cases the practices related to accreditation and recognition of earlier work experience for a compulsory traineeship were very rigid and diverse before the RPL reform. The RPL reform is likely to make these practices more flexible. The reform will affect, for example, university students who are working part-time or full-time in their own field during their studies. With the reform their work experience can now be accredited more consistently to cover the degree-related traineeship period.

The Centre for Extension Studies at the University in Turku is carrying out an ESF-funded project called AHOT korkeakouluissa (RPL in Higher Education) 2008–2013. One of the aims is to create a special qualification certificate (osaamissertifikaatti). The purpose of this qualification certificate is to recognise students' skills that have been acquired through work or a traineeship, and compensate it in their degrees. The certificate is a supplement to a letter of reference and CV. The qualification certificate is issued by the employer and it describes the employee's real job skills acquired during their work. The certificate can be used, for example, when applying for HE degrees or when the person wants to complete interrupted studies flexibly. The qualification certificate is currently being piloted at the Department of Information Technology in University of Turku and some employers are involved. The pilot aims to find out what the HE institution's requirements are for the qualification certificate.⁷⁵

Organisation of Traineeship under Study, Relevant Stakeholders and their Role

As a result of the autonomous position of Finnish universities the organisation of traineeship varies substantially according to university, department and degree in case. In general there are four main actors that are involved in the traineeship organisation process. The main actors in the process are the university career service unit, the traineeship coordinator from the department or faculty, the student and the employer.

The career services of Finnish universities have an important role in graduates' transition to the labour market. In the late 1990s Finnish universities established career service units to promote employment of university graduates and career counseling as an answer to the

⁷¹ RPL Newsletter 3/2008. University of Turku. Centre for Extension Studies.

⁷² Rehtorien neuvoston työryhmäraportti (maaliskuu 2009): Oppimisesta osaamiseen: Aiemmin hankitun osaamisen tunnistaminen ja tunnustaminen

⁷³ University of Turku. AHOT-hanke. Materiaaleja.

⁷⁴ Education and Research 2007–2012. Development Plan

⁷⁵ Anttila, Tiina. Conversation and e-mail correspondence.

economic recession in the early 1990s. One of the means of promoting employment is the organisation and facilitation of the traineeships. The career services also promote cooperation between employers, universities and university graduates. The Ministry of Culture and Education and Ministry of Employment and the Economy both played an important role in the establishment of university career services. The university career services establishment also highlighted the promotion of employment as one of the elements of university studies and strengthened the universities' responsibility in the employment of their graduates. The economic support for the career services provided by the Ministry of Culture and Education ended in 2000. Since then the career services have been successfully integrated as a part of the basic function of Finnish universities.

Nowadays all Finnish universities have their own career service units and their number of staff varies from one to ten. The career services of Finnish universities have cooperated closely since their establishment, although the official agreement on national Aarresaari network was established in 2001. The Aarresaari network represents 19 Academic Career Services of Finnish universities. National networking has increased the effectiveness and social importance of their work. The Aarresaari network has created a nationwide academic recruitment service for employers and university students with more than 12,000 visitors per month.^{76 77} The Aarresaari network is currently negotiating on the new cooperation agreement. Unfortunately all the Finnish universities will not be involved in the new agreement.

The career services cooperate closely with other university departments on traineeship issues. The responsibilities between the faculties and career services vary in different universities. At the University of Helsinki the Career Services are responsible for the coordination of the traineeship system of university subsidised traineeships. Basically the career services are responsible for promoting and marketing the traineeships to the students and the employers. The career services also produce guidelines and orientation materials for the trainees and for employers receiving trainees. The career services are responsible for the general administration of the traineeship system, or part of it, and data collection for traineeships statistics. Educational departments are always responsible for the content and accreditation issues, but the role of career services is more variable. In smaller universities the career services may have a bigger role in the traineeship application and recruitment process.

Other relevant stakeholders in university students' transition to the labour market are the National Union of University Students, Akava (Confederation of Unions for Professional and Managerial Staff in Finland) and Employment and Economic Development Offices. University students are represented by the National Union of University Students in Finland. Akava, which is a trade union confederation for those with university, professional or other high-level education represents the graduates⁷⁸. The Employment and Economic Development Office offers services for the unemployed.

The Finnish government has a long tradition of offering traineeship placements to university students and employing university graduates. The Office for the Government as Employer in the Ministry of Finance carries out different measures aimed at young people. The traineeships are seen as one of the functional ways of getting young people acquainted with the versatile job opportunities in governmental institutions. The governmental institutions are also encouraged to cooperate with students when they are working on their thesis. Governmental institutions can offer topics for a thesis that students can make use of, they are also encouraged to provide a salary for thesis work.^{79 80}

⁷⁶ Aarresaari. Academic Career Services.

⁷⁷ Aarresaari. Aarresaari 10 vuotta (1.9.2004).

⁷⁸ Akava - Confederation of Unions for Professional and Managerial Staff in Finland.

⁷⁹ Ministry of Finance. The competitiveness and future of the Government as Employer.

Funding and Resource Allocation

In 2008 the member organisations of Akava started a Traineeship Manifest which promoted traineeship conditions and remuneration levels.⁸¹ The Aarresaari network has also raised the issue of adequate remuneration for traineeships. Since 2010 the monthly scholarship for university traineeships has followed the minimum salary limit defined by terms of employment and the Social Insurance Institution. The limit was €1,071 in 2011. This is a major issue as it can affect the unemployment benefits of the student after graduation.⁸²

Degree students who have completed a compulsory traineeship seem to be in a better position to receive a university subsidy for traineeships. For example, at the Institute of Behavioral Sciences in Helsinki University basically all the students can receive a scholarship. The amount of scholarships per university and per department varies each academic year. Since 1998 the Ministry of Education and Culture has not allocated the university traineeship scholarships separately. The traineeship funding has since been part of the basic funding system of the universities and the departments at each university negotiate their shares every year. This procedure has changed the arrangements and resources related to traineeships in Finnish universities. In some cases traineeship funding has decreased but in the degrees with compulsory traineeships the resources are still at an adequate level. In some departments the scholarship recipients are chosen by means of lottery as the allocation is not enough for all the applicants. There are also departments and universities that do not offer traineeship scholarships at all. For example, Lappeenranta University of Technology has not offered scholarships for their students' traineeships since 2009. In technical and commercial fields, students can often find reasonably paid summer jobs in their own field that can be accredited as traineeships. According to stakeholder interviews the students in different universities do not have equal access to traineeship scholarships, but as the previous example shows each field of study can find practices that are suitable for their students.

At the University of Helsinki each department has a certain number of scholarships to be distributed. In the case of university subsidised traineeships the employer makes an agreement with the university department about the division of costs. The average length of these university subsidised traineeships is three months. The university department is usually responsible for the salary for one or two months and the employer for the corresponding salary for the remaining one or two months. In the University of Helsinki the average monthly scholarship is €1,350⁸³. The employer can also pay a bigger salary to the trainee but the amount equivalent to the university monthly salary is the minimum requirement.

There are also exceptions in the traineeship systems; for example, in a social work degree the length of compulsory traineeship is a lot longer than for an average university degree. The traineeships are called practical training and are considered a very integral part of the degree. The students are considered to be taught by the employer during the traineeship and the employers are paid for the supervision by the university. At the University of Lapland the supervision remuneration is €24–84 per week. In some few cases if the student has previous competent study or work experience from the field they can receive a salary from the employer during the traineeship. In these cases the students are not considered as needing such intensive supervision and the employer cannot receive remuneration for traineeship supervision.

In addition to national funding schemes the university students also undertake transnational traineeships within different traineeship programmes.

⁸⁰ Ministry of Finance. Valtiöyönantajan kilpailukyky ja tulevaisuus.

⁸¹ Akava. Uutisarkisto 2008. Yliopisto-opiskelijoiden harjoittelu kaipaa kohennusta.

⁸² Social Insurance Institution. Työssäoloehto.

⁸³ University of Helsinki. Career Services. Palkkaa harjoittelija: tarjoa harjoittelupaikka.

Description Of Traineeship Under Study

The Government Decree on University Degrees 794/2004 states that studies leading to a lower university degree may include '*work practice for professional development*'. Studies leading to a higher university degree may include '*internship improving expertise*'. The exceptions are the degrees where traineeships are compulsory: the Bachelor of Science degree in Pharmacy, studies for the degrees of Licentiate of Medicine, Licentiate of Dentistry, Licentiate of Veterinary Medicine, the degree of Master of Science in Pharmacy and the Master of Science degree in Psychology, and education in social work belonging to the field of social sciences which includes compulsory internships.⁸⁴

The university traineeships in Finland can be roughly divided into two types; traineeships that are accredited as part of the degree (a compulsory or voluntary part of the study curriculum) and traineeships that students may undertake during degree studies but that are not accredited as a part of the degree. The Finnish university system is very flexible and allows students to take various traineeships during their studies. The traineeships can be university subsidised, funded by transnational trainee programmes or non-salary traineeships.

The traineeship application and recruitment processes vary a lot in Finnish universities. For example, at the Institute of Behavioral Sciences in the University of Helsinki, where traineeships are a compulsory part of the study curriculum, students can sign up for the university subsidised traineeship once a year. The prerequisite is a certain amount of approved study attainments and the students can receive the university traineeship subsidy only once. In all Master's degree curriculums at the Institute of Behavioral Sciences a traineeship is compulsory. The Institute of Behavioral Sciences contacts their network of employers that have previously taken trainees from the institute every year to enquire whether they can offer a placement. The list of these employers offering placements is sent to the group of students that have signed up for the traineeships. Each employer announces the tasks and requirements needed for their position and students can apply for the placements directly. The traineeship recruitment process is similar to any other recruitment except for the fact that these placement offers are only made public to the students that have signed up and therefore are entitled to the university scholarship. The signed up students may also look for a placement on their own and then get it approved by the department.

Content and Practices related to the Traineeship under Study

The Government Decree on University Degrees 794/2004 defines that the lower degree must give the student '*a capacity for applying the acquired knowledge and skills to work*' and the upper degree '*knowledge and skills needed for independently operating as an expert and developer*'.⁸⁵ The preceding quotations have been interpreted as traineeships and 'working life skills' modules at most universities.

According to stakeholder interviews, some universities have taken active measures to include 'working life skills' modules into the study curriculums since the 2004 decree. At the University of Helsinki the Career Services have taken an active role in creating and implementing these working life skills modules. The planning and tailoring of these working life skills modules has been done in cooperation with the Career Services and the educational staff. According to stakeholder interviews the working life skills modules do not seem to be equally available in all the universities and departments or the information

⁸⁴ Decree 794/2004

⁸⁵ Decree 794/2004

about their availability does not reach the students well enough. However the importance of the working life skills modules is considered very high.

There are no clear learning aims or traineeship content in Finland for most university degrees. However in some professional degrees, where the traineeship is compulsory, the content of the traineeship is more strictly defined. For example, in social work traineeships the content is individually planned and evaluated in cooperation with the employer, student and educational staff.

Traineeship Contract and Trainee's Terms and Conditions

If the traineeship is subsidised by the university, the employer and trainee agree an employment contract which ensures that the student legally has employee status and therefore the corresponding jurisdiction is applied in the traineeship. The university scholarship is a means to ensure a trainee's legal position and employer's commitment to the process. The employer also signs an agreement about funding with the university department in case. In practice, the employer invoices the university for its share of the salary and is then responsible for paying the monthly salary for the trainee during the whole traineeship period.

If the traineeship is not subsidised by the university, a trainee's status is dependent on the content of contract made with the employer. If the traineeship is an accredited part of the degree, the trainee is covered by the university insurance during the traineeship. In the most vulnerable situation are the trainees who undertake traineeships that are not subsidised by the university nor accredited for their degree.

As mentioned in the National Report, Finnish university students are also eligible for the governmental student allowance during their traineeships if the traineeship is accredited by the university. In transnational traineeships travel grants may be awarded, for example, from the university's international office or from the CIMO (Centre for International Mobility).

Quality Assurance Mechanisms

Each Finnish university has its own quality assurance mechanisms. These mechanisms may take a stance on traineeships, but according to stakeholder interviews the quality of university traineeships varies in practice as it depends on the cooperation of the trainee and employer representative.

Universities, university departments and employers may have their own guidelines related to traineeships' guidance and quality assurance. Students from the Institute of Behavioral Sciences at the University of Helsinki are not usually contacted during the traineeship by their departmental traineeship coordinator. The starting point is that the university students are considered independent self-guided actors and the traineeship should resemble, as much as possible, real working life. Therefore students are encouraged to discuss quality issues, traineeship content and any possible challenges that may arise during the traineeship directly with the employer. Students may also consult the departmental traineeship coordinator in challenging cases. It seems to be quite rare that traineeships do not go as planned.

Technically the quality assurance takes place when the departmental coordinator at the university or educational staff approve the traineeship placement before the traineeship and, when the traineeship is completed, approve and accredit the traineeship report. The departmental coordinator at the university is in the key position in quality assurance and traineeship coordination is, in most cases, only a small share of their tasks. According to stakeholder interviews the quality assurance does not seem to be very structured, on the

contrary quality assurance seems to be individually viewed in each case. However the quality of university traineeships is seen to be very high in general.

Current Debate

The Finnish Association of Students of Political Sciences (SVOL) has raised the issue of inequalities in the traineeship practices at Finnish universities. The length of traineeships, compulsory nature of traineeships, traineeship subsidy arrangements by the university and guidance are variable. However, traineeship is seen as an important investment for students' futures and it is important in facilitating the transition to the labour market.⁸⁶

There has been public debate about limiting study times in universities. Finnish university students are considered to start their studies too late and study times are being protracted. The public debate usually draws the conclusion that students would benefit the national economy better by graduating more rapidly and younger. The National Union of University Students has disagreed about the limitation of study times. Limitations in study times would naturally affect the traineeship possibilities, especially in degrees where it is not compulsory. At the same time international comparison shows that in Finland graduates holding Master's Degree achieve established posts within just over a year after their graduation. The same figure for other countries varies between three and ten years. Research shows that the work experience accrued during studies is strongly linked with the employment after graduation.^{87 88} However the Ministry of Education and Culture claims that not all work experience is relevant and useful in employment in a student's own field. The National Union of University Students has suggested that the amount of student allowance issued by the Social Insurance Institution of Finland should be raised. More extensive student allowance would enable the students to concentrate on their studies instead of worrying about their livelihood.

Effectiveness of Case-studied Traineeship: Outputs and Results

In addition to university subsidised traineeships students can undertake other types of traineeships independently or within traineeship programmes like Erasmus or AIESEC. Depending on the employer, the length of the traineeship and the tasks undertaken by the trainee, these traineeships may also be approved and accredited as a part of their degree. At the Institute of Behavioral Sciences at the University of Helsinki, for example, students undertake approximately 45 university subsidised traineeships a year and 15 traineeships that were funded by other means but were accredited as a part of the degree. The individual university departments may have statistics about the traineeships that are accredited as a compulsory traineeship in the students' transcript of records and whether these traineeships are subsidised by the university or not. Whereas the Career Services of University of Helsinki, which is responsible for the statistics at university level, do not collect data on traineeships that are not subsidised by the university. The number of subsidised traineeships at the University of Helsinki was 729 in 2010.

From the point of view of an employer traineeship is effective in many ways. The trainee can bring new ideas and innovations to the employer and the employer can also learn about the content of the degree in question. The traineeship can be the only contact the employer has with the educational institutions of their field. The three-month subsidised traineeship can also be seen as a low risk recruitment opportunity. It is not rare that trainees continue working part-time for the employer after their traineeship. From the point of view of the university traineeships are important in motivating students. Students get a chance to apply

⁸⁶ Finnish Association of Students of Political Sciences. Kannanotto: Harjoittelukäytänteet epätasa-arvoistavat opiskelijoita.

⁸⁷ Kivinen, O. & Nurmi, J: Opiskelun nopeus ja työmarkkinarelevanssi-korkeakoulupolitiikan dilemma?

⁸⁸ Reflex. Info. The Flexible Professional in the Knowledge Society New Demands on Higher Education in Europe.

learned theory in practice. The traineeship can also motivate students in planning their studies and future careers and speed up their graduation.

Traineeship offers students information about the working life and skills required for different positions. During the traineeship students can start to build their professional identity. Students can also plan their future careers better after having experience from working life. Otus (the Research Foundation of Finnish Student Organisations) issued research looking at university students' experiences of the traineeships that are part of the study curriculum in the generalist fields (fields that do not prepare for a certain profession). According to the research, 85 per cent (n= 158) of the students considered their traineeship experience successful. According to the research students learned basic skills needed in their field and working in different types of circumstances. They also developed their self-knowledge and self-esteem during the traineeship. However traineeship was not considered to have much link with their studies. The students also felt that university's role was rather invisible and the employer was not very familiar with the traineeship goals. According to the research, the quality of duties and supervision, as well as effective planning of the traineeship at the work place, are the key elements of successful traineeships.⁸⁹

Conclusions

The university traineeship practices in Finland are complicated and significantly variable. University traineeship scholarships clearly help students in getting very valuable traineeship experience and facilitate their transition to the labour market. The university scholarship is a great way to ensure the student's legal position and employer's commitment to the traineeship.

As mentioned in the previous chapters, the Finnish university system offers students a lot of options and freedom to plan for individual paths and schedules. Students are considered to be responsible for their own studies and traineeship as a part of the studies. University is seen as an enabler that offers different opportunities for students. Quality assurance is seen as built into the administrative structures and self-assessment is emphasised. The traineeship structures vary but function well. The study system as a whole, as well as traineeship-related practices, are created to encourage students' freedom and responsibility.

The inequality of the university traineeship subsidies is clearly a consequence of the autonomous role of the Finnish universities. The whole system of university traineeship scholarship seems to be in a transition phase. The changes in the university funding system also create pressure on allocation of resources for traineeship scholarships. At least one Finnish university has recently given up the traineeship scholarship system. Students of those degrees where traineeship is compulsory seem to be in the most secure position for maintaining scholarships, although resources have tightened.

According to stakeholder interviews, the traineeships do not necessarily promote dialogue between employers and universities, although, at its best, such dialogue could mean employers would be able to influence the study curricula, so that it would respond to employers' and working life's needs. The biggest challenges are the lack of resources and in general the lack of tradition and interest in cooperation. In technical fields cooperation is more common and seen to be more beneficial. According to research issued by Otus, students also considered that closer cooperation between the employer and university is crucial in successful traineeships⁹⁰. The change in the university funding system has played a large role in increasing the cooperation between universities and other actors of society

⁸⁹ Penttilä, Johanna: 'Kyllä sitä osaa ja pärjää'. Yliopisto-opiskelijoiden harjoittelukokemukset yleisillä akateemisilla aloilla.

⁹⁰ Penttilä, Johanna: 'Kyllä sitä osaa ja pärjää'. Yliopisto-opiskelijoiden harjoittelukokemukset yleisillä akateemisilla aloilla.

and opening up channels in general. This is also beneficial for students' transition to the labour market.

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National Report on Traineeships France

M'Hamed DIF

BETA-Céreq Alsace

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1. Traineeships as part of Member State's Youth Policy Measures

1.1 Introduction: Overview of Youth Unemployment

At the end of the second quarter of 2011, the French unemployment rate for young people (15-24 years old) WAS 22.8 per cent, 2.3 percentage points higher than the EU-27 average (20.5 per cent) for the same age group and 13.1 percentage points higher than the national average (9.7 per cent) for all age groups. This rate increased by 3.8 percentage points during the period from June 2008 to June 2011 (Eurostat News Release, 2011).

The rise of youth unemployment, especially since the beginning of the current economic crisis, is mainly due to the vulnerability and the specific labour market entry difficulties of the 15-24 age group in the French labour market. As confirmed by the consulted stakeholders involved in the implementation of VET and labour market inclusion policies, this situation is mainly the result of the following factors.

First, there is lack of fluidity in the transition from school to work (OECD, 2009). This is due to insufficient matching and adaptation of the educational and training content to employer qualification and skills requirements as well as the changing needs of the labour market. This is amplified by a lack of sufficient cooperation and partnerships between enterprises and educational and training institutions, especially within the initial general secondary educational track (with the exclusion of the apprenticeship path). This has, *inter alia*, resulted in growing numbers of early school leavers with no or with very low initial qualifications.

Second, France is characterised by considerable labour market segmentation with growing numbers of precarious and subsidised employment contracts. The difficulty of accessing sustainable/permanent employment has led to the proliferation of subsidised part-time, temporary or fixed-term contracts which have been very common for most young people, especially during the last decade. Specifically, more than a third of young people aged under 30 are employed on temporary work contracts compared to only one seventh as the average of the working population.

Moreover, most of the jobs occupied by young people tend to be low qualified ones, especially within low qualification sectors (such as construction sector) where 40 per cent to 50 per cent are occupied by individuals aged under 30. Because of labour market segmentation and the proliferation of subsidised inclusion contracts, more than one in four jobs occupied by young people aged under 26 are subsidised by the state or local authorities (as opposed to only one in 25 for the working population as a whole) (DARES, 2011d). The combined effect of precarious and subsidised employment contracts tends to compress the pay scale for young people to its lowest level.

The social integration, information, advice and guidance, training and labour market inclusion issues of young people aged 16-25 with difficulties accessing employment, are mainly by the network of local missions (ML-Missions Locales) in cooperation, at regional level, with employment centres (Pôles Emploi), the regional councils and other public and private operators.¹ In 2009, 1,268,000 young people aged 16-25 were in contact with Missions Locales (Youth Advisory Centres), while for 40.6 per cent this was their first contact (DARES, 2011b).

¹ *Missions locales pour l'emploi* are Youth Advisory Centres tasked with helping young people with job search searching for employment through the TRACE programme (Trajet, Accès à l'Emploi). Established in 1982 they now comprise a network of more than 600 centres. They involve partnerships between cities, inter-municipal structures, local or regional communities, the LPES and other relevant associations, <http://www.lamissionlocale.net/>

Due to the economic crisis, the activity of the Missions Locales network increased in 2009 through conducting 3.9 million interviews (compared to 3.7 million in 2008). Of all young people who had been in contact with this network, 435,000 got work placements. Of those who contacted the network for the first time, 23 per cent succeeded in gaining work placements (through normal work contracts, subsidised employment contracts or alternance-based training-work contracts) and 16 per cent could have access to traineeships six months after their first contact. Although most of the young people in contact with the Missions Locales network are less qualified (40 per cent without level ISCED 3 education/qualification), the number of qualified young people (with at least ISCED 4 level education/qualification) looking for work placements through this network is increasing (DARES, 2011b).

1.2 Measures for the Promotion of Youth Traineeships and Employment

Measures undertaken for the promotion of youth-related traineeships and employment fall into two interconnected categories:

- youth traineeships related to VET policy measures
- traineeships linked to active labour market policies (including access to unemployment and other social benefits connected with relevant policy measures).

1.2.1 Youth Traineeships in VET

Youth-related traineeships in VET are mainly part of the national educational and training policies and programmes. They can be grouped into two basic categories:

First, **traineeships facilitating the transition from school to work which are mainly aimed at young people following secondary education or university courses**. They include the following:

- Alternance-based training placements (connected with apprenticeships and Contrats de Professionnalisation).
- Mandatory and non-mandatory traineeships in secondary and higher education.
- Traineeships connected with transnational co-operation and mobility programmes (such as Leonardo da Vinci and Erasmus)

Secondly, there are **inclusion traineeships** and related measures **targeted at disadvantaged, low qualified young people** (including early school leavers) who face difficulties entering the labour market. These traineeships and measures help their beneficiaries acquire, through training specifically tailored to their needs, the basic knowledge and skills in order to facilitate their transition to work or allow them access to further vocational training. These youth inclusion and training measures mainly come under the framework of the plan *Hope for Suburbs (Plan Espoir Banlieues)* launched on 8th February 2008 and the *Emergency Plan for Youth Employment* launched on 24th April 2009. They include the following:

- The Second Chance School (E2C -Ecoles de la Deuxième Chance);
- The training accompaniment contracts (CAF- Contrats d'Accompagnement Formation).²

² The aim of these contracts was to offer a status, social protection and remuneration to 50,000 young people engaged in vocational training programmes

1.2.2 Traineeships and Inclusion Measures in Active Labour Market Policies

Traineeships and inclusion measures linked to ALMPs are associated with youth-related information, advice, guidance and employment assistance actions as well as inclusion contracts for young people, including access to financial support, social and unemployment benefits). They also provide reinforced advice, guidance, accompaniment and support through the actions of interconnected public sector bodies such as the job centres (Pôles Emploi), the 'permanent stands for information provision and guidance' (PAIO – Permanence d'Accueil, d'Information et d'Orientation) and the local missions (ML-Missions Locales) in cooperation with other public and private organisations. As will be detailed in the next two sections, these inclusion measures include:

1. the integration contract in social life (CIVIS-Contrat d'Insertion dans la Vie Social);
2. the autonomy contract (Contrat d'Autonomie);
3. the unique inclusion contract (CUI-Contrat Unique d'Insertion) (consulted stakeholders, 2011).

Table 1.1: Main Traineeships and Inclusion Measures in VET and ALMPs

Main traineeship programmes & initiatives, including, ALMPs, educational VET & university traineeships as well as mandatory and non-mandatory professional training	Brief description	Web link
Alternance-based Traineeships (Stages en Alternance/Stages alternants/Formation en Alternance)	These are specific types of traineeship as they are based on alternating periods of on-the-job-placements (usually within a company) and in-house training within a VET provider organisation. They are integrated within the implementation framework of two types of placement contracts: apprenticeship and Contrats de Professionnalisation. The first exclusively targets the vocational inclusion of young people aged 16-26, while the second targets the professional integration/reintegration within the labour of both young and old people, including those already living on the minimum social allowances (such as 'ASS' and 'RSA') provided by the public authorities	http://www.travail-emploi-sante.gouv.fr/informations-pratiques,89/fiches-pratiques,91/contrats,109/le-contrat-d-apprentissage,13810.html http://www.travail-emploi-sante.gouv.fr/informations-pratiques,89/fiches-pratiques,91/contrats,109/le-contrat-de-professionnalisation,992.htm
Mandatory and Non-mandatory (Facultative) Traineeships	These are mainly part of IVET system and are relevant to all vocational and technical qualifications in upper secondary and higher education at all levels. Since the 2006 Equal Opportunities Act they are subject to a tripartite agreement (Convention de	http://www.focusrh.com/ecole-entreprise/stages-alternances/stage-obligatoire-et-stage-facultatif-quelle-difference.html?id_arti

Main traineeship programmes & initiatives, including, ALMPs, educational VET & university traineeships as well as mandatory and non-mandatory professional training	Brief description	Web link
	Stage) signed by the trainee and both the sending and host organisation prior to the start of the traineeship	cle=1195 http://www.stages-et-entreprises.com/charte/infos-juridiques.php http://www.travail-emploi-sante.gouv.fr/informations-pratiques,89/fiches-pratiques,91/acces-et-accompagnement-vers-l,651/les-stages-etudiants-en-entreprise,3904.html
Traineeships linked to international cooperation and mobility programmes	These are undertaken within the framework of international cooperation and mobility programmes (mainly Erasmus and LdV programmes) and are subject to the same legislation regulating mandatory and non-mandatory training, especially in connection with the requirements of tripartite signed agreement	http://www.2e2f.fr/erasmus-mobilite-publics.php http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc920_en.htm http://www.europe-education-formation.fr/leonardo-mobilite.php http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-davinci/doc4000_en.htm
Second Chance School (E2C-Ecole de la Deuxième Chance)	The E2C provides vocational education and training to young people aged between 16 and 25 without professional qualifications or certified diplomas, with the aim of facilitating their access to employment or to vocational certificates referenced within the French NQF	http://www.gouvernement.fr/gouvernement/qu-est-ce-que-l-ecole-de-la-deuxieme-chance http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichCodeArticle.do?cidTexte=LEGI TEXT000006071191&idArticle=LEGIARTI000006524594&dateTexte=&categorieLien=cid

Main traineeship programmes & initiatives, including, ALMPs, educational VET & university traineeships as well as mandatory and non-mandatory professional training	Brief description	Web link
The Training Accompaniment Contract (CAF- Contrat d'Accompagnement Formation)	The CAF is intended to enable disadvantaged young people aged 16-25 with difficulties in integrating into the labour market; raise the level of their qualifications and/or adapt their skills to current labour market's needs; and have access to certified training and/or sustainable employment	http://www.emploi.gouv.fr/pdf/jeunes_caf.pdf http://www.emploi.gouv.fr/boite_outils/pdf/Contrat_accompagnement_Formation_CAF.pdf
The Integration Contract in Social Life (CIVIS-Contrat d'Insertion dans la Vie sociale)	This ALMP measure for socio-professional accompaniment and inclusion is aimed at young people aged 16-25 with a qualification level equivalent at most to ISCED 4 (EQF level 4), who are either looking for stable employment, or are registered as unemployed for more than 12 months over the last 18 months	http://www.travail-emploi-sante.gouv.fr/informations-pratiques,89/fiches-pratiques,91/acces-et-accompagnement-vers-l,651/le-contrat-d-insertion-dans-la-vie,999.html
The Autonomy Contract (Contrat d'Autonomie)	Created within the framework of the Plan 'Hope for Suburbs' launched in 2008. It seeks to provide unemployed young people with intensive and personalised support and accompaniment with the aim of allowing them to acquire qualifications through training and/or helping them have access to stable employment (as employees or via the creation of their own enterprise)	http://www.emploi.gouv.fr/boite_outils/pdf/contrat_autonomie.pdf http://www.gouvernement.fr/gouvernement/plan-espoir-banlieues-une-nouvelle-dynamique-pour-la-france http://www.gouvernement.fr/gouvernement/contrat-d-autonomie-un-bilan-d-etape-tres-prometteur-pour-les-jeunes-issus-des-quartier
The Single Inclusion Contract (CUI – Contrat Unique d'Insertion)	In its renewed framework of 1 st January 2010, the CUI takes the form of both the Initiative Contract for Employment (CUI-CIE) in the for-profit sector and the Accompaniment Contract in Employment (CUI-CAE) in the non-profit sector. Its basic aim is	CUI: <a "="" href="http://www.travail-emploi-sante.gouv.fr/informations-pratiques,89/fiches-pratiques,91/contrats,">http://www.travail-emploi-sante.gouv.fr/informations-pratiques,89/fiches-pratiques,91/contrats,

Main traineeship programmes & initiatives, including, ALMPs, educational VET & university traineeships as well as mandatory and non-mandatory professional training	Brief description	Web link
	to facilitate the labour market inclusion of unemployed young and adult people who experience serious social and professional difficulties as regards their access to employment	<p>109/le-contrat-unique-d-insertion-cui,10996.html:</p> <p>CUI-CIE: http://www.travail-emploi-sante.gouv.fr/informations-pratiques,89/fiches-pratiques,91/contrats,109/le-contrat-initiative-emploi-cie,7744.html</p> <p>CUI-CAE: http://www.travail-emploi-sante.gouv.fr/informations-pratiques,89/fiches-pratiques,91/contrats,109/le-contrat-unique-d-insertion,10998.html</p>

2. Legislative Framework for Traineeships

Traineeships in France, usually referred to as 'Stages', are explicitly and fully regulated by the legislation. Additionally, some of them are monitored through their related guidelines and policy programmes established by the public authorities. Their overarching legal framework is basically the same as that governing VET in its two basic components: IVET (Initial Vocational Education and Training) and CVT (Continuing Vocational Training) (consulted stakeholders, 2011).

Since June 2000, all current legislations (Acts and implementation Decrees) concerning IVET are grouped in a 'Code of Education (Code de l'éducation) which substitutes most of the previous Acts and Decrees. The full version with a detailed dynamic table of contents is constantly updated and accessible on the public website 'legifrance'.³

Concerning traineeships and inclusion measures and contracts connected with CVT and labour market active policies, the related statutory and regulatory texts have been for the last four decades part of a distinct body of labour law called Labour Code (Code du Travail). This code includes all relevant legislative and regulatory texts and is regularly updated and

³ <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichCode.do?cidTexte=LEGITEXT000006071191>

accessible on the public website 'légifrance'.⁴ This labour code was revised on the 1st of May 2008 to include a sixth part specific to CVT instruments under the title 'Lifelong Vocational Training' (La Formation Professionnelle tout au long de la Vie) which also includes apprenticeships (although apprenticeship is classified as part of IVET). Moreover, it is important to underline in this connection that there is a specific procedure for adopting legislation and regulations governing CVT instruments: First, the social partners negotiate a national inter-professional agreement or Accord National Interprofessionnel (ANI). Following the signing of ANI, the agreement is either fully or partially integrated into legislation (Acts and Decrees) (consulted stakeholders, 2011).

In this section, each of the main existing traineeships/instruments for the promotion of youth access to employment will be presented within the statutory and regulatory framework governing its introduction and implementation. As briefly introduced in the previous section, these traineeships/measures fall within the range of two basic categories: youth-related traineeships which form part of VET policy measures and traineeships linked to ALMPs.

2.1 Youth Traineeships in VET

Youth-related traineeships and inclusion measures in VET constitute an important integrating part of the national educational and training system. Here one can distinguish traineeships facilitating transitions from school to work, including those relating both secondary and tertiary education, and traineeships enabling disadvantaged and less qualified young people to acquire basic skills and competences deemed critical for their labour market and social inclusion.

Concerning **traineeships facilitating transitions from school to work which mainly apply to those attending secondary or tertiary education**, the following forms can be found:

First, alternance-based traineeships: They are specific types of traineeships based on alternating periods of work and training within an enterprise and a VET provider. Within the French context there are two forms of alternance-based training (formation en alternance, dual training): Apprenticeships and Contrats de Professionnalisation.

(a) Apprenticeship Contract: Since the Act n° 71-576 of 16 July 1971 came into force, apprenticeships are part of the French IVET system. However, as mentioned earlier, they are regulated by the sixth part of the Labour Code on 'lifelong Vocational Training' (in Book II concerning apprenticeships). According to the law, an apprenticeship concerns young people aged 16-26 who wish to continue their initial vocational education and training with the aim of obtaining a vocational title or qualification. Since the Social Modernisation Act n° 2002-73 of the 17th January 2002, the relevant professional qualifications and titles are referenced and registered within the French National Qualifications Framework (NQF), the *Répertoire National des Certifications Professionnelles* (RNCP).

Additionally, Act n° 2006-396 of 31st of March 2006 on 'equality of opportunity' (Equal Opportunities Act) created the 'junior apprenticeship' specific to youngsters aged 14 or over.⁵ According to the rules governing this type of apprenticeship, pupils are allowed to leave the compulsory general education system in order to learn a vocational profession. At the age of 16 years old, the beneficiary of this measure, can stop the training as a 'junior apprentice' and join his/her original college or another educational or training institution. The funding of this type of alternating placements is provided by the State, the regions and the enterprises.

⁴ <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichCode.do?cidTexte=LEGITEXT000006072050&dateTexte=20120307>

⁵ Loi n° 2006-396 du 31 mars 2006 pour l'égalité des chances, <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000000268539&dateTexte=>

(b) Professionalisation Contract: Following the National Inter-professional Agreement (ANI) of 5th December 2003, Act n°2004-391 of 4th May 2004 concerning 'lifelong vocational training and social dialogue' introduced the *Contrat de Professionnalisation (CP)*. Since 1st October 2004 the CP has become the substitute of the previous three vocational inclusion contracts: the Vocational Qualification Contract, the Vocational Guidance Contract and the Vocational Adaptation Contract. It is specifically regulated by Chapter 5 under Title 2 within Book 3 of the sixth part of the Labour Code. Its objective is to allow young people under the age of 26 and without professional qualification, or those who wish to complete their training at any level, including job-seekers aged 26 years and over to obtain a *Vocational Qualification Certificate (CQP: Certificat de Qualification Professionnelle)*, a title or a qualification referenced by the collective agreement and registered within the NQF. The financing of this type of alternance-based placements is provided by accredited funding organisations called OPCA (Organismes Paritaires Collecteurs Agréés) (Joint Commission for Collective Training).⁶ These accredited joint registered collection agencies provide accredited training collective agreements (Insurance funds).

Secondly, **mandatory and non-mandatory training and traineeships** associated with both **secondary and tertiary education** as well as **international cooperation and mobility programmes**:

Since Act n° 2006-396 of 31st March 2006 on 'equality of opportunity' (Equal Opportunities Act), which was amended by Law n° 2009-1437⁷ of 24th November 2009 and completed by Decree n° 2010-956⁸ of 25th August 2010, all types of mandatory and non-mandatory traineeships (including those supported by international cooperation and mobility programmes) are subject to specific legislation. In particular, it introduced the compulsory requirement of a prior negotiated and signed tripartite agreement (**Convention de Stage**) by the sending education and training provider, the host enterprise/ organisation and the trainee, regardless whether the traineeship is undertaken in France or abroad. This compulsory traineeship agreement is an important requirement since it should clearly specify the training programme, including its duration, the trainee's terms and conditions, including his/her remuneration, social security and insurance coverage as well as other types of compensation and benefits.

Indeed, as has been mentioned France is standing out in terms of adopting an explicit 'regulated' approach to traineeships since it requires that all traineeships be accompanied with and a written agreement (Convention de Stage) signed between the trainee, the education establishment and the employer which, *inter alia*, should specify both the length of the traineeship and the trainee compensation (Scarpetta and Sonnet, 2012).

Specifically, under Article 3 of Decree n° 2006-1093 of 29th August 2006, in line with Article 9 in Equal Opportunities Act the traineeship agreement should include the following specifications:

- The definition of the various tasks assigned to the trainee by the host organisation, in accordance with the objectives of the traineeship;
- Start and end dates of the traineeship;
- The trainee's maximum working hours per week: if the trainee is expected to work during nights, Sundays or holidays, the agreement should clearly specify this possibility;
- The amount of trainee compensation and its mode of payment;
- The range of fringe benefits offered to the trainee, especially meals, accommodation and reimbursement of costs incurred as part of the traineeship;

⁶ <http://www.formation-continue.fr/-organismes-paritaires-collecteurs-agrees-.html>

⁷ <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000021312490>

⁸ <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000022740722&dateTexte=&categorieLien=id>

- The social security system under which the trainee benefits, including coverage in case of a work related accident, as mandated by article L.412-8 of the Social Security Code.⁹ Sometimes the trainee must also provide proof of 'responsabilité civile' (civil responsibility) coverage (Cabinet Karl Waheed, 2010);
- The mentoring and supervision arrangements of the traineeship, including those pertaining to both the educational establishment and the host organisation;
- The conditions of issuing to the trainee a 'Traineeship Completion Certificate' ('Attestation de Stage') and/or the validation procedures for the completed training deemed essential for obtaining the targeted qualification;
- The terms of suspension and termination of the traineeships agreement;
- The conditions under which the trainee is permitted to be absent, notably absence related to his/her educational course; and
- Those clauses in the organisation's own by-laws¹⁰ which apply to the trainee.

As mentioned earlier and will be discussed in greater detail in Section 4, the trainee's rights, terms and conditions were further reinforced by subsequent amendment and application legislations following the 2006 Equal Opportunities Act, notably the Law n° 2011-893 of 28 July 2011 for 'the development of alternance-based training and the professional career path security' (Loi Cherpion).¹¹ This law was brought in with a view to both reinforcing the existing traineeship-related legislative framework and introduced additional requirements deemed to improve the protection of trainees (Mongourdin-Denoix/Eurofound, 2011). Crucially, this legislation is seen as response to growing concern, reports and allegations of trainee exploitation by employers. The new law:

1. Reinforces the importance of the compulsory tripartite traineeship contract (Convention de Stage) signed between the trainee, the educational establishment and the trainee.
2. Limits the length of a traineeship to six months per academic year, ie a trainee cannot undertake a traineeship with the same company for more than six months.
3. Seeks to ensure that trainees are not assigned tasks performed by regular staff.
4. Requires that the traineeship's learning content should be of high quality and integrated into the trainee's degree or other training.
5. States that companies should wait for a period corresponding to 1/3 of the length of the previous traineeship before they can take on a new trainee in the same role as that of the last one.
6. Stipulates that trainees undertaking a traineeship lasting for more than two months, should receive minimum compensation in the form of a bonus (called 'gratification').¹² The amount of this compensation which is defined by a sectoral or extended inter-professional agreement should be mentioned in the traineeship agreement.
7. Promotes the recognition of the period of traineeship as part of the probation period if the trainee is recruited within three months upon completion of the traineeship.
8. Increases the involvement of Works Councils in relation to traineeships by requiring that the annual report of companies employing fewer than 300 employees should include information about the number of trainees and their terms and conditions. In particular, it is compulsory that Works Councils in such companies are kept informed on a quarterly basis about the number of trainees, their terms and conditions and assigned tasks.

⁹ <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichCodeArticle.do?cidTexte=LEGITEXT000006073189&idArticle=LEGIARTI000024421417&dateTexte=20120308>

¹⁰ The rules and regulations enacted by an association or a corporation to provide a framework for its operation and management

¹¹ La loi n° 2011-893 du 28 juillet 2011 pour le développement de l'alternance et de la sécurisation des parcours professionnels, <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000024408887>

¹² The law explicitly states that this is not a wage

The **mandatory traineeships** are part of the IVET system and concern all vocational and technical education in upper secondary and higher education at all levels. Since September 2010 and in line with the Decree n° 2010-956 of 25th August 2010 (which modified the Decree n° 2006-1093 of 29th August 2006 as regards the application of Article 9 in the Equal Opportunities Act), these traineeships are officially mandatory. Consequently, they have to be integrated within the education and training related programmes and study curricula which lead to the targeted qualifications and should be taken into consideration in the student assessment process.

The **non-mandatory traineeships** are optional and undertaken voluntarily on the trainee's initiative. Given the growing trend towards the culture of more flexibility, especially in higher education, there are at present two types of non-mandatory traineeships:

- **Optional/facultative traineeships integrated as options within certain VET curricula/programmes** and validated as credits within the educational and training systems (and the relevant qualification's units of learning outcomes) leading to the targeted qualification. In this case, the signature of the required agreement by the trainee's sending organisation can be easily obtained.
- **Facultative traineeships not integrated (even as options) within the targeted qualification curricula/programmes.** In this case, as the trainee's sending organisation can refuse signing the required tripartite agreement, the applicant has to justify the coherence and the value added of the traineeship to the development of her/his CV and professional career progression.

Regarding **traineeships associated with transnational mobility programmes**, they concern primarily IVET and are subject to the same legislation governing mandatory and non-mandatory traineeships as indicated above, especially in connection with requirement of a tripartite signed agreement. According to consulted stakeholders, placements within these programmes (especially Leonardo da Vinci and Erasmus) are often part of students', trainees' and apprentices' courses and provide credits towards the targeted qualifications (consulted stakeholders, 2011).

In relation to the second basic category within youth-related VET traineeships which concerns the **inclusive traineeships for disadvantaged and/or low qualified young people**, here one can distinguish two basic measures:

- The Second Chance School (E2C – Ecoles de la Deuxième Chance): It is regulated through a number of legislative instruments (Acts, Decrees and Circulars) which specify its aims, target groups, qualification-related of social rehabilitation and financing. Concerning the aims and the target groups, Article L214-14 in the Code of Education, modified by the Act n°2009-1437 of 24th November 2009 in its Article 38, specifies that:

'the Second Chance Schools provide vocational training and education to young people aged between 16 and 25 without professional qualifications or "certification". These schools deliver to young people at the end of the training a certificate specifying the attained level of competences in a way which facilitates their access to employment or to a certification referenced and registered within National Qualifications Framework (French NQF).'

Moreover, Decree n° 2007-1756 of December 2007 concerning the Second Chance Schools added to Code of Education (within Chapter IV of 1st Title of Book II) a section which specifies (Art. D.201-10) the following:

'the "habilitation" as a Second Chance School is granted for a duration of 4 years by the "E2C Network in France" to training providers in accordance with criteria defined via a working programme established by the E2C network with the approval of the ministers in charge of education and vocational training.'

In connection to financing, Decree n° 2009-221 of 24 February 2009 concerning the conditions of financing the Second Chance Schools through an apprenticeship tax specifies that the accredited Second Chance Schools can benefit from the exemptions cited in Section III of the 1st Article in Act n° 71-578 of 16th July 1971. Additionally, the Circular n° 2009-13 of 5th May 2009 concerning the development and funding of the Second Chance Schools specifies the support provided by the State and the regions.

- The Training Accompaniment Contract (CAF – Contrat d’Accompagnement Formation): CAF is integrated within the framework of the implementation of the Emergency Plan for Youth Employment launched on 24th April 2009. It was created through the circular DGEFP (General Delegation for Employment and training) n° 2009-24 of 12 June 2009 concerning its implementation.¹³ According to this circular, CAF is intended to enable young people aged 16-25 at risk of social exclusion to have access to employment, raise their level of qualifications and/or adapt their skills to current labour market needs, leading ultimately to accredited qualifications and/or sustainable employment. This traineeship instrument is implemented by French job centres (Pôle Emploi) which should ensure a supply of traineeships in order to complement the traineeship-related provision funded by the Regional Councils and the Agency for Services and Payments (ASP) in connection with trainees’ remuneration arrangements.

2.2 Inclusion Measures linked to ALMPs

They allow mainly disadvantaged young people to benefit from reinforced guidance and accompaniment and facilitate their access to employment and training (consulted stakeholders, 2011). They include the following:

- The Integration Contract in Social Life (CIVIS – Contrat d’Insertion dans la Vie Sociale) which was launched within the framework of implementation of Act n° 2005-32 of 18 January 2005 in relation to the Social Cohesion Plan. It was introduced and implemented through (i) the Decree n° 2005-241 of 14 March 2005 concerning youth accompaniment towards employment and the integration contract in social life; and (ii) The Circular DGEFP (General Delegation for Employment and Training) n° 2005-09 of 19 March 2005 regarding youth professional/labour market and social inclusion.

CIVIS aims to assist young people with difficulties in securing sustainable employment through the provision of individual and personalised support. It is implemented via the network of local missions and Permanent Reception, Information and Guidance Centres (PAIO – *Permanences d’Accueil, d’Information, et d’Orientation*). The beneficiaries are young people aged 16-25 looking for sustainable employment (Art. D. 5131-12 of Labour Code) either with a qualification level equivalent at most to ISCED4 (EQF Level 4), or those who have not completed their lower secondary education, or registered as unemployed for more than 12 months over the last 18 months. Young individuals without qualifications benefit from a personalised support, accompaniment and guidance by an adviser from the local mission’s service or from PAIO, which continues for a year after the young person secures employment.

- The Autonomy Contract (Contrat d’Autonomie) which is integrated within the framework of implementation of the Plan Hope for Suburbs (Plan Espoir Banlieue) launched on 8th February 2008. It is regulated through the Circular concerning its implementation, issued by the State Secretariat for Urban Policy and the DGEFP (General Delegation for Employment and Training) on 24 April 2008. This measure offers unemployed young people intensive and personalised support and accompaniment with the aim of allowing them to acquire qualifications through training and/or access to sustainable employment (as employees or through the creation of their own enterprises). The preparation for employment is implemented by both public and private bodies which should ensure that the training, guidance and accompaniment provided match local market conditions and

¹³ http://www.cnml.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf_2009-06-12_Circ_contrat-accompagnement-formation.pdf

needs. The duration of the contract is 18 months maximum (of which 6 months are for the required follow-up and accompaniment at work). During this contractual period, the beneficiary receives a grant of €300 per month with access to other benefits such as assistance to mobility and training.

- **The Single Inclusion Contract (CUI – Contrat Unique d’Insertion):** It was initially established by Act n° 2008-1249 of 1st December 2008 which generalised the minimum solidarity income and reformed the social inclusion policies. Its launch and implementation is regulated by Decree n° 2009-1442¹⁴ of 25 November 2009 and the Circular DGEFP (General Delegation for Employment and Training) n° 2009-42 of 5th November 2009 regarding its effective launch on 1st January 2010. In the renewed framework, it takes the form of both the Initiative Contract for Employment (CUI-CIE – Contrat Initiative-Emploi)¹⁵ in the profit sector and the Accompaniment Contract in Employment (CUI-CAE – Contrat d’Accompagnement dans l’Emploi)¹⁶ in the non-profit sector. Its purpose is to facilitate the professional integration of unemployed people having social and professional difficulties hindering their access to employment. Since the 1st of January 2010, this contract replaces four subsidised inclusion contracts created by the Social Cohesion Act of 18th January 2005:

In the non-profit sector, the (CUI-CAE) replaces the Contract for the Future (CAV-Contrat d’Avenir) which targeted primarily individuals living on minimum social benefits, and the accompaniment contract for employment (CAE – Contrat d’Accompagnement pour l’Emploi) designed for other disadvantaged job-seekers.

In the profit sector, the (CUI-CIE) replaces the Minimum Activity Revenue Inclusion Contract (CI-RMA – Contrat Insertion-Revenu Minimum d’Activité) open to individuals on minimum social benefits and the New Initiative Contract For Employment (CIE-le Nouveau Contrat Initiative Emploi) concerning other job-seekers at risk.

3. Availability of and Access to Traineeships

This section presents available statistical data concerning the evolution and characteristics of the access to the main instruments which promote traineeships as a way of improving young people’s employment prospects (as presented in their two basic categories through their legislative frameworks in the previous section).

3.1 VET Contribution to the Professional/Labour Market Inclusion of Young People

According to CEREQ’s 2010 survey concerning the labour market inclusion of young people leaving IVET in 2007, the overall employment rate in 2010 of those who completed their education in 2007 was 72 per cent (CEREQ, 2010). While the rate of the unemployed was 16 per cent, that of those on training was 8 per cent, leaving 4 per cent inactive. The employability rate is dependent on the level of attained level of qualifications through the IVET system, ie the higher the level of obtained qualification, the higher the labour market entry rate. In 2010, the employment rate of holders of higher education qualifications which graduated in 2007 was 85 per cent against 75 per cent for holders of vocational and professional baccalaureate (ISCED Level 4), 70 per cent for holders of both CAP (Professional Aptitude Certificate) and BEP (Professional Studies Diploma) (ISCED level 3),

¹⁴ <http://legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000021334634&categorieLien=id>

¹⁵ <http://www.travail-emploi-sante.gouv.fr/informations-pratiques,89/fiches-pratiques,91/contrats,109/le-contrat-unique-d-insertion,10997.html>

¹⁶ <http://www.travail-emploi-sante.gouv.fr/informations-pratiques,89/fiches-pratiques,91/contrats,109/le-contrat-unique-d-insertion,10998.html>

and only 48 per cent for those either holding a lower secondary diploma or without any diploma (ISCED Level 2 at most).

The quality and conditions of employment secured by young people are also dependent on the level of obtained qualifications: the higher the level of qualification, the higher is rate of securing open-ended (permanent) employment contracts and relatively higher salaries. Among holders of higher qualifications in 2007, 72 per cent of them were employed on an open-ended contract in 2010, against 54 per cent for holders of the professional/technological baccalaureate and CAP (Professional Aptitude Certificate)/BEP (Professional Studies Diploma), and only 37 per cent for those without qualifications or holding at most a lower secondary education diploma (CEREQ, 2010).

3.2 Traineeships through Alternance-Based Vocational Education and Training

The Emergency Plan for Youth Employment (Plan d'Urgence pour l'Emploi des Jeunes) launched on 24th April 2009 targeted 490,000 alternance –based traineeship contracts to be signed between June 2009 and June 2010. Their distribution between apprenticeship and professionalisation contracts was planned as follows (Groselier, 2009):

- 320,000 apprenticeship contracts with an expected increase of 35,000 over the 285,000 contracts signed during 2008
- 170,000 Contrats de Professionnalisation with a planned increase of 30,000 contracts more than what was achieved in 2008 (140, 000 contracts).

In order to achieve these quantitative targets three Decrees (n° 2009-693, n° 2009-694 and n° 2009-695 of 15 June 2009) set the terms of financial support offered to employers recruiting young people under these types of traineeship contracts (signed after 24th April 2009). Measures included were the following: 'zero employer social contributions' for companies (with over 10 employees) recruiting apprentices; (ii) an 'exceptional' incentive of €1,800 to companies (with less than 50 employees); (iii) financial support of €1,000 to €2,000 for recruitment under the Contrats de Professionnalisation. These measures, expected to expire on 30th June 2010 were extended to 31st December 2010 (PLF-2011, 2010).

According to Government data the level of attainment of the Emergency Plan for Youth Employment targets in connection with the alternance-based traineeships the results in July 2010 were less than expected due to the continuing adverse effect of the economic crisis. Specifically, between June 2009 and June 2010 about 82.4 per cent of the global target of creating 490,000 alternance-based traineeship placements was achieved, broken down as follows (Gineste, 2010; Groselier, 2009):

- 88.4 per cent out of 320,000 targeted apprenticeship contracts
- 71.2 per cent out of the initially targeted 170,000 Contrats de Professionnalisation placements.

On the basis of recent DARES data the characteristics and trends of the evolution of alternance-based traineeship placements can be briefly explored for each of its two basic components (apprenticeship and Contrats de Professionnalisation) as follows (DARES, 2011a, and 2011c):

First, the evolution of apprenticeship placements is characterised by the following trends:

- At the end of 2009, 288,000 new contracts were signed in the profit sector against 299,000 in 2008, with a decrease of 3.6 per cent between 2008 and 2009. Although marginal, the public sector with its 7,800 new placements achieved a 17 per cent increase following a 10 per cent increase in 2008. On the whole, about 426,000 apprentices were in apprenticeship training in 2009 across all sectors of the economy.

- Within the context of a deteriorated employment situation with the start of economic crisis since mid-2008, the new placements have decreased by 4 per cent over a year after an increase of 7 per cent before in 2008. The decrease of new placements was more pronounced in construction, industry and commerce than in the other sectors. On the whole, the highest rate of placements is concentrated within the tertiary sector with 56 per cent in 2009 against 52 per cent in 2008.
- Most of the placements in 2009 (78 per cent) are undertaken in small enterprises with less than 50 employees, although the weight of those with over 50 employees are progressing in comparison with 2008 to represent 22 per cent of the 2009 new placements, which represents a 1 per cent increase.
- The targeted level of qualifications through apprenticeship training is increasing, with about half of the new placements targeting higher level qualifications starting from the Baccalaureate Level (ISCED 4) to the grade of engineer.
- Concerning gender balance, about a third of the new placements, basically in the tertiary sector with 46 per cent of the new placements, are taken over by young women who are relatively older than young men but more qualified.

Secondly, concerning the second component of the alternance-based training (ie Contrats de Professionnalisation), the evolution of placements has the following trends:

- Access concerns mainly young people of the 16-26 age group, representing 84 per cent of the new placements in 2010), and one third of all the alternance-based traineeship placements on average.
- Most of the placements are concentrated within the tertiary sector representing a share of over three quarters on average in the new placements.
- Over six out of ten new placements are undertaken in companies with less than 50 employees (65.8 per cent in 2010).
- The take-up of this type of contract is dominated by beneficiaries holding initial qualifications equivalent at most to ISCED 4, representing about seven out ten new placements (70 per cent in 2010).
- Most of the targeted qualifications are sector specific qualifications.
- The ability to secure employment after a successful completion of traineeship is as high as in apprenticeships and even higher and faster in most cases.

3.3 Transnational Co-operation and Mobility Traineeships

The flow of beneficiaries of transnational cooperation and mobility traineeships is associated mainly with the Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci mobility programmes.

3.3.1 Access to Traineeship and funding through Leonardo da Vinci (LdV) Mobility Programmes

The evolution of the outgoing flow of beneficiaries of LdV mobility programmes is characterised by the following trends (Table 3.1):

- The number of beneficiaries of LdV mobility increased in the period 2007-2011 from 7,542 to 10,602 participants (+40.57 per cent). The main increase related to the participants from the labour market (+107.62 per cent), while that for IVET trainees was much lower (+28.5 per cent).
- That said, IVET trainees are still overwhelmingly over-represented (about seven out of ten of all beneficiaries) in comparison to participants in the labour market (on average two of ten of all beneficiaries).

Table 3.1: Evolution of LdV Mobility Traineeships per Target Group (2007-2011)

	2007 ^a	2008 ^a	2009 ^b	2010 ^b	2011 ^b
IVET participants	5,736	6,376	5,212	8,372	7,371
Labour market participants	1,115	1,586	1,307	2,555	2,315
VET professionals	691	693	936	919	916
Total	7,542	8,655	7,155	11,846	10,602

Source: *LdV Mobility Statistics by Country 2000-2011 - France*: http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/doc4000_en.htm and http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/doc/stat/france_en.pdf

Note: ^a achieved mobilities; ^b mobilities from selection database

In relation to funding the increased number of selected LdV mobility projects from 284 in 2007 to 353 projects in 2010 (+24.30 per cent) was accompanied by an overall increase of 24.47 per cent in the total amount of grants to beneficiaries (Table 3.2):

Table 3.2: LdV Mobility Funding (2007-2010)

	2007	2008	2009	2010
Number of projects	284	331	356	353
Grants to beneficiaries (€)	12,846,353	13,626,774	15,155,508	16,504,078

Source: *LdV Mobility Statistics by Country in Years 2000-2011 - France*: http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/doc/stat/mobility11_en.pdf and http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/doc/stat/france_en.pdf

Note: ^a achieved mobilities; ^b mobilities from selection database

3.3.2 Access to Traineeship and Funding through Erasmus Mobility Programmes

The evolution of outgoing and incoming flows of students through Erasmus mobility programmes during the period 2007/08-2009/10 is characterised by the following trends (Table 3.3):

- The outgoing and incoming flow of students' study and placement mobility continuously increased over the entire period 2007/08 – 2009/10. This upward trend is confirmed by the growing share of outgoing students on Erasmus mobility in the overall number of graduates (as well as in the French population) from 4.16 per cent and 1.19 per cent in 2007/08 to 4.81 per cent and 1.39 per cent in 2009/10 respectively.
- Compared to company placements study mobility is overwhelmingly more popular and undertaken on average by 8 out of 10 beneficiaries in both outgoing and incoming flows. In terms of duration, the study mobility is also dominant as its duration is almost the double of that of placement mobility (5.8 months for study mobility against 3.3 months for placement mobility during the academic year 2009/10).

Table 3.3: Evolution of Outgoing and Incoming Flows of Students on Erasmus Mobility (2007/08 – 2009/10)

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Outgoing students on study mobility	22,556	23,560	24,426
Outgoing students on company placements	3,389	4,723	5,787
Total of outgoing students on Erasmus mobility	25,945	28,283	30,213
Share in the French population (per cent)	1.19	1.31	1.39
Share in the graduate population (per cent)	4.16	4.55	4.81
Incoming students on study mobility	20,503	20,955	22,033
Incoming students on company placements	2,699	3,659	4,108
Total of incoming students on Erasmus mobility	23,172	24,614	26,141
Average duration of student's mobility in months	6.5	6.4	6.2
On a study mobility (months)	N/A	6.9	6.8
On a company placement (months)	3.7	3.5	3.3

Source: *Erasmus Country Statistics 2009-10: Erasmus Mobility – France*, http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc/stat/0910/countries/france_en.pdf

In relation to funding the Erasmus budget allocated to mobility actions increased over the period 2007/08-2009/10 by about 5.6 per cent. The overall average trainee's monthly grant during that period is about €200. However, the trainee's monthly grant on a company placement is far higher than that of study mobility. The monthly grant for a company placement is almost the double of that offered to a study placement (Table 3.4).

Table 3.4: Erasmus Mobility Funding (2007/08 – 2009/10)

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Erasmus budget for mobility actions (€)	43,100,276	48,592,989	45,493,000
Average monthly grant per student (€)	200	236	193
For a study mobility (€)	181	216	175
For a placement mobility (€)	437	438	347

Source: *Erasmus Country Statistics 2009-10: Erasmus Mobility – France*, http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc/stat/0910/countries/france_en.pdf

According to a recent survey the impact of international mobility undertaken by a young person on his/her professional integration in the labour market is not significant (APEC, 2011). Specifically, for 40 per cent of holders of Bac + 4 (ISCED Level 6) in 2010 who benefited from at least one mobility abroad, undertaken mostly within the framework of their study programmes, their knowledge, skills and experience acquired as a result of this mobility do not provide a significant advantage as regards the length of school-to-work transition of graduates. In particular, there is no significant difference in the duration of school-to-work transition (in that it is eight months after graduation) between graduates

who benefited from at least one placement abroad (72 per cent) and those who did not (71 per cent) (CESE, 2011).

In contrast, graduates who lived for a certain time abroad do seem to enjoy some advantages in terms of conditions of employment when they return to France. Specifically, they are more likely to occupy the first senior employment position and/or to have access to a permanent employment contract. As also confirmed by Cathy Perret's study for CEREQ in 2008, the impact of acquired international experience on the quality and conditions of the first secured job is clearly visible (CESE, 2011). This qualitative trend is also reflected in the high degree of employer satisfaction (86 per cent) with higher education graduates' skills recruited in their companies in the last three to five years (Flash Eurobarometer, 2010).

3.4 Traineeship-related Inclusion Measures for Disadvantaged and Low Skilled Young People

The Annex to the Finances' Act Project for 2011 concerning VET provided some quantitative performance indicators in relation to the on-going implementation of inclusive instruments, namely the implementation of the Accompaniment and Training Contract (CAF), the 'Second Chance School (E2C)', the Integration Contract in Social Life (CIVIS) and the Autonomy Contract (PLF-2011, 2010).

As regards the implementation of the Accompaniment and Training Contract (CAF-Contrat d'Accompagnement Formation) which aimed at allowing young people aged 16-25 facing employment difficulties to improve their qualifications and/or their competences in line with current labour market needs. The ultimate aim is to help them either to obtain an accredited qualification or secure sustainable employment. To this end, the following was observed:

- The State has effectively transferred €60 million to the employment pole (Pôle Emploi) in charge of placements and €20 million to the Public Service and Payment Agency (ASP – Agence de Service et de Paiement) which is responsible for, *inter alia*, trainee remuneration issues.¹⁷
- Between September 2009 and mid-June 2010, 18,616 unemployed young people registered within the public services for employment and inclusion (Pôle Emploi and Missions Locales) benefited from a Training Accompaniment Contract (CAF-Contrat d'Accompagnement Formation) with an achievement rate of 37 per cent out of 50,000 targeted beneficiaries.

In relation to the Second Chance School (E2C), 925 additional places were offered in 2009 which represented a 19 per cent increase in comparison with the initially offered places. For 2010, it was expected that about 4,000 additional places would be created.

In connection with the Integration Contract in Social Life (CIVIS – Contrat d'Insertion dans la Vie Civile), 274,304 young people benefited from it in July 2010. Among these beneficiaries, 61,318 worked during the month and 29,700 had access to training. Since the creation of CIVIS in May 2005 until the end of July 2010, 967,075 contracts were signed. Among the beneficiaries during this period, 699,559 completed their CIVIS and 238,716 found sustainable employment. Among the beneficiaries before the end of July 2009, 54 per cent left CIVIS within less than a year after the signature of the contract and 19 per cent secured sustainable employment within less than a year.

Concerning the Autonomy Contract, by mid-April 2010, 26,500 unemployed young people benefited from this measure. Of those 4,247 either obtained a qualification through training (30 per cent) or accessed employment (70 per cent).

¹⁷ <http://www.asp-public.fr/>

Access to all these categories of traineeships and inclusion contracts has also been supported by ESF within the framework of the financial Operational Programme *Regional Competitiveness and Employment 2007-2013*. Out of the overall planned ESF contribution of €4,494,563,975 (representing 50 per cent of the total co-funding), about two thirds (65 per cent) concerned improving access to employment (Priority Axis 2) and social inclusion (Priority Axis 3). Within the remaining ESF contribution, 31 per cent is dedicated to funding measures connected with the promotion of adaptability (Priority Axis 1) and the development of human capital (Priority Axis 4) (ESF National Operational Programme 2007-2013 as modified on the 18 June 2010 by the National Follow-up Committee CNS).¹⁸ Given that most of the undertaken traineeships and inclusion measures are implemented on regional level, the ESF overall funding contribution to all regions represents on average 85 per cent of its total contribution. However, the level of funding differs from one region to another depending on each region's financial capacity.

In connection with the ESF contribution through the *Competitiveness and Employment Programme 2007-2013* to the achievement of the guideline objectives of the EU Strategy 2020, €2.6 billion have been planned since the start of the current programming period (15 March 2011). According to the French National Reform Programme 2011-14, the distribution of this ESF planned contribution over the three EU2020-related guideline objectives is as follows (PNR, 2011):

- 41 per cent is earmarked for improving access to the labour market and reducing structural unemployment
- 34 per cent is allocated to the promotion of lifelong VET and the development of skilled workers to meet the labour market needs
- 25 per cent is dedicated to the promotion of social inclusion and the reduction of poverty.

4. Practices and Content of Traineeship

As described in the previous Sections 2 and 3, the major forms of traineeships which facilitate an effective and sustainable labour market entry of young people are those which form part of the educational and training system (including higher education) such as alternance-based VET (Contrats de Professionnalisation and apprenticeships) followed, to some extent, by those regular mandatory and optional traineeships connected with obtaining upper secondary and higher education qualifications and some mobility programmes (LdV, Erasmus). These are followed by other forms of traineeships/stages or inclusion contracts within the implementation of inclusive labour market related measures and programmes (such as Emergency Plan for Youth Employment, Hope for Suburbs, Social Cohesion Law related programmes). They include the Integration Contract in Social Life (CIVIS); the 'Autonomy Contract' and the most recent 'Single Inclusion Contract'. The analysis provided under this section is mainly based on the information collected through stakeholder interviews (consulted stakeholders, 2011).

Alternance-based vocational training placements are usually implemented within the framework of a specific type of employment contract signed between the trainee and an employer. It is based, in practice, on a combination of alternating periods of training within the enterprise for acquisition of practical knowledge, skills and competences and periods of theoretical and technical core and specific knowledge within the training institutions/centres outside the enterprise (or even within the same enterprises if they have their own training centres, as it is the case with the implementation of some Contrats de Professionnalisation). Each of the two existing alternance-based training contracts (apprenticeship and Contrats de Professionnalisation) has its own target groups and specific objectives.

¹⁸ www.fse.gouv.fr

While in some IVET schools, enterprises complete and use the learning and training received in the educational institution, in more professionally oriented curricula VET providers complete and use the on-the-job learning and training received in the company especially through alternating periods of training. This pedagogical approach is usually referred to as 'alternating pedagogy' which is characterised by:

- Focus on company-based workplace training where the teachers/trainers use the workplace experience to design the vocational educational and training progress;
- Division and distribution of the learning and training activities between the company and the off-the-job training centre on the basis of a specific training schedule;
- Complementary role of the training provider in terms of learning and training provided off-the-job who is responsible for delivering learning content which cannot be covered at workplace. This is due to the fact that the size and nature or range of the activities of the enterprise (especially if it is small and/or has a limited range of activities) does not allow it sometimes to cover the professional learning units as defined in the established training curriculum and the requirements of the occupational standards underpinning the targeted qualification.
- Close liaison, monitoring and on-going communication between the VET provider, the in-house training department, the company and the trainee through well-established coordination, communication, control and follow-up intermediaries such as training and pedagogical tutors and communication tools such as liaison documents.

The in-house VET providers and their teaching and training staff have great pedagogical autonomy and flexibility in defining and using teaching approaches and supporting instruments, tools and equipments which are adapted to the specific workplace. Although the teaching method can be either deductive, inductive or a combination of the two, the dominant practice as exemplified by VET curricula, especially through the alternance-base training route, is the use of 'inductive' and active learner-centred teaching method. This teaching method goes from the concrete and specific to the general as it is based on specific experiments, case studies or experimental exercises and experiential learning in training provision by building on progressively on the learner's individual experiences, knowledge, capacities, expectations and constraints.

The follow-up and liaison documents commonly used between the enterprises and the VET provision organisations are simply formative tools enabling the assessment of the progress and the level of achievement by the trainees in the course of their educational and training activity. However, these tools cannot provide materials for credit units leading to certified qualification. In order to obtain the targeted certified qualification and/or recognition of the traineeship-related learning, the trainee must both submit and defend a report on the completed traineeship in front of an assessment panel as well as take the required examinations.

To this end, there are two types of assessment methods in use: (i) continuing assessment during training called CCF (Contrôle en Cours de Formation); and (ii) the punctual assessment method (Contrôle Ponctuel). The assessment panel awards the diplomas to successful trainees in accordance with the frame of reference for the examinations as set up in the qualification's occupational standards. This reference framework of standards for assessment determines for each occupation (within the overarching framework of its qualification standards) the competences and skills required by the candidate. It is drawn up by the sectoral Professional Consultative Commissions (CPCs – Commissions Professionnelles Consultatives) which are attached to different ministries responsible for establishing technological and vocational qualifications (mainly the Ministry of Education). CPCs comprise representatives of the concerned Ministries, the social partners, experts and sectoral bodies such as Chambers of Commerce.

In higher education, obtaining all targeted qualifications especially in technical and vocational fields is conditional on undertaking the pedagogically required mandatory and

optional training within a company/an organisation either inside the country (representing 80 per cent on average in the consulted institutions) or abroad (in about 20 per cent) . This is usually implemented within the framework of the terms and conditions set in a signed tripartite agreement called '**Convention de Stage**' between the sending, the host organisation and the trainee. The training is generally validated through the presentation of a training report/dissertation to the assessment panel where the professional tutor/mentor is usually present.

With the exception of higher education apprenticeship, this mandatory training is usually undertaken (on a full-time basis) during and/or towards the end of the educational programme. The duration of the undertaken traineeship usually ranges between four and six months, during which the trainee receives from the employer compensation amounting to one third to 100 per cent of the minimum guaranteed wage.¹⁹ In relation to the duration of the mandatory training associated with certain regulated professions (eg doctors, architects, and practicing engineers), it is usually far higher.

Placements within higher education international cooperation and mobility programmes are often part of the students' courses of study and provide credits towards the targeted qualifications. In this connection, it is important to stress that, according to a recent ESN (Erasmus Student Network) study, a large number of students who benefited from Erasmus mobility programmes had their acquired ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) validated upon their return to France. However, one out of five beneficiaries still faced some validation difficulties after their return. Some of them had even to retake the relevant exams within their sending organisation (ESN-PRIME, 2010; CESE, 2011).

The instruments linked to ALMP measures are implemented and monitored through a network of public bodies (in cooperation and partnership with their contracted operators) which are tasked with the inclusion and employment aspects on regional level. These bodies include the following:

- The one-stop-shop Public Employment Service (Pôle Emploi) created on 19th December 2009 following the merger of the previous 'National Agency for Employment (ANPE – Agence Nationale pour l'Emploi)' and the 'Associations for Employment in the Industry and Commerce (ASSEDIC – Associations pour l'Emploi dans l'Industrie et le Commerce)'.²⁰
- Local Missions (ML- Missions Locales) and the Reception Stands for Information Provision and Guidance (PAIO – Permanence d'Accueil, d'Information and d'Orientation). Since the end of 2011 the latter is integrated within the Missions Locales (ML). The Local Missions network is composed of over 484 non-profit organisations (financed by the State and the regions) with over 3,950 stands distributed all over the French regions. Their role consists in providing by specifically appointed tutors individualised reception (interviews), information, guidance and accompaniment to young people at risk aged 26 or under. Such young people include school leavers with no or low qualifications and, as a result, with considerable difficulties in securing employment.
- Regional Directorate for Enterprises, Competition, Consumption, Labour and Employment (DIRECCTE – Direction Régionale des Entreprises, de la Concurrence, de la Consommation, de Travail et de l'Emploi).²¹ It is tasked with providing support to individuals who face difficulties in entering the labour market. This is mainly achieved through its territorial units for employment and inclusion in cooperation with the French public employment services (Pôle Emploi), the local missions and the regional councils.
- Regions and their councils are involved through their education and training departments and territorial stands in providing information, guidance and accompaniment to young

¹⁹ Exceptionally, it might go up to 9 or 12 months

²⁰ <http://www.pole-emploi.fr/accueil/>

²¹ <http://direccte.gouv.fr/>

people with employment difficulties so that they have access to training including Contrats de Professionnalisation in cooperation with other involved actors.

5. Trainee's Rights and Terms and Conditions

The trainee's rights, terms and conditions are specific to the type of undertaken traineeship (mandatory or voluntary) and the employment/work status of the beneficiary during the traineeship. The analysis provided here is based on information and data collected through key stakeholder interviews conducted as part of this study (consulted stakeholders, 2011). In mandatory and non-mandatory traineeships within VET and higher education (including traineeships within trans-national cooperation and mobility programmes), the trainee's rights, terms and conditions have been, especially since 2006, strengthened through a succession of regulatory and implementing legislative instruments. Relevant provisions mainly concern the traineeship duration and conditions of implementation, the trainee's remuneration, social security and insurance coverage including other types of compensation and benefits, the hours of work, etc.

Since the traineeship has to be closely integrated within the pedagogical educational and training programme (associated with the trainee's targeted qualification), its duration, which has to be clearly specified in the traineeship agreement, is variable. In principle, the duration of a traineeship can vary from few days/weeks to six months. For instance, in the undertaken 'observation sequences/periods within a professional milieu' which, since 2005, are mandatory for pupils during the last year of the lower secondary education, this duration does not usually exceed one week. In contrast, in upper secondary VET and, especially, in higher education the traineeship duration is higher (but cannot exceed the limit of six months). However, it can be extended for justified pedagogical reasons beyond this maximum duration within the limit of the academic year (30th September – 1st October). In this connection, some regulated professions such as medicine, law, architecture, etc. are not subject to this maximum duration requirement; they rather involve mandatory professional traineeships of much longer duration.

The trainee's remuneration, social security and insurance coverage as well as other types of compensation are also regulated by the legislation. According to Article 30 of Act n° 2009-1437 of 24th November 2009 concerning guidance and lifelong vocational training, the trainee's remuneration is mandatory if the duration of traineeship is over two calendar months within the same academic year regardless of the number of hours worked. The amount of the remuneration which has to be specified in the tripartite Convention de Stage can be fixed by a Decree if it is not already established through sectoral or inter-professional agreements. In this connection, Decree n° 2008-96 of 31st January 2008²² sets the monthly remuneration received by the trainee at 12.5 per cent of the hourly social security ceiling.²³ As long as the trainee's remuneration is at most equal to this ceiling, both the employer and the trainee are exempted from the payment of their social security contributions (including 'CSG' and 'CRDS'). These contributions are paid by both parties if the trainee's remuneration exceeds this ceiling. The sickness and accident insurance coverage of the trainee ('MP/AT') is also the responsibility of the sending institution if the remuneration remains within the limit of this ceiling; otherwise it is paid by the host enterprise/organisation.

In this connection, more recent legislation, notably Law n° 2011-893 of 28 July 2011 (Cherpien Law) for 'the development of alternance-based training and the professional career path security' has reinforced, through its Article 27 ('Encadrement des Stages'), the

²² Loi n° 2011-893 du 28 juillet 2011 pour le développement de l'alternance et la sécurisation des parcours professionnels, <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000018044877>

²³ For example, this amounted to €398.13 per month in 2009 for a working period of 151.76 hours per month

students' rights as a trainee (with a student/pupil status as opposed to an employee status) by specifying that:²⁴

- The trainee cannot perform tasks corresponding to those in a regular job assignment within the enterprise
- The training period within the same organisation is normally limited to 6 months
- Companies should wait for a period corresponding to 1/3 of the length of the previous traineeship before they can take on a new trainee in the same role as that of the last one
- The host organisation has to keep a 'training register' for the trainees separate from that concerning its regular staff
- If a trainee is recruited within the three months following the completion of the traineeship, the probation period is reduced accordingly by taking into account the duration of the already completed traineeship within the organisation
- Although this reduction is limited to 50 per cent of the length of the probation period, the traineeship duration is taken into account as a proper working experience including trainee's rights to social security, retirement benefits and unemployment insurance
- The trainees have the right to benefit from social and cultural activities organised by the company's Works Committee²⁵ under the same conditions as those applied to regular staff.

This legislation reinforcing the protection of the trainees on mandatory and optional traineeships came as a response to the observed questionable/'bad' practices of some employers who exploit the trainees' status as students/pupils by allocating to them the same work assignments as those given to their regular employees but with fewer rights and lower quality employment terms and conditions (consulted stakeholders, 2011).

In alternance-based traineeships the trainee is, from the beginning, on a specific employment contract whereby he/she has automatic access to social security coverage, including pensions and unemployment insurance. As far as trainee compensation is concerned, this is dependent on the level of qualification and age of the trainee. In the case of apprenticeship placements, apprentice remuneration is variable from 25 per cent to 85 per cent of the minimum guaranteed income. As regards the Contrats de Professionnalisation placements, the trainee receives a relatively higher compensation, ranging from 55 per cent to 100 per cent of the minimum guaranteed wage and even beyond in certain cases.

The overall duration of the on-the-job placements within the enterprise, it is also variable depending on whether these are connected with apprenticeships or Contrats de Professionnalisation. While in the case of the former, the trainee has to spend 60 per cent to 75 per cent of the duration of the apprenticeship contract within the enterprise (and the remaining time within the training institution, he/she has to spend more time in the latter (75 per cent to 85 per cent of the whole duration of the concerned contract).

In the case of other inclusion traineeships connected with the implementation of certain ALMP measures, the trainee's rights, terms and conditions are dependent on the type of the traineeship and related contract. If the traineeship is based on a fixed-term employment contract, the trainee is entitled to a salary and all the benefits connected with the status of an employee: social security coverage, pensions and unemployment insurance. If the traineeship is based only on guidance and accompaniment, the trainee might receive compensation/grant from the regional council or from the job centre.

²⁴ <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000024408887&dateTexte=&categorieLien=id>

²⁵ These are made up staff representatives and, in some cases, trade union representatives appointed by trade union organisations to promote employees' interests. They provide services for which there is no statutory obligation, designed to enhance workers' well-being and improve their living conditions. They are generally connected with recreation, holidays, sport and culture but may also take the form of a contribution to the costs of a complementary health insurance scheme, a staff canteen or prepaid universal service vouchers (CESU).

6. Quality Assurance of Traineeships

The quality assurance of training and qualifications associated with the different forms of traineeships examined in this report is realised through the following processes (Consulted stakeholders, 2011; Eurydice, 2010; CEDEFOP, 2008 and 2009):

- There is a regular process for quality and performance evaluation of the educational and training system. In addition to the usual assessment and follow-up role of the Inspectorates at both national and regional levels, there are other organisations involved in the training-related performance evaluation. These include notably the High Council for Education (HCE – Haut Conseil de l'Éducation²⁶) and the independent Research and Higher Education Agency (AERES – Agence d'Évaluation de la Recherche et l'Enseignement Supérieur²⁷). The High Council for Education was set up in 2005 (Article 14 of the Framework and Programme Act for the future of the School of 23 April 2005). It makes recommendations and proposals concerning both the methods to assess the learners' and trainees' knowledge as well as the organisation and the results obtained via the educational and training system, including teacher training and pedagogy. Each year, this council prepares and publishes a diagnostic evaluation report. AERES was created by Act n° 2006-450 of 18 April 2006 with the basic task of evaluating higher education and research institutions and their activities including their educational programmes, awarded certifications and procedures for the assessment of involved staff.
- The existence of framework of reference of standards which combines both occupational and qualification/certification standards for each type of qualification registered within the NQF (RNCP – Répertoire National des Certifications Professionnelles²⁸). These qualifications and their reference standards are designed and updated by the Consultative Professional Commissions (CPC-Commissions Professionnelles Consultatives) linked to Ministries involved in vocational education and/or different forms of traineeships. There are 14 sectoral CPCs in charge of the design and updating of qualifications and their related reference standards associated with the Ministry of National Education²⁹.
- Although most of the training providers are not ISO certified, some of them use ISO to improve their internal management evaluation such as the introduction of a number of quality labels, in the early 90s, concerning the quality assurance of training organisation and trainers. For example, since 2000 a quality label called 'GRETA-Plus' is granted to the network GRETA (GROupements d'ÉTABlissements publics d'enseignement) by the Ministry of National Education.³⁰ This quality label establishes the same quality requirements through a common framework of reference governing both the organisation of the GRETA network and its training provision and services. In addition to its integration of some elements of ISO approach, this quality label is more in conformity with the Framework of Reference of Good Practices (Référentiel des Bonnes Pratiques) AFNOR BPX 50-762 for tailor-made training and service provision. The AFNOR Reference of Good Practices includes 21 commitments detailed in a document published by AFNOR on its website.³¹ The label 'GRETA-Plus' is granted for three years but it has to be confirmed each year following an audit organised by the academy where the concerned GRETA is located.
- At regional level, the regional councils, which are now in charge of vocational training for young and adult people, have adopted 'quality charters' (Chartes Qualité). These charters are negotiated and co-signed by the vocational bodies representing particular sectors and the training providers which enter into contractual agreement with the region. They cover

²⁶ <http://www.hce.education.fr/>

²⁷ <http://www.aeres-evaluation.fr/>

²⁸ <http://www.rncp.cncp.gouv.fr/>

²⁹ <http://www.education.gouv.fr/>

³⁰ <http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid50753/la-formation-continue-des-adultes-a-l-education-nationale.html>

³¹ www.afnor.org

various aspects of training such as improving the quality of training provision and services connected with accompaniment and work placements.

- Moreover, concerning the transnational mobility traineeships and placements, the quality requirements are secured since the 2006 Equal Opportunities Act and its subsequent amendments and application Decrees. Their quality is assured through the signature of detailed tripartite agreement (Convention) between both the sending and host organisation in conformity with the recommendations of the transnational cooperation and mobility programmes. In this connection, the LdV programme for instance, established a set of quality commitments for the implementation of training placements which need to be respected by all involved parties:³²

First, the sending organisation is committed to undertake for each participant the following actions: (a) defining clearly the placement's objectives in terms of skills and competences to be acquired; (b) identifying the appropriate host country and organisation (including the training programme contents and duration) in cooperation with the intermediate organisation which helps in choosing the suitable host organisation and providing the necessary contact details; (c) selecting the participating trainee according to clearly defined criteria, including preparing him/her to the professional and cultural context of the host country; (d) negotiating and establishing a traineeship agreement transparent for all involved and signing parties; (e) co-ordinating the management of travel and accommodation arrangements, the social security and insurance coverage; (e) evaluating the trainee's personal and professional achievements through the traineeship.

Secondly, the host organisation is expected to foster the participant's understanding of its own culture and mentality and to assign tasks and responsibilities which allow the trainee to effectively achieve the placement's training objectives. This includes the appointment of a tutor/mentor for each trainee and the provision, if needed, of all appropriate support.

Thirdly, both the sending and the host organisations are jointly committed to negotiate and agree (in terms of a signed 'traineeship' agreement) the following: the training programme and its duration, the validation procedure of acquired skills and competences, and the appropriate channels used for communication between parties involved in the agreement.

Fourthly, the trainee is also committed to contribute to the success of his/her placement by complying with all agreed arrangements concerning the placement such as abiding by the rules and regulations of the host organisation, communicating any problem or a change regarding the placement to the sending organisation and, upon completion of the placement, submitting a report on the training received including all related supporting documents.

The Erasmus transnational traineeships are governed by similar robust quality assurance procedures.³³

7. Overall Assessment as Regards Traineeships

Traineeships which are integrated within the VET curricula/programmes of upper secondary and higher education are reported to have a positive impact on the labour market transition of young people, including graduates (consulted stakeholders, 2011). This is achieved through the contribution of traineeships to:

- The reduction of the graduate's length of labour market transition period. For example, about 80 to 90 per cent of higher education graduates holding technical/ vocational

³² http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/doc/quality_en.pdf

³³ http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc894_en.htm

qualifications secure their first job within the first six to twelve months on average after their graduation; and

- the improved quality and terms and conditions of the graduates' first placement in employment.

In this regard, it is also important to underline that alternance-based traineeships as part of the implementation of professionalisation and apprenticeship contracts offer better access to employment than school-based traineeships. For example, in its 2008 report the High Council of Education observed that (COE, 2011):

'the rate of access to employment is higher through apprenticeship than school-based training for the same targeted type of qualification. In 2006, 80 per cent of the holders of professional baccalaureate (ISCED 4) obtained a job against 64 per cent via the school-based training route. As for the holders of a professional aptitude certificate (CAP) or a professional studies diploma (BEP) (ISCED 3), 66 per cent of them had access to employment via apprenticeship against only 43 per cent through school-based training'.

As confirmed by the consulted stakeholders involved in traineeships through Contrats de Professionnalisation such as the Employers' Groups for Insertion and Qualification (GEIQ), the rate of access to employment through these contracts is even higher and more immediate after the completion of the traineeship.

The specifically targeted subsidised contracts (which are integrated within the framework of the new basic Unique Contract for Inclusion (CUI – Contrat Unique d'Insertion) continue to be used as means of improving employment access for a large proportion of young people aged up to 26. At the end of September 2010, 59,000 young people under the age of 26 benefited from a subsidised contract within the for-profit sector. This was achieved almost exclusively through the 'Initiative Contract for Employment (Contrat Initiative Emploi)' (CUI – CIE). Moreover, at the end of September 2010, 81,000 young people under the age of 26 benefited from subsidised 'Accompaniment Contracts to Employment (CAE – Contrats d'Accompagnement à l'Emploi)' (CUI – CAE).

However, it was observed that the subsidised contracts within the for-profit sector offer better perspectives for labour market inclusion, especially access to sustainable employment, than those offered within the non-profit sector (COE, 2011). A recent study on 'Professional Inclusion of Individuals completing their Subsidised Contracts in 2008' (DARES, 2010) confirmed that:

- 74 per cent of the beneficiaries who completed their Initiative Contracts for Employment (CUI- CIE) in the for-profit sector usually found a job after six months against 31 per cent of those who completed their Accompaniment Contract to Employment (CUI-CAE) in the non-profit sector.
- Concerning access to sustainable employment, 60 per cent of those who completed their CUI-CIE in the for-profit sector found stable jobs against 32 per cent completing their CUI-CAE in the non-profit sector.

Concerning the performance of the main existing Accompaniment Measures/ Contracts mainly used for low qualified young people with considerable difficulties in accessing employment, the following was observed (COE, 2011):

- The 'Integration Contract in Social Life' (CIVIS – Contrat d'Insertion dans la Vie Sociale' was implemented in 2005 with the aim of providing personalised support to 800,000 young people towards stable employment during the period 2005-2010 (with 160,000 expected beneficiaries per year). The results obtained over the period 2005-2010 are:
 - By the end of 2010, over one million of young people signed their contracts. Of those, 91 per cent were initially at Baccalaureate level (ISCED 4) and 50 per cent at ISCED level 3 and lower.

- 35 per cent the beneficiaries who completed their contract were afterwards either employed or on a traineeship.
- 34 per cent beneficiaries completing their contract had access to stable employment.
- During the year 2010 alone, about 174,000 benefited from CIVIS which, compared to 2009, amounted to a 13 per cent increase. Overall, 34.5 per cent of beneficiaries completing their contract found a job and 26 per cent had access to stable employment.
- In the Autonomy Contract, 36,000 contracts were signed in 2010. Among the 23,800 beneficiaries completing the contracts at the end of 2010, 10,000 were successful (42 per cent) with a 65 per cent access rate to employment. Mainly due to its relatively high cost, this contract was discontinued in September 2011 (as there will be no new beneficiaries after this date according to some of the directly involved stakeholders).
- The Accompaniment Contract to Training (CAF – Contrat d’Accompagnement Formation), covered 37,000 young people under 26 were in 2010.
- As regards the Second Chance Schools (E2C), 9,800 places were opened within about 25 E2C at the end of 2010, representing 82 per cent of the targeted 12,000 placements. In 2009, the rate of completion was positive, in that 59 per cent of the beneficiaries completing this particular accompaniment measure found a job or traineeship.

In the light of these performance indicators and related impact factors, the report of the Council for Guidance and Employment (COE – Conseil d’Orientation pour l’Emploi)³⁴ and some of the consulted stakeholders, put forward the following recommendations (COE, 2011):

- Since the alternance-based traineeships through Contrats de Professionnalisation and apprenticeships have been shown to be the most effective instrument in facilitating youth access to employment, their development should be further reinforced.
- The governance of the existing labour market transition instruments is complex and shared by a multitude of actors, whose involvement and actions are, however, not sufficiently coordinated. To this end, the current mode of governance needs to be simplified by clarifying the specific role of each stakeholder on the basis of reinforced networks of cooperation and inter-linkages between all relevant actors.
- The general education system still lags behind as regards the matching of its curricula and training programmes to the rapidly changing employer needs in terms of required skills and competences. As a result, the mandatory and optional traineeships within the enterprises should be generalised and reinforced throughout the entire educational and training system, with a view to providing a closer link between the worlds of education and work.
- Due to the diversity and complexity of the existing labour market inclusion instruments and lack of sufficiently clear information and guidance about their specific use and roles, there is a need for greater rationalisation of such measures. This should also include the development of more simplified and well-targeted information and guidance concerning the existing inclusion instruments.

³⁴ <http://www.coe.gouv.fr/>

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Policy Framework

Traineeships alternating between on-the-job training in an enterprise and training within an accredited training provider is one of the most effective methods for helping young people to make the transition into employment. About one in five employed young people on average take alternating traineeships (professionalisation and apprenticeship contracts). Within this framework, the professionalisation contract constitutes the second most important component of alternating training in terms of the flow of newly recruited young people. With 148,000 new beneficiaries in 2010, it represents over one in three new recruits to alternating training (apprenticeship plus professionalisation contract) (DARES, 2011). However, its outcome in terms of inclusion in the labour market six months after the completion of training remains higher than that of an apprenticeship: 75 per cent against 60 per cent for apprenticeship (Commission de Concertation sur les Jeunes, 2010).

Although apprenticeships and professionalisation contracts are both alternating based skill-formation and inclusion policy measures, the professionalisation contract (in contrast with apprenticeship as an IVET instrument) is part of continuing vocational training (CVT). Therefore, it integrates within CVT and labour market policy inclusion measures.

Formally introduced through the 2004 Act (of the 4th of May) concerning 'LLL and social dialogue' (in its articles 12 and 13) following the National Inter-professional Agreement of the 5th December 2003. It primarily targets young people (16-25) with low qualifications and/or with labour market inclusion/re-inclusion difficulties, who are seeking to improve or adapt their professional qualifications in accordance with their career projects and/or chances of access to better or durable jobs. Additionally, it targets job-seekers aged 26 years and over, the beneficiaries of active solidarity income (RSA-revenu de solidarité active) as well as individuals on other specific solidarity grants/allowances (DGEFP, 2011). Its basic aim is to allow its beneficiaries to obtain a 'Vocational Qualification Certificate (CQP: Certificat de Qualification professionnelle)', a title or a qualification referenced by the collective agreement and registered within the NQF repertory (RNCP-repertoire national des certifications professionnelles) at all its levels from the CAP (professional aptitude certificate-ISCED 3) to the engineer's diploma (ISCED 6) (consulted stakeholders, 2011).

Organisation of Traineeship under Study, Relevant Stakeholders and their Role

The Professionalisation contract is a formal contract signed by an employer and the trainee, which allows the latter to undertake alternating training connected with the targeted qualification and the status of an employee and as such the trainee receives a salary varying according to age and level of qualification from the employer. This also includes all other advantages related to this status, such as social security coverage and unemployment insurance (DGEFP, 2011).

In the light of the consultation undertaken with different stakeholders, the relevant stakeholders involved in the implementation of this contract can be grouped into two basic categories: directly concerned stakeholders involved in the implementation process and other intermediary/indirect stakeholders involved through cooperation and partnership (consulted stakeholders, 2011).

The stakeholders involved in the first group (directly involved in the implementation of the contract and/or financing arrangements) are the following:

- The enterprises: they are responsible for on-the-job practical training (75 per cent to 85 per cent of the whole traineeship time) and the payment of the trainee's salary.

- The training providers (public or private): they take charge of the implementation of the agreed training programme for the targeted qualification and ensure the related support and follow-up during the training.
- The 'OPCA' (Organismes Paritaires collecteurs agréés): the social partners' sectoral and inter-professional funding organisations, created by the social partners themselves and accredited by the State as parity funds collectors and managers of the employers' mandatory contribution to CVT financing. They take charge of the validation and monitoring of the professionalisation contract as well as the funding for training provided by the training providers. This includes the support and follow-up of the trainee during the in-house training and the tutors' remunerations and their training. The sectors and the inter-professional organisations in charge of the OPCA, play a strategic role in defining the priorities connected with trades (métiers) and required qualifications. This includes setting up the level of financial coverage and the access to the professionalisation contract.

The second group includes intermediary guidance, support and inclusion stakeholders working in partnership with the first group of stakeholders. They include the following:

- First, the network of public service actors for employment and inclusion on regional level, which includes:
 - Employment pole (pôle emploi) created on the 19 December 2009 following the merger of the previous 'National Agency for Employment' (ANPE-Agence Nationale pour l'Emploi) and the 'Associations for Employment in the Industry and Commerce' (ASSEDIC – Associations pour l'Emploi dans l'Industrie et le Commerce). Its main role in connection with the professionalisation contract consists of providing information, guidance and support of individuals searching for work and/traineeship placements.
 - The Local Missions (ML – Missions Locales) and the reception stand points for information provision and guidance (PAIO – Permanence d'Accueil, d'Information and d'Orientation). Their role consists of providing individualised reception (interviews), information, guidance and support by specifically appointed tutors for under 26 years olds, usually school leavers without (or with low) qualifications which do not allow them to have access to employment.
 - The (State) Regional Directorate for Enterprises, Competition, Consumption, Labour and Employment (DIRECCTE – Direction Régionale des Entreprises, de la Concurrence, de la Consommation, de Travail et de l'Emploi). Through its regional units it is responsible for employment and inclusion in cooperation with the employment pole, the local missions and the regional councils, particularly for individuals with difficulty accessing the labour market. Until June 2011 it had been in charge of registering and monitoring the professionalisation contracts. Now all the activities of validation, registration and monitoring are handled by the OPCAs.
 - The regions and their councils are involved through their education and training departments and regional standpoints in providing information, guidance and accompaniment for young people with employment difficulties, helping them access training including the professionalisation contract in cooperation with other actors.
- Secondly, the sectoral and interprofessional 'Grouping of Employers for Inclusion and Qualification' (GEIQ – les Groupements d'Employeurs pour l'insertion et la Qualification) which are highly effective in recruiting individuals with low qualifications and with difficulties accessing the labour market (especially young people) mainly through the professionalisation contract. The trainees are then placed within their member enterprises. Given that most of its member companies are small and medium enterprises, the GEIQ handles the administrative arrangements of the contracts and secures the support and follow-up process through a double tutoring: the GEIQ's appointed tutor and the tutor appointed by the receiving company.

- Thirdly, the 'Enterprises for Temporary Employment and Inclusion' (ETTI – Enterprise Temporaries du travail et d'Insertion) which can recruit through the professionalisation contract in the same way as temporary employment companies. They benefit from the State subsidies for the support under programme 102 'access and return to employment'.

Funding & Resources Allocation

Since the funding of the on-the-job part of the traineeship is the responsibility of the employer through the salary (including social security coverage) paid to the trainee as an employee, the remaining funding is for the off-the-the job training within a training institution/centre (including the activities connected with the support, follow-up and assessment). This part is handled by OPCA (the social partners' sectoral and interprofessional funding organisations). The training within the training institutions/centres is financed on the basis of hourly rates established through sectoral/ interprofessional agreement. In the case of the non-existence of such agreement, the rate of €9.15 per hour is used as a base for covering the training costs (including the support, follow-up and assessment). The expenses of the tutorship can be dealt with by the OPCA up to a limit of €230 maximum per month per tutored trainee (however this rate can increase by 50 per cent for tutors over 45). The tutors' training can also be taken handled by the OPCA with a limit of €15 maximum per hour for maximum duration of 40 hours (consulted stakeholders, 2011).

As an incentive, employers are fully exempt from payment of employer's social contributions concerning job-seekers aged 45 and over with a supplementary recruitment premium of €2,000. The employers also receive an annual compensation for their social contribution concerning the recruitment of young trainees under 26 (DGEFP, 2011).

Description of Traineeship under Study

Content and Practices related to the traineeship under Study

The off-the-job training within the educational and training institution/centre involves qualified teachers/trainers in the domain of the targeted qualifications, which are usually referenced by the collective agreement and registered within the NQF repertory (RNCP – repertoire national des certifications professionnelles) through levels from the CAP (professional aptitude certificate – ISCED 3) to the engineer's diploma (ISCED 6). The related training programmes are implemented by applying what is usually called 'alternating pedagogy approach' based on the practice that the provided in-house training completes the on-the-job learning and training through the use of the 'inductive and active learner-centred teaching/training method'. Moreover, in addition to the use of liaison documents between the enterprises and the training centres/institutions as follow-up and formative control instruments, there are two methods for assessing the knowledge and skills acquired leading to a qualification: continuous assessment during the traineeship (CCP – Contrôle en Cours de formation) and punctual assessment (CP – Contôle ponctuel) (consulted stakeholders, 2011).

The trainee is usually supervised and supported by a tutor appointed by the employer (although this appointment is not mandatory). The appointed tutor is selected on voluntary basis from the enterprise's employees with at least two years experience in the field and experience of the targeted qualification. The role of the tutor consists of receiving, helping and guiding the trainee within the enterprise. The tutor has the responsibility of liaising with the training institution/centre in charge of the support and the implementation of the training programme. This includes the tutor's participation in the follow-up of the implementation of the training and in the assessment process in cooperation with the pedagogical tutor and the rest of the trainers within the educational and training

institution/provider. However, there are cases where there are two appointed tutors, for example in the case of the intermediary placement role played (between enterprises and training providers) by the GEIQ. The GEIQ appoints a professional tutor who supports the trainee during the professionalisation contract in cooperation with the tutors appointed by the enterprise, and the pedagogical tutors and trainers from the training institution/provider, including participation in the follow-up and assessment stages (continuing and final assessment) (consulted stakeholders, 2011).

The duration of the professionalisation contract varies between six to 12 months (with the possibility of its extension to 24 months in cases of higher level professional qualifications) depending on whether the concluded contract is fixed or open-ended (CDD or CDI) (consulted stakeholders, 2011).

Traineeship Contract and Trainee’s Terms and conditions

As the Professionalisation contract is a mandatory formal work contract signed between an employer and the trainee, it allows the latter to acquire the status of a salaried employee/worker like the rest of the employees within the enterprise, including access to social security coverage and unemployment insurance. During the contract, the trainee receives a salary, paid by the employer, which varies according to the age and qualification level of the trainee, between 55 per cent and 80 per cent of the minimum guaranteed wage (SMIC) for the age group 16-25 years old (85 per cent of the SMIC or 100 per cent of the conventional salary in the concerned sector/branch of activity for the age group 26 and over) which is relatively higher than that of the apprentice as detailed below (DGEFP, 2011).

Table A 1: Proportion of minimum guaranteed wage received during a traineeship under a professionalisation contract

Qualification level /age	16 to 20 years old	21 to 25 years old	26 years and over
NQF level 5 and lower (ISCED 3 or lower)	55 per cent of SMIC	70 per cent of SMIC	100 per cent of SMIC or 85 per cent of conventional salary with the sector/branch of activity
NQF level 4 and higher (ISCED 4 and higher)	66 per cent of SMIC	80 per cent of SMIC	

Quality Assurance Mechanisms

In addition to the follow-up mentoring role exercised by directly involved stakeholders in the implementation process, the quality assurance of the training provided and qualification awarded through the professionalisation contract is controlled via a set of overarching instruments (consulted stakeholders, 2011). First, the existence of a reference framework of standards combining both occupational and qualification/certification standards for each type of qualification registered within the NQF repertory (RNCP – Répertoire National des certifications Professionnelles). These qualifications and their referential standards are designed and updated by the consultative professional commissions (CPC– commissions professionnelles consultatives) connected with ministries involved in vocational education and/or different forms of traineeships. There are 14 sectoral CPCs in charge of the design and updating of qualifications and their related referential standards connected with Ministry of national education.

Secondly, the regular overarching quality and performance evaluation of the educational and training system and methods. Different organisations take part in the assessment of the

performance of the educational and training system, notably the 'High Council for Education' (*Haut Conseil de l'Éducation*,) set up in 2005.

Thirdly, at the regional level where there are stakeholders and operators actively involved in the implementing and monitoring processes. The regional councils in charge of VET for young and adult people, adopted 'quality charters' (*Chartes qualité*). These charters are negotiated and co-signed by the vocational bodies representing particular sectors or by the training provider that enters into contractual agreement with the region. They cover various aspects of training such as:

- Improving the quality of training provision, placing workers (including qualified trainees) in jobs and qualifications in specific sectors;
- Enhancing the quality of services offered by training bodies, including the way trainees are treated on work placements as well as training methods, follow-up and help in job seeking.

Moreover, in connection with the extent to which ISO/CEN approaches have been incorporated into the quality assurance practices in France, the overall quality assurance principles reflect ISO principles. However, most of the training providers are not ISO certified.

Current Debate

The outcome of the consultation conducted with different stakeholders is that the opinions expressed are more or less convergent concerning the current positive appreciation and performance of the professionalisation contract in comparison to the other work-based inclusion and training instruments (especially apprenticeship). The divergence involves the existence of some negative factors which, if removed or properly dealt with, would further increase the positive performance against set objectives for effectively meeting the needs of the targeted groups.

The key positive findings from the collected qualitative consultation were:

As a CVT alternance-based instrument, the professionalisation contract provides more flexibility for both the trainee and the employer. The trainee has access to more on-the-job-training as an employee, usually with a higher salary than that obtained through the other training and inclusion instruments (even including apprenticeships) with the possibility of transforming a successful professionalisation contract into a normal durable work contract. Although the trainee is not confined (as in apprenticeships or other IVET-based mandatory traineeships) to choose only an academic-year based curriculum for his/her targeted qualification, some have the option of choosing to do so. In relation to this, it was observed within some of the consulted higher education and training providers, that some trainees on professionalisation contracts are following in-house education and training leading to obtaining a professional Bachelor's or Master's degree. For early school-leavers, including those with no or low initial qualifications, who have difficulty accessing the labour market, the professionalisation contract constitutes one of the basic instruments for catching-up with what they missed by obtaining the required qualifications for access to durable employment and/or further learning.

For some of the employers who finance the professionalisation directly through the payment of the trainee's salaries and indirectly via their sectoral initial contribution to the OPCA, the professionalisation contract constitutes an initial investment in human capital with a high potential of productivity for them in later stages. As the trainees spend more time training on-the-job (even compared to an apprenticeship), they get more familiar with the enterprise's activity and environment and at the same time acquire more operational skills and competences than the freshly recruited employees. This is why some of their consulted representatives recommend keeping the most successful trainees after the completion of their contract.

For the in-house training providers, the professionalisation contract like other work-based traineeships allows them to develop cooperation and partnership with the enterprises and develop/adapt their curricula to match labour market needs and promote employability. Moreover, as the professionalisation contract allows the trainees to have access to the same type of qualifications registered with NQF repertory and awarded by the IVET, it has the advantage of contributing to the development of learning path-fluidity and complementarities within and between different components of the whole educational and training system and is more connected with meeting changing labour market needs.

According to the stakeholders interviewed some of the most important remaining limiting factors include the following:

As the professionalisation contract is categorised in France as an alternance-based instrument, it suffers from the competition and confusion with the dominant and well established apprenticeship. Due to its relatively higher costs compared to apprenticeships in terms of trainees' salaries (with comparatively less public support), some companies are sometime discouraged from recruiting on the basis of apprenticeship contract. Moreover, it is underlined that the professionalisation contract also suffers from a lack of external tutors who can handle the support and follow-up of the most disadvantaged young people in addition to the one appointed by the enterprise. The level of GEIQ (the Grouping of Employers for Inclusion and Qualification and Inclusion) deals with this issue by creating a double tutoring: one tutor from the GEIQ and another one from the enterprise. It was also noticed that there is an increasing bias in favour of beneficiaries already holding initial formal qualifications equivalent to at least to Bacalaureate level (ISCED 4 and higher), although the professionalisation contract targets basically disadvantaged young people without or with low initial qualification. These factors were also confirmed by a diagnosis concerning the implementation of the professionalisation contract, established by 'Jean-François Pillard's mission group after four years following its introduction (Pillard, 2009).

Effectiveness of Case-studied Traineeship: Output and Results

The information provided in this section on the effectiveness of the professionalisation contract is basically based on DARES recent surveys (2011), completed with the results of this year's conducted interviews with stakeholders.

In 2010 148,000 new professionalisation contracts were signed (compared to 146,000 in 2009 and 179,000 in 2008) with a slight increase (of 1.14 per cent) between 2009 and 2010 after an important decrease of 18 per cent between 2008 and 2009 due to the impact of the crisis. This take-up concerns mainly young people of the age group 16-25 (representing 84 per cent of the new placement in 2010). Most of the accessible placements are concentrated within the tertiary sector. Over six out of 10 new placements occur within enterprises with less than 50 employees (65.8 per cent in 2010). The highest initial qualification trainees have is generally at most equivalent to ISCED 4, representing about seven out ten new beneficiaries (70 per cent in 2010). Most of the targeted qualifications are sector related qualifications representing 38 per cent of the new placements in 2010.

The stakeholders interviewed confirm that success rates are as high as in apprenticeships and even higher in some cases: on average about 80 per cent of the beneficiaries who completed their professional contracts had immediate access to employment. This includes the transformation of professionalisation contracts into normal work contracts. The remaining successful ones usually find a job within six months to a year on average (75 per cent) . Moreover, the professionalisation contract allows its successful beneficiaries to have easy access to career/learning progression and socio-professional mobility as the acquired qualifications are generally recognised on sectoral and national levels and referenced via the NQF to the EQF.

Moreover, the professionalisation contract has on the whole a favourable impact on the enterprise and the educational and training system according to the stakeholders interviewed.

Enterprises gain in terms of productivity and cost effectiveness as they have access to skilled labour equipped with more directly operational skills and competences matching their recruitment needs. As the trainees spend three-quarters of the alternating traineeship taking on-the-job practical training within the enterprise, the potential employers of these trainees are usually more inclined to recruit candidates who already acquired (through the successful completion of their professionalisation contracts), the required directly operational skills and competences. Related to this, stakeholders confirmed that many companies prefer to keep their successful trainees at the end of their professionalisation contracts.

Conclusions

In light of the results obtained through the investigation and the consultation of involved stakeholders, the professionalisation contract can be considered as one of the most effective instruments in facilitating access to training and employment. However its relative weight and performance within the alternance-based training system should be further reinforced by undertaking the following actions concerning some of the remaining hindering factors:

- Development and improvement of the existing information system concerning the professionalisation contract towards the end-users and stakeholders involved in the implementation process.
- Simplifying the administrative access procedure to the professionalisation contract, including systemising the pre-training assessment process.
- Reinforcing the role of the OPCAs and employers' organisations in charge of financing and monitoring the implementation of the professionalisation contract in guaranteeing the quality of provided training and the individualised support. This includes adapting the level of financing to the quality of provided individualised support and follow-up of the trainee.
- Development of external tutorship to take charge of the support and follow-up of the most disadvantaged individuals in having access to training and employment.
- Promoting reinforced cooperation and partnerships on regional levels between different involved stakeholders such as the OPCAs, the public services for employment and inclusion (such as 'poles emplois' and 'Missions Locales') and employers' organisations and intermediary placement groupings such as GEIQ and involved training providers.

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National Report on Traineeships Hungary

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1. Traineeships as part of Member State's Youth Policy Measures

1.1 Overview of current situation of young people and traineeships as part of youth policy measures

The Hungarian labour market had two basic characteristics before the global economic crisis: a relatively low unemployment rate (around 5 per cent) was accompanied by low employment rate (less than 60 per cent) and a high share of inactive people. The economic crisis had a negative impact on the labour market, especially on the level of unemployment. In 2010 the employment rate (55.4 per cent) was almost 9 per cent lower than the EU-27 average (64.1 per cent) and was lower than most regional competitors (Bulgaria: 59.7 per cent, Czech Republic: 65 per cent, Poland: 59.3 per cent, Romania: 58.8 per cent, Slovenia: 66.2 per cent and Slovakia: 58.8 per cent). The unemployment rate (11.2 per cent) was also above the EU-27 average (9.7 per cent) and the second highest in the region (Bulgaria: 10.2 per cent, Czech Republic: 7.3 per cent, Poland: 9.6 per cent, Romania: 7.3 per cent, Slovenia: 7.3 per cent and Slovakia: 14.4 per cent).

The negative consequences of the crisis substantially affected young employees and job seekers. In 2001 the employment rate of those aged 15-24 was 30.7 per cent while in 2010 it was 18.8 per cent. This rate is far below the EU-27 average of 34.1 per cent and is the lowest of the post-socialist countries in the region (Bulgaria: 22.2 per cent, Czech Republic: 25.2 per cent, Poland: 26.2 per cent, Romania: 24.3 per cent, Slovenia: 34.1 per cent and Slovakia: 20.6 per cent). The unemployment rate amongst 15-24 year olds was 26.6 per cent in 2010 that exceeded both the EU-27 average (21.1 per cent) that of most regional counterparts (Bulgaria: 23.2 per cent, Czech Republic: 18.3 per cent, Poland: 23.7 per cent, Romania: 22.1 per cent, Slovenia: 14.7 per cent and Slovakia: 33.6 per cent).

The fact that the employment rate within this cohort was significantly lower (18.8 per cent versus 55.4 per cent) and the unemployment rate much higher (26.6 per cent versus 11.2 per cent) compared to the whole economically active population indicates the vulnerable labour market position of this age group. The relatively worsening situation of young employees is also reflected in the decline in their employment conditions over the last decade. According to Eurostat the percentage of Hungarian employees aged 15-24 with a temporary employment contract increased from 15.4 per cent to 26 per cent between 2002 and 2010, while the share of temporary employment within the whole active population remained only 9.8 per cent in 2010. It is worth, however, stressing that the rate of temporary workers among young entrants is significantly lower than the EU-27 average (42 per cent) and is comparable with the other post-socialist countries (Bulgaria: 7.5 per cent, Czech Republic: 22.5 per cent, Poland: 66.1 per cent, Romania: 4 per cent, Slovenia: 70.8 per cent and Slovakia: 19.1 per cent). These data show the polarisation of the Hungarian labour market where younger generations enjoy less security than their elder counterparts. The risk of unemployment is substantially higher among young entrants with lower education level (ISCED 0-2) which can be traced back to the high drop-out rate in secondary, especially vocational education. (Kertesi and Varga 2005)

Besides the problems mentioned above other tendencies shaping the labour market situation of the young employees include:

- shift from vocational to general education accompanied by the expansion of higher education that led to shortages in certain manual occupations
- 'dead end character' of the vocational education and training e.g. closed mobility paths between the VET institutions and both general and higher education

- poor quality, low labour market value and social prestige of VET system, adverse selection of VET students (more than 30 per cent of them are socially disadvantaged and hardly motivated to learn)
- weak links between education and employment, that caused competence deficit of the young labour market entrants
- weak links between the education supply and the labour market demand
- poor education for Roma minority.

In order to overcome these problems, a number of employment and education initiatives have been implemented with the aim of helping young people adapt to the needs of the labour market. In the 2000s these active labour market measures included:

1. Counselling and job search assistance

Within the framework of the Life Long Guidance (LLG), which was established in 2009, educational institutions make an effort to help their students through the provision of guidance or through the organisation of job fairs. The Public Employment Service (PES) also provides a set of complementary services for young labour market entrants registered as unemployed. These services include training, counselling and various forms of personal assistance and special support in order to gain work experience.

2. Supporting employment

Young labour market entrants can participate in the so-called 'START' programme that provides a subsidy to employers on social security contributions of young employees. If a young entrant becomes registered unemployed, after 90 day the state subsidises 50-100 per cent of his or her wage depending on his/her educational level.

3. Education and Training initiatives

Promoting VET

In 2010 the government allocated 2 billion HUF (approximately €6,700,000) to a scholarship programme with the aim of motivating pupils finishing primary education to choose vocational training programmes instead of participating in general education.

Bringing closer the labour market supply and demand

In order to better coordinate adjustment of labour market supply and demand, Regional Development and Training Committees (RDTCs) have been set up in every region on a tripartite basis. Employers' organisation, trade unions and the representatives of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry participate in the RDTCs. The main task of the Committees is to monitor the labour and skill demands of the companies at the regional level and, based on empirical evidence, to determine the annual number of pupils by occupations.

On the 19th of December 2011 the Hungarian Parliament adopted the new Act on Vocational Education and Training. The new law shortens the length of vocational courses from four years to three years, increases the number of vocational subjects, introduces a standard examination system, delegates the quality control to the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, introduces an obligatory vocational guidance to all school leavers, and restructures the rules concerned for traineeship.

The new concept laid down in the Act has been, however, largely criticised, because:

- It does not abolish the 'dead end character' of the VET system, but increases the social inequalities within the education system.
- It exclusively supports the development of labour supply in low-value added manufacturing sectors at the expense of knowledge-intensive economic activities.

- The introduction of the new law was not prepared well enough. It aims to strengthen the practice-orientation of the VET system by ensuring a greater role for company-level traineeships; however it is questionable to what extent companies will cooperate in creating such a system. Until 1989 traineeship/practical training was an integrated part of the Hungarian VET system. The basic function of VET institutions was to ensure the skilled labour supply for the state-owned large companies. Pupils and students were employed by enterprises during their traineeship period and they were paid for their work. Secondary vocational schools were financially supported by enterprises. The system was based on the combination of theoretical education and enterprise-based practical training. After the collapse of the state-socialist system state-owned firms have been mainly replaced by small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and the vital connections between the VET schools and the business sector dramatically weakened. According to latest available data in 2009 30.8 per cent of the vocational school students participated in traineeship provided by 9,000 companies (1.3 per cent of the Hungarian enterprises). According to the president of the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry at least 20,000 companies should participate in practical training of VET pupils in order to vitalise the system. In May 2011 the GKI Economic Research Co. carried out a survey on the willingness of Hungarian companies in participating traineeship by providing practical training places. Forty two per cent of companies reported themselves as to be eager to cooperate with VET institutions but this ratio was only 33 per cent among the enterprises employing less than 50 people, and 48 per cent in firms with 51-200 employees. These results support the argument that, contrary the government efforts, a radical increase of the number of traineeship providing companies cannot be expected.
- The new system aims to follow the pattern of the German dual VET system where vocational training is 'divided' between schools and companies but implements only a few elements of the German system, e.g. the system of student contracts.
- The new law requires too much administration from traineeship provider companies that makes them uninterested in providing traineeships.

Table 1.1: Summary table of main ALMP traineeship programmes in Hungary

Main traineeship programmes & initiatives, including, ALMPs, educational VET & university traineeships as well as mandatory professional training	Brief description
Life Long Guidance (LLG)	In the framework of LLG that was established in 2009, educational institutions make an effort to help their students either through guidance or through the organisation of job fairs.
The Public Employment Service (PES)	PES provides a set of complementary services for young labour market entrants registered as unemployed. These services include training, counselling and various forms of personal assistance and special support is also offered in order to gain work experience.
START programme	The programme is created for young labour market entrants. It provides a subsidy to employers on social security contributions of young employees. If a young entrant becomes registered unemployed, after 90 day the state subsidises 50-100 per cent of his or her wage depending on his/her educational level.

2. Legislative Framework for Traineeships

2.1 Legal framework for and governance of traineeships

There are several legal sources of regulation for traineeships in Hungary. In vocational education and training the main source of legislation is the new Act on Vocational Education and Training (in Hungarian: *Törvény a szakképzésről – in the followings: SZT*) adopted by the Parliament on the 19th of December 2011. The aim of the new law is to strengthen the practical orientation of the Hungarian VET system by regulating and promoting traineeships, along with other forms of practical training. SZT defines four types of institutions that are allowed to provide VET courses: vocational schools (in Hungarian: *szakiskola*), secondary vocational school (in Hungarian: *szakközépiskola*), public and private adult education institutions. The new legislation brings radical changes in relation to vocational schools. Until now, the length of training in vocational schools was 4 years. In the first two years students were taught only general subjects and they started to learn professional subjects only in the 3rd year. The new law shortens the length of training from 4 to 3 years and makes changes to the structure of training. In the first year students will learn both practical and general subjects, but in the remaining two years only practical courses will be offered. In case of the secondary vocational schools the length of training remains 4 years but students will be offered more practical courses even in their first school years.

As mentioned before, one of the core aims of the new SZT is to strengthen the practical orientation of the Hungarian VET system by promoting practical training in general and traineeship in particular. The law defines the practical training (in Hungarian: *gyakorlati képzés*) as follows. Practical training is an integrated part of vocational education and training with the aim to students in acquiring work-related practical skills that are necessary for both being able to perform a given occupation and to prepare for the final vocational exam. It may be carried out in school-based workshops and/or in economic entities entitled by law to organise such form of training.

The new law requires that practical training in the first school year shall be carried out in school-based workshops and in the second and third school years both in school and in external workplaces. Traineeship in external workplaces should be carried out on a contractual basis. The law makes a differentiation between two types of traineeship contracts. In the first case the vocational school and the company conclude a cooperation agreement on traineeship/traineeship of students (in Hungarian: *együttműködési megállapodás*). In this case companies may provide scholarships to students who are allowed to undertake training at the company (typical for working in the summer holiday). This type of contract should be the basis of traineeship in art schools and in cases when traineeship is taking place at public institutions. The SZT defines the obligatory elements of cooperation contracts, e.g. they should fix the length of practical training, the physical infrastructure, the duties of both parties, the remuneration of students, etc.

The other type of legal agreement on traineeship is the student contract (in Hungarian: *tanulószerződés*) that is concluded directly between the student and the employer who provides the practical place for traineeships. The law defines the legal entities that are entitled to conclude a student contract: firms, public institutions, NGOs, churches, sole proprietors. The organisation providing traineeship shall be registered at the regional Chamber of Commerce and Industry that has the right to audit, monitor and evaluate the performance of the traineeship provider. The law stipulates the minimal content of the student contracts. It should contain the administrative details of the parties, the remuneration of students, the obligation of trainees at the workplace, the physical conditions of training, etc. The trainees have to pass a final exam at the end of traineeship. The process of terminating traineeship contracts is similar to the process for standard employment contracts.

Besides the above-mentioned changes the new legislation covers the simplification of the structure of the National Qualification Register (in Hungarian: *Országos Képzési Jegyzék – OKJ*), declares that the curricula of vocational programmes and the requirements of final exams belonging to the different occupations should be standardised, and ensures further entitlements to the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry in managing, coordinating and controlling the VET system.

In higher education (in the followings: HE) the Act on Higher Education (Act no. CXXXIX/2005) regulates traineeships. Until the implementation of the Bologna reforms that began in 2008 traineeships were obligatory only in fields with strong practical orientation. There were three areas: agriculture, business and accounting and education. Since the modification of the HE legislation in 2006 almost all BA programmes should contain a traineeship period. The law stipulates only the minimum length and credit value of traineeship but says nothing on their content. The same is applicable to the case of non-degree granting short vocational higher-education programmes. The Hungarian Parliament adopted a new higher education law in 2011 (Act no. CCIV/2011). The new law defines traineeship in higher education as follows: 'partly self-supporting activities of higher education students carried out at external workplaces or within higher education institutions.' The law stipulates (15 §) that higher education institutions are obliged to organise practical training of a 6 months duration for BA programmes (except of some theoretical degrees, like for instance classical philology). The list of practice-oriented programmes is enumerated in the Government Decree 289/2005. The law also covers the employment conditions of trainees. It requires an employment contract between the trainee and the employer and says that the rules of Labour Code should be applied during the traineeship period. Trainees are entitled to earn a minimum of 15 per cent of the minimum wage for work carried out during the traineeship and employers are obliged to provide liability insurance in favour of their trainees.

3. Availability of and Access to Traineeships

3.1 Statistics/Quantitative Information about traineeships

In order to understand the institutional framework of traineeship, in the following the structure of the Hungarian education system will be briefly presented:

Pre-primary education (ISCED 0-1)

This educational level is created for children from 3 to 7 years of age. The pre-primary education (kindergarten, in Hungarian: *óvoda*) is optional, except for the final year (at the age of 5 or 6), which is compulsory.

Primary education (ISCED 1-2)

In Hungary primary schools provide basic education in two 4-year cycles. Children attend primary schools (in Hungarian: *általános iskola*) until the age of 14, after which they have to choose a secondary school.

Secondary education (ISCED 2-3)

In Hungary there are three different forms of secondary education:

1. Vocational and special vocational schools (ISCED 3):

Students who do not intend to obtain a secondary school leaving certificate and wish to begin working immediately after the compulsory period of education, have the opportunity to attend a vocational school (in Hungarian: *szakiskola*). During the first and second years of their studies (9th and 10th grades), students are taught only general subjects. They

learn professional subjects from the 11th grade on. The professional orientation and preparation for vocational training starts in the 9th and 10th grades. However, the real vocational training begins in the 11th grade, partly in the school-workshops, and partly in factories. The duration of the training in vocational schools is 4 years. It consists of 2 years of general studies and a 2-year vocational course. From the next year, however, the system will be changed, according to the new legislation on VET (see in details before). The length of training will be shortened from 4 to 3 years and its internal structure will also be changed. In the first year students will learn both practical and general subject, but in the remaining two years only practical courses will be offered for them.

2. Secondary general schools (ISCED 2 -3)

The secondary general schools prepare students for universities and colleges, providing general education. The general secondary schools (in Hungarian: *gimnázium*) offer four-year-long education – starting in the 9th grade and finishing in the 12th grade. Bilingual schools offer 5-year programmes. At the end of the final year, students take school-leaving exams. According to the two-level secondary school-leaving examination regulations, students have the opportunity to choose whether they take the standard-level or the higher-level exam. The standard-level exam is focused on assessment of basic skills of students intending to complete their studies and search for a job. In case of higher-level exam, academic knowledge is emphasised and this exam serves as an entry to the higher educational institutions.

3. Secondary vocational schools (ISCED 3)

Secondary vocational schools (in Hungarian: *szakközépiskola*) offer the opportunity to learn a profession and provide general education as well. In the 9th–12th grades, students are taught mainly general subjects. This is a preparatory phase for the secondary school-leaving exam and further studies. The vocational orientation starts in the 9th grade. From the 11th grade on, theoretical and practical basic knowledge is taught in workgroups. The real vocational training begins only after the secondary school leaving exam (ISCED 4). Students complete their studies with final exams in the prescribed vocational subjects. The new legislation laid down in the SZT introduced changes to courses at this type of school, as well. The most important change is that students will be offered more practical courses even in their first school years.

Tertiary (higher) education (ISCED 5-6)

In Hungary, higher education institutions can be state-owned or run by legal entities determined by the law. Non state higher education institutions can request official recognition from the state. There are two types of tertiary institutions: non-university institutions/colleges and universities. Previously, colleges used to offer college degrees, while universities used to offer college and university degrees. Today both types of institutions may launch courses in all of the three cycles, but they have to offer Masters courses in at least two fields of study and PhD courses in at least one field in order to qualify as a university. In total Hungary has 77 universities and colleges (18 state universities, 14 state colleges, 25 religious colleges/ universities institutions, 14 private and foundation schools and 6 colleges of foreign countries established in Hungary).

Two-year advanced vocational programmes, (ISCED 5B, 120 ECTS credits) can be run by both higher education institutions and upper secondary schools, while professional higher education training programmes (at ISCED level 5A) are run by higher education institutions for those who are already graduates.

In the last decades there has been a dramatic shift from vocational training to general education. Based on the EUROSTAT the distribution of the Hungarian pupils/students between the various levels of the education system in 2009 was as follows. 15.14 per cent of student were in pre-primary educational institutions (ISCED 0), 18.45 per cent of them in primary education (ISCED 1), 20.17 per cent in lower, 24.88 per cent in upper secondary

education (ISCED 2.3), 3.07 per cent in post-secondary education (ISCED 4) and 18.49 per cent of them participated in tertiary education (ISCED 5,6). 90.13 per cent of tertiary education participants were in academic-oriented programmes, while 8.12 per cent were in occupational-oriented courses, indicating a relatively modest level of practical orientation in the tertiary education system.

There are several statistical indicators that can be used to assess the extent of traineeships in Hungary. According to the latest data available in 2009 42892 student contracts were registered in 9000 companies providing traineeship. (Szép 2009) This means that 30.8 per cent of the vocational school students participated in traineeship provided by 1.3 per cent of the Hungarian enterprises.

Additionally, a proxy indicator of traineeship can be the prevalence of initial vocational training (IVT) provided by the employees to their entrants¹. According to the latest wave of the Continuing Vocational Training Survey (CVTS -2005) 6 per cent of the Hungarian enterprises employing at least 10 people provided IVT courses to their entrants which is far below the European level (31 per cent) but is somewhat higher than the average of the other post-socialist countries in the region (Bulgaria: 4 per cent, Czech Republic: 3 per cent, Poland: 9 per cent, Romania: 2 per cent, Slovakia: 1 per cent and Slovenia: 9 per cent.).

There are, however, differences between the various sectors in terms of the IVT incidence. IVT is more prevalent in the financial services sector compared to the economy overall and less common in social and other personal services. There is also a difference between different sizes of firm: medium (between 50 and 249 employees) and large-sized firms (more than 250 employees) are more active in providing IVT courses than their small-sized (between 10 and 49 employees) counterparts.

3.2 International student mobility

In relation to international student mobility, 2.1 per cent of the Hungarian students studied abroad in 2009, whilst 2.7 per cent of the students came from a foreign country. We dispose more precise data on the number of foreign students, as well. According to a recent study, students are coming to Hungary with the aim to participate in higher education from more than 120 countries. In the school year 2009/10, 13,536 students came from Europe. Most of them are coming from the neighbouring countries; usually they are of Hungarian origin. However, an increasing share of other European countries can be detected. The total number of foreign students according to the country of origin is the following: Romania (3,005), Slovakia (2,512), Germany (1,972), Ukraine (1,482), Serbia (1,385), Norway (738), Sweden (436), Cyprus (236), Greece (193), Russia (192), Ireland (183), France (159), Spain (158), Great Britain (157), Croatia (136), Austria (123)². (Berács-Malota 2011)

According to the database of the Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci international student mobility programmes³, the number of Hungarian students studying abroad in through the Erasmus programme has increased significantly in the last ten years. While in 2000/01 only 2,001 Erasmus students were registered, their number reached 4,140 in 2009/10. This represented a share 1.04 per cent of the total student population. The overwhelming majority of them (3421) was studying, while 637 students did company placement abroad (this proportion is slightly higher than in other post socialist countries). The average duration of student mobility was 5.3 months for mobility for studies, while the duration for

¹ It should be kept in mind, however, that those receiving initial training are not automatically mean young entrants, since elderly employees with existing work experiences may also be trained this way when they join to a new firm. We also have to note that the structural differences of the (vocational) educational systems of the various European countries also cause deviations in the prevalence of IVT. This effect also should be taken into consideration if we carry out an international comparison.

² Only countries sending more than 100 students were ranked.

³ For this analysis we used the official statistics of Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci student mobility programmes: http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc920_en.htm and http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/doc/stat/slovenia_en.pdf

company placements was 3.9 months. The average EU monthly grant was €338 for studies and €392 for company placements. In total €8,874,000 was spent for Erasmus mobility actions in 2009/10. In the framework of the Leonardo da Vinci programme 130 projects were selected in 2010 receiving grants of €3,843,369.

3.3 Sectors where traineeships are prevalent

According to the statistics the sectors where traineeships are particularly common include: manufacturing, repair and trade, construction, hospitality, social and health care. Although recent changes made traineeships an obligatory part of almost all BA programmes in the higher education, there are two groups of occupations where traineeship has been an integrated part of the curricula for a long time. These are medicine and law. In the medical occupations (medical doctor, dentist, pharmacist, veterinarian, clinical psychologist, etc.) graduates are obliged to participate in practical training after finishing their studies but before obtaining their final qualification. Their traineeship period takes more, from two to five years; it varies between the different medical professions (in case of the dentists for instance it is possible to get a licence in three years, while in the case of MDs traineeship last five years on average). Lawyers are also obliged to participating in a traineeship period in case if they want to receive a licence to practice. In the legal professions the traineeship period takes three years on average.

3.4 Profile/Patterns of traineeships

As presented before, traineeship is prevalent in sectors (medical and legal occupations) where participating in traineeship is a legal prerequisite of obtaining a licence that allows an individual to carry out professional activities independently. In this case length and content of training is strictly regulated by law. In other occupations in the higher education the law defines only the minimum length and credit value of traineeship.

3.5 Financing of traineeships

There is a limited amount of data on financing traineeships in Hungary. In general, the dominance of public sources in funding educational expenditures is salient: Public funding makes up 100 per cent of educational expenditures in financing formal education. The cost of formal (school-based) adult education institutions is financed by their managing authorities (central or local governments). Their budget is based on the support from the state budget according to the norm (per capita) defined in the annual Budget Act. This norm is 1/3 of the prevailing support for initial education.

Non-formal adult education (training outside the school system) is financed from three legally defined sources:

- The state budget
- The Labour Market Fund
- The compulsory training contribution from companies.

Since 2003 two employment groups have been supported from the state budget:

- those who participate in an accredited training scheme obtaining their first profession
- disabled adults who participate in training.

The Labour Market Fund is based on the payments of both employers and employees. The Fund finances various training activities. It can be used to support further training for unemployed or employees who are threatened with job loss.

Companies are obliged to pay a training contribution to the state budget on the basis of their annual wage costs. The contribution, however, can be directly used by companies to support their own training activities, including traineeships. In 2007 the structure of the training contribution of Hungarian enterprises was as follows: 9.5 per cent of the contributions went to the continuing vocational training of companies' own employees, 20.4 per cent to direct support of vocational schools or higher educational institutions, 56.8 per cent was paid directly to the state budget and 20.4 per cent was devoted to financing the cost of traineeships at the company level. There were substantial differences between the various sectors regarding their financial contributions to traineeships. Companies in mining, in electricity, gas and water supply and financial services spent far above the average on traineeships, while social and health care, education, hospitality and construction industry lagged behind. (Szép 2009) However, the new law on the financing of vocational education and training adopted at the end of 2011 obliged Hungarian companies to pay their contribution to a central fund, rather than using it directly themselves. Financial supports will be distributed centrally upon requests.

As mentioned before, in 2010 the government allocated 2 billion HUF (appr. €6,700,000) to a scholarship programme with the aim of motivating pupils finishing primary education to choose vocational training programmes instead of participating in general education.

3.6 Public perceptions about traineeships

In the last few years, public debates related to the vocational education and training has been focused on two main issues. There has been a comprehensive discourse about the structural problems of the Hungarian education system. Two further topics can be identified within this issue. One was about the shortage of qualified manual workers and the expansion of higher education. The other topic was that the supply of the educational institutions does not meet the labour market demands. The debates, however, remained mainly ideological not being supported with evidence-based empirical analyses. The other main issue was the weakening links between the (vocational) education and companies, and the lack of work-related, practical training of pupils/students. One of the major challenges concerning the two issues is the shortage of in-depth analyses of the Hungarian companies' real skill demands and knowledge utilisation praxis which should serve as a basis for both public discourse and policies.

4. Practices and Content of Traineeships

4.1 Traineeships as part of education and/or labour market entry and integration for young people

As mentioned before, traineeship is completely integrated into vocational secondary and higher education, and also part of regular higher education too. Schools can arrange compulsory traineeships with employers, including firms and the public sector. Voluntary traineeships are advertised by both sectors with varying intensity. (For example, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, or the National Bank of Hungary seems to be much more active than other public employees.) Firms in the private sector (especially multinationals) actively use traineeship to screen potential employees (along with other tools such as tournaments).

Traineeships appear in two forms in the higher education. There are vocational courses in higher education that do not lead to a degree but provide high level specialised education for given jobs. Such courses usually specify a proportionately high share of traineeship (For

example a course in Tourism Management⁴ includes lessons of 2130 hours + an obligatory traineeship of 360 hours).⁵ In the case of BA and MA degrees, some type of traineeship is almost always obligatory.

4.2 Length of traineeship

The length of traineeship varies according to the different education levels. Traineeships in vocational education commence after the second or the fourth year of education, depending on the nature of the school (lower or upper secondary level). In this case traineeships can vary in length between 1 and 2 school-years. The length of the actual work experience can vary within these designated periods, but these are not regulated by law.

In higher education, one semester of training is compulsory in the case of programmes with strong practical orientation BA programmes. Length of traineeships in other cases (other degrees and non-degree granting courses) is not regulated by law.

In the case of voluntary traineeships for students in higher education, a great variety of traineeships can be found. Although these are usually offered during the summer, there are traineeships starting in the autumn, too.

4.3 Issues about employer practices as regards traineeships

The evolution of the practice-oriented training follows more or less the same patterns in all post-socialist countries. Under the state-socialism traineeship was an integrated part of the Hungarian VET system. In that period large state-owned companies dominated the size structure of the Hungarian firms. As a consequence, vocational education institutions could relatively easily build up relationships with these companies in order to organise traineeships for their students. Students were employed by these large enterprises during their traineeship period and they were offered job opportunities once they graduated. Secondary vocational schools were also financially supported by enterprises. The system was based on the combination of theoretical education and enterprise-based practical training.

After the collapse of the state-socialist system, micro and small sized enterprises became the dominant form of business organisations and the relationships between the VET schools and the business sector dramatically weakened. Both vocational schools and secondary vocational schools had difficulties finding places for trainees and apprentices and company-based practical training became an exception rather than the rule. Some of the VET schools had the opportunity to maintain workshops but the infrastructure has gradually broken down. Although students from secondary vocational schools are still referred as apprentices, their education is not enterprise-based any longer but takes place within schools. As presented before, 30.8 per cent of the vocational school students participated in traineeships provided by 9000 companies (1.3 per cent of Hungarian enterprises).

The tendencies presented briefly above can be traced back partly to the radical restructuring of Hungarian enterprises, where large state-owned companies were replaced by small- and medium sized private enterprises with fewer resources to employ trainees. The occasional cooperation between schools and enterprises is often based on traditional contacts or personal relations between the schools and the firms.

⁴ http://ak.nyme.hu/fileadmin/dokumentumok/atfk/FELVETELI_TAJEKOZTATO/dokumentum/szakle_r_s_idegenforgalmi_szakmenedzser.doc

⁵ http://www.fisz.hu/uifisz/index.php?lap=doc/doc&dok_id=107

5. Trainee's Rights and Terms and Conditions

The new act on vocational education and training (SZT) in determining the various elements of the student contract defines the rights of trainees as well. Employers are obliged to pay wages during the traineeship period based on a percentage of the actual minimum wage, depending on the number of working hours. Trainees are entitled to have a holiday period of 35 day a year at least and an extra ten days before the final examination. In case of illnesses, injuries and sickness or maternity leave the rules of the Labour Code should be applied. Trainees are obliged to take financial responsibility for damages they may cause at work to the extent that is defined in the Labour Code.

6. Quality Assurance of Traineeships

Several initiatives have been launched in Hungary in the last two decades aimed at improving the quality of education. In order to do so a plethora of different quality assurance methods and programmes have emerged. The most important ones are the following:

EFQM: This was the first model used between 1995 and 1999. It implemented a system of self-evaluation in 28 vocational training schools in cooperation with the Frey-Academy in Switzerland. The most important outcome of this model was to raise awareness concerning the importance of quality management in the field of education.

COMENIUS 2000: This was the first sector-specific quality development programme aimed to control and evaluate the professional work of the Hungarian educational institutions by paying special attention to needs and satisfaction of the clients. As a result institutional models of total quality management were implemented in 1,700 secondary educational institutions.

Award for Quality Improvement in Public Education: This award, first announced in 2002, was based upon the system of self-evaluation mentioned above and aimed to encourage public education institutions to reveal their organisational strengths and weaknesses.

Development Programme for Lower Vocational Education I.: This programme (launched in 2003) was financed by the Ministry of Education and aimed to facilitate the integration of students graduating from lower vocational education institutions into the labour market. In cooperation with 89 educational institutions a Self-Evaluation Model for Lower Vocational Education was elaborated with the of solving the basic problems of this form of education (i.e. to include the needs of the corporate sector into the training programmes, to create traineeship places at companies, to decrease the number of early school leavers, to increase the prestige of vocational training, etc.).

Development Programme for Lower Vocational Education II.: In the second phase of the programme (2006-2011) some 70 educational institutions launched the Quality Assurance Framework for Vocational Training which was based on the Common Quality Assurance Framework of the European Union and was designed taking into consideration the characteristics of the Hungarian context. It is worth noting that Hungary was the first country in the EU to implement such a framework.

ISO 9001:2008: The fourth version of the most widely used quality management standard was introduced in all Hungarian vocational education institutions.

Accreditation for Adult Education: This process of quality evaluation and quality accreditation was launched in 2002 as a precondition when applying for any Hungarian and

European tenders. This accreditation includes the existence of a plan for human resource development, a policy for quality management, a process description of training activities, a quality management system, quality management targets and self-evaluation system.

On the basis of the Copenhagen Declaration (2002), the member states of the European Union approved the Common Quality Assurance Framework (CQAF) in 2004 which was adopted by the Hungarian government in 2006. In 2009, the European Parliament and the European Council approved the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework (EQUARF). Its Hungarian analogue called 'Hungarian Framework for Quality Management in the Vocational Training' was elaborated in 2009 and launched in the spring of 2010. The implementation process ended in 2011 by training for the representatives of the educational institutions. In order to help the common use of this framework a methodological manual was prepared and a mentoring network has been established. According to the initial plans, 95 per cent of the vocational education institutions will use a quality management system based on this framework.

As mentioned earlier, the new law on vocational education and training gives the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry more power to monitor and evaluate the VET system, including traineeships. The law defines two levels of quality assurance for traineeships. At the first level it precisely stipulates the requirements for teachers and instructors participating in a traineeship. The law requires relevant qualification, at least five-years of work experience and a clean record. The second level is output-oriented by the regulation of the requirements of final exams. The new act gives a central role to the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in defining the output requirements and directly supervising final examinations.

For international student mobility programmes such as Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci, the responsibilities are clearly defined.⁶ According to the quality assurance policy of these programmes, the sending organisation is responsible for defining placement objectives (skills and competencies to be developed), choice of the host organisation, the duration of the project and the content of the placement. It is also the responsibility of the sending organisation to select the participants, to establish a contract, to manage transport, accommodation, visa/work permit arrangements and social security cover and insurance and to evaluate the personal and professional achievements of the participants. The host organisation is responsible for assigning tasks and responsibilities to participants, identifying a tutor to monitor the training progress of the participants, and for providing practical support if required. The sending and hosting organisations are jointly responsible for negotiating a tailor-made training programme together with an appropriate mentoring and monitoring arrangements. They are also jointly responsible for establishing validation procedures to ensure recognition of skills and competencies acquired as well as for establishing communication channels and evaluation of the progress of the project on an on-going basis. The participant is required to do their best to make the placement a success, to abide by the rules and regulations of the host organisation, to inform the sending organisation of any problems or changes occurring in relation to the placement and to submit a report in the specified format, together with requested supporting documentation in respect of costs, at the end of the placement.

⁶ http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/doc/quality_en.pdf

7. Overall Assessment as regards Traineeships

7.1 Benefits and drawbacks of traineeships/Effectiveness of traineeship

The main problems for young labour market entrants are:

- A shift from vocational to general education accompanied by the expansion of higher education that led to shortages in certain manual occupations.
- The 'dead end character' of vocational education and training (in the following: VET).
- Poor quality, low labour market value and social prestige of VET system, adverse selection of VET students (more than 30 per cent of them are socially disadvantaged and hardly motivated to learn),
- Weak links between education and employment.

In order to solve these problems several efforts have been made in the last few years. One of the measures taken is the new act on vocational education and training (SZT) that aims to strengthen practical orientation of the VET system by promoting practical training, including traineeships. Among other things, the new law shortens the length of vocational courses from 4 years to 3 years, increases the number of vocational subjects, introduces a standard examination system, delegates the quality control to the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, introduces an obligatory vocational guidance to all school leavers, and restructures the rules related to traineeship.

The new concept reflected in the legislation, however, is accompanied by several risks. First of all, the willingness of Hungarian companies to participate in traineeship programmes is rather low. According to latest available data in 2009 30.8 per cent of the vocational school students undertook traineeships provided by 9000 companies (1.3 per cent of Hungarian enterprises). According to the president of the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry at least 20,000 companies should participate in practical training of VET students in order to vitalise the system. According to the results of a recent survey 42 per cent of companies reported being eager to cooperate with VET institutions but this fell to 33 per cent among enterprises employing less than 50 people, and increased to 48 per cent in firms with 51-200 employees. Another related problem is the complexity of administration and supervision of traineeships that may discourage companies from offering traineeships. These problems suggest that, contrary to government efforts, a radical increase in the number of companies providing traineeships cannot be expected.

Regarding higher education there is no systematic cooperation between Hungarian companies and universities even if some isolated good practices exist. Universities and other higher education institutions are mainly involved in international student mobility programmes like Erasmus or Leonardo da Vinci. The number of students participating in Erasmus programme for example has been doubled in the last 10 years. The share of Hungarian students studying abroad (18 per cent) is slightly higher than in such post-socialist countries of the region like Slovakia (16 per cent) , Czech Republic (14 per cent) or Bulgaria (9 per cent) ⁷ even if lack of funding is a main barrier inhibiting significant proportion of students to participate in these mobility programmes⁸. The most important benefit of these programmes is improving foreign language skills.

⁷ Source: Flash Eurobarometer, 2011, p. 10.

⁸ Source: op. cit. p. 18.

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Annex

Table A 1: Employment rate in some New Member States (15 to 24 years)

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
<i>EU-27</i>	40,9	40,6	40,1	40,1	37,0	37,5	37,3	37,4	35,0	34,0
<i>Bulgaria</i>	19,8	19,4	20,7	21,5	21,6	23,2	24,5	26,3	24,8	22,2
<i>Czech Republic</i>	34,2	32,2	30,0	27,8	27,5	27,7	28,5	28,1	26,5	25,2
<i>Hungary</i>	30,7	28,5	26,8	23,6	21,8	21,7	21,0	20,0	18,1	18,3
<i>Poland</i>	24,0	21,7	21,2	21,7	22,5	24,0	25,8	27,3	26,8	26,3
<i>Romania</i>	32,6	28,7	26,4	27,9	24,9	24,0	24,4	24,8	24,5	24,3
<i>Slovenia</i>	30,5	30,6	29,1	33,8	34,1	35,0	37,6	38,4	35,3	34,1
<i>Slovakia</i>	27,7	27,0	27,4	26,3	25,6	25,9	27,6	26,2	22,8	20,6

Source: EUROSTAT

Table A 2: Unemployment rate of population less than 25 in some New Member States

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
<i>EU-27</i>	17,3	18,0	18,3	18,6	18,8	17,5	15,7	15,8	20,1	21,1
<i>Bulgaria</i>	38,8	37,0	28,2	25,8	22,3	19,5	15,1	12,7	16,2	23,2
<i>Czech Republic</i>	17,3	16,9	18,6	21,0	19,2	17,5	10,7	9,9	16,6	18,3
<i>Hungary</i>	11,3	12,7	13,4	15,5	19,4	19,1	18,0	19,9	26,5	26,6
<i>Poland</i>	39,5	42,5	41,9	39,6	36,9	29,8	21,7	17,3	20,6	23,7
<i>Romania</i>	17,6	21,0	19,5	21,0	19,7	21,0	20,1	18,6	20,8	22,1
<i>Slovenia</i>	17,8	16,5	17,3	16,1	15,9	13,9	10,1	10,4	13,6	14,7
<i>Slovakia</i>	39,2	37,7	33,4	33,1	30,1	26,6	20,3	19,0	27,3	33,6

Source: EUROSTAT

Table A 3: Share of outgoing Erasmus students as a percentage of the total student population between 2007 and 2010 in some New Member States

	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010
<i>Bulgaria</i>	0,44	0,54	0,62
<i>Czech Republic</i>	1,54	1,54	1,43
<i>Hungary</i>	0,87	0,98	1,04
<i>Poland</i>	2,41	2,40	2,44
<i>Romania</i>	1,64	1,20	1,28
<i>Slovenia</i>	1,03	1,13	1,20
<i>Slovakia</i>	0,78	0,88	0,92

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc920_en.htm

Hungarian Case Study Report

Traineeship in focus for this case study

The Demola project of the Budapest University of Technology and Economics

Policy Framework

See National Report

Organisation of Traineeship under Study, Relevant Stakeholders and their Role

In the following pages we present one of the higher educational traineeship programmes provided by the Budapest University of Technology and Economics (in Hungarian: Budapesti Műszaki és Gazdaságtudományi Egyetem, in the following referred to as BME). It is situated in Budapest and its highlighted fields of science are the various types of engineering fields, chemical and biotechnological sciences, natural sciences and social and economic sciences.

The reason why we have reviewed this university particularly is that this is one of the leading Hungarian Universities, with over 23,000 students, 110 departments and over 1,500 lecturers and researchers. BME has a long history, spanning more than 200 years. It is the centre of the Hungarian engineering and mechanical sciences and plays a decisive role in Hungarian research and development activities connected to the higher education system.

BME is also a leader in introducing educational innovations to the Hungarian higher education system. It was among the first universities to introduce the ECTS, the European Credit Transfer System, which made the university accessible for foreign students of various exchange programmes, e.g. Erasmus. In 2006 the BSC-MSC system was also first introduced in the field of informatics, which is among the core strengths of the educational offering of BME.

These are not only interesting facts, but they make BME a great subject for reviewing. As mentioned above, organised traineeships in higher education are a relatively new phenomenon outside of law and health care education, and those not in the profile of BME. If we want to introduce these particular types of traineeships into higher education, then it is beneficial to do so through the example of a proactive, innovative, leading university which is in the mainstream of Hungarian higher education.

Funding & Resource Allocation

As mentioned in the National Report, companies are obliged to pay a training contribution to the state budget on the basis of their annual wage costs. Some of this contribution, however, can be used for supporting companies' own training activities, including traineeships. In 2007 the structure of the training contribution for Hungarian enterprises was as follows: 9.5 per cent of the contribution was expended on continuing the vocational training of companies' own employees, 20.4 per cent went towards direct support of vocational schools or higher educational institutions, 56.8 per cent was paid directly to the state budget and 20.4 per cent was devoted to financing the cost of traineeships at company level. There were substantial differences between the various sectors regarding their financial contributions to traineeships. Companies in mining, in electricity, gas and water supply and financial services spent far above the average on traineeships, while social and health care, education, hospitality and the construction industry lagged behind (Szép 2009).

Description Of The Traineeship Under Study

Content and Practices related to the Traineeship under Study

BME went through a major organisational restructuring between 2008 and 2010 and the organisation is now built up in a divisional structure. In this structure the upper management of the university, which is made up of the president and the faculty deans, is strictly concerned with strategic matters, and other issues, such as traineeship questions, are the responsibility of the individual faculties. This restructuring was necessary because of financial issues and it places more liability on faculties to govern their budgets responsibly, whilst also allowing them to fully enjoy benefits, including fiscal advantages, of their own activities. The traineeship programme is part of the faculties' external relationships that may provide profits for them.

In this case study we present the traineeship system of the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Informatics as an example. The traineeship requirements of the study programmes provided by this faculty are regulated at a national level by the Ministry of National Resources. These requirements are put into practice at both faculty and departmental level in the education of electrical and IT engineers. For these professions the Higher Education Act prescribes at least six weeks of compulsory traineeship outside of the university, at BSc level. At MSc level four weeks are compulsory but it is not necessary to complete these externally. The BSc traineeship is usually carried out in the last summer holiday before the 7th semester of the programme. The departments are obliged to support their students to find a training place and it is the traineeship coordinator who is responsible for this. The coordinator deals with the companies who accept the trainees and carries out the administration required by law.

The compulsory traineeship program, the benefits, and disadvantages of it

A six week traineeship programme is compulsory before the last semester of the BA programme. If the student can not find a place for himself the faculty offers him a place at a company; approximately 90 per cent of the students choose from the list of company places offered by the department. Usually they go to a small or medium sized company, but sometimes they go to a bigger company with whom the department already has strategic connections. As the head of the department told us, the most frequent complaint of companies against this type of traineeship is that it is too short. The companies cannot give the trainees a scope of activities and responsibilities because they will leave within a few weeks; sometimes this leads to wasteful activities, and if the students feel that they are doing valueless tasks, they do not take the practice seriously.

It is possible to complete the compulsory traineeship programme by participating in a traineeship run by a company as part of its hiring process. In this case the student, in the final semester of their BSc studies, becomes a potential employee of the company. This means that the company expects the student to stay on after the traineeship period and usually the trainee is also interested as this is the main reason of this type of traineeship; in this case the student finds their own place of practice.

During a company traineeship the company has real expectations of the students, as they are not expected to leave after six weeks. They have to work hard on tasks that are equal to other employees' work, and they are more likely to be part of the company community. It is also a huge motivator that they are paid for their work – which is not necessary for the six week traineeship. Here both the company and the student plan for the long term and it can lead to a more fruitful relationship.

The department accepts these kinds of quasi jobs, and also real jobs, when the student is an employee and a student at the same time. This traineeship has to fulfil the same conditions as the university organised traineeship. There have to be two consultants and a

report on the six weeks' work has to be produced which is accepted by both of the consultants.

Innovative way of Traineeship in Higher Education - The Demola project

In the following we present an innovative initiative that combines university-based research activities with traineeship programmes, providing possibilities for students to acquire practical competences and for firms to solve technical problems.

Origins of the project

The idea came from a Finnish project of the same name. They discovered this project in Tampere, Finland, where the university and the local economy are heavily tied together through this concept. They have over 18 months' experience running this project and the concept not only works in Finland, but evidence of its success can also be found throughout Europe.

The core idea of the programme is that the companies share their research problems with the university, then the university puts together a team of researchers and students from various fields and they come up with a solution. The company has the option whether to buy the new technology or not, so the research team also has the option to sell it or to create a spin-off company. The process could work in reverse too; in which case, the research group would come up with an idea and the industrial company could decide whether it sees opportunity in it or not.

The Hungarian implementation - the conditions of the project

This project is only in its pilot stage, but expectations are high. The original Finnish concept was created for solving IT-related problems, but the Hungarian implementation of this system aims to make it more widely accessible by involving all eight faculties of the university. The central idea is that industry needs multidisciplinary solutions; a real life industrial problem does not have just one technical aspect which sits within the knowledge-base of a specific field of engineering, but instead it has multiple aspects. This makes it necessary to involve various scientific fields. It would be a mistake to forget about the economic dimension of the work because a good solution in an industrial sense means a solution that not only solves the technical and scientific issues, but one that is at the same time economically viable and successfully marketable. As an interviewee told us, it is not completely true that the university lacks such horizontal thinking, but programmes like Demola could strengthen the connection between multiple disciplines and create a culture of teamworking among various experts, which companies do not usually find in regular education. As our interviewee formulated, it could widen the range of tools the university has to satisfy industrial needs, and it could potentially attract more investment.

The concept works in the following way. The participating company brings the university an industrial issue and a laboratory is especially built for the Demola concept. Experts from the Demola programme examine what kinds of competences are needed to arrive at a complex solution to the problem and they then assemble a three to five member team, which includes students from different departments or even faculties of the university. The students gathered for the project are from a group of students who have previously indicated that they would like to participate in such projects. These students could have been shortlisted by their competences and field of interest and this makes it easy to match the right researcher to the specific projects. After the assembly of the team the deadlines are set and the work begins.

The ideal student career path starts with finding a field one wants to specialise in; according to this idea, the student chooses the department or faculty that offers the kind of specialism they are interested in. This mainly includes practical subjects like laboratory practice and theory as mentioned above. During the laboratory practice students sometimes get involved in an industrial programme and they join these projects and contribute to them through their laboratory work. Many, but not all of them, are industrial related projects connected to

a specific company. The student can then continue his or her work at the university as a six week summer traineeship for the company. After the practice period the student returns to university to conclude his or her work in a thesis. Once this is completed successfully and the student has been awarded a degree, he or she can return to the company or continue to study at MSc level.

The individual research project starts with separate laboratory training. To do this, students have to choose a faculty consultant who mentors them throughout the laboratory practice. The thesis of the students must be based on this laboratory practice. During the masters level qualification there are two more semesters of this laboratory, quasi industrial-like environment practice. These practices could involve following a common scientific problem, or they could entail researching different problems. The research products from these practices belong to the university; the faculty has the property rights. The research programme of students frequently attracts companies and it also helps the students' careers and determines the traineeship location.

The work is controlled by a company tutor. This makes not only the students but also the company responsible for some kind of solution. After the programme is evaluated as successful and finished, the company has the option to buy the project's outcome; students also have the right to ask for a patent on the solution, and sell it on the market, or to start a spin-off company with it.

Quality Assurance Mechanisms

Trainees have to have two consultants. There is a department consultant who oversees the trainee's activity and whether it matches the academic requirements of the study programme. There is also an on-the-job tutor, who supervises the trainee's job at the workplace, and gives them tasks that benefits them. The trainee must conclude his six weeks of the programme with a report that covers all the weeks' work in as much detail as possible so both consultants can accept it. It is an advantage of the specific field of study that it includes a lot of individual laboratory work, so there is a detailed system of how activities must be reported, and how these can be translated to working hours, and after that into credits. The clear benefit of such a traineeship programme is that the student has an opportunity to participate in a working environment and it develops his or her competences.

Current Debate

Although the concept may sound fine, it is only at the pilot stage at the moment. This means its actual implementation could be very different from what the concept was in the early stages. There is a huge gap between the logic represented by a researcher, a student and a corporate manager so finding the common denominator is a huge task. There is also an issue as to how this project can be compatible with the university's legislative background. Yet another issue is that it is not clear yet how participants can exploit the advantages of such joint projects in practice.

Effectiveness of Case-studied Traineeship: Outputs and Results

Benefits for the students

As was hinted earlier, a huge motivator for the students could be the possibility of a cash return on their research activity. However, beside the monetary aspect of the project, there are lots of possibilities for personal development. Students with different expertise have to work together. This means for example that an IT student, a mechanical engineering student and a student of management disciplines have to find a common language, routines for teamwork, and solutions to everyday working environment conflicts. The advantage of

Demola is that learning for personal interest in a familiar environment may be more beneficial than a short-term compulsory traineeship at a company.

Benefits for the companies

As an interviewee stated, it is a win-win situation for both the companies and the students. The companies do not have to take the financial cost and risks of research and development. Such projects would demand great financial commitment from a company, but the Demola laboratory gives the university a huge size-efficiency advantage, so it can take over this risk. As an interviewee told us, this is not just advantageous for technology-based companies but firms active in traditional industries also seem to be interested in the project, as well as small and medium sized companies (SMEs). It can be especially attractive for them because they are not usually familiar with the academic environment.

Innovative way of Traineeship in Higher Education - Technological Transfer

As part of a state-supported tender, a technological transfer office has been established to enhance and support technology transfer between the university and companies. The way that the technological transfer process works is that firstly an inventory is created of the knowledge, ideas and innovations that the university possesses. They are then categorised according to the stage of development they are in and the market value they represent; examples of categories include ideas that need further research to be marketable, research that is near to publication and possible subjects for a patent.

According to this agenda, the office organises entrepreneurial seminars where students and young scientists can meet with industrial figures, such as legal experts, venture capitalists, practicing entrepreneurs. Not only do they give lectures on market opportunities, but they are also available to speak to the students and answer their questions.

There are also other events where these parties can meet, like the so-called 'idea contest' where 58 teams compete for first prize. The winner of this contest is not awarded money, but a complete package of assistance to develop their idea. This means that the best idea, in terms of marketability, receives an opportunity to realise that idea with the help of legal, marketing, financial, investment and strategic management services. The office tries to follow up this project until it is fully developed at which point the university owned company BME Viking Co. Ltd. can help launch it as a spin-off company.

Conclusions

In this case study we briefly presented the implementation of a Finnish initiative at one of the leading Hungarian universities. The implemented Demola project is ambitious in its targets: it aims to foster better cooperation between the university and companies, support technology and knowledge transfer between the two and involve a larger set of fields of expertise than is the case in the original country (where the programme is restricted to IT).

While the programme may be for the benefit of every participant, it is at a very early stage at the moment and as such it raises some questions. Among others it is still unclear how the different cultures, values, logics and interests of the involved participants (e.g. academic staff, students and company representatives) will be integrated and it is also questionable how the participants will be able to exploit the advantages of such joint projects in practice.

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National Report on Traineeships Ireland

Catherine Rickard, IES

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1. Traineeships as part of Member State's Youth Policy Measures

1.1 Overview of current situation of young people and traineeships as part of youth policy measures

The statutory school leaving age in Ireland is 16 years old, however, more typically young people will leave school at age 19. On completion of secondary education, school leavers in Ireland may enter higher education, undertake FET (i.e. post Leaving Certificate Courses, state sponsored training programmes) or enter the workforce. Unlike other OECD countries which typically have separate vocational and general streams of upper secondary level education (ITUC,2011), in Ireland most students undertake a general academic route leading to the Leaving Certificate and some 65 per cent of students then progress to third level education (ITUC, 2011). The ITUC state there have been attempts to promote alternatives to the Leaving Certificate over the last 20 years, but 'brand loyalty' means only a 'negligible proportion of students undertake a programme of study with a primary vocational emphasis' (ITUC, 2011:4) and therefore the vocational element in upper secondary education is weak in comparison to other countries (ibid.)

The sectors of the economy that employ the greatest proportions of young workers are technology and food processing (Robberecht, 2010), but youth unemployment in Ireland is concentrated into the construction and trade sectors (Robberecht, 2010). When the Irish property bubble burst and developers' projects were cancelled (Dobbins, 2011), the construction sector was one of the first to suffer contraction in employment (Eurofound, 2011) and three out of five construction jobs disappeared (Eurofound, 2011a). This sector alone has accounted for almost half (47 per cent) of the total decline in employment over the last two years in Ireland (Dobbins, 2011). Ireland is one of the worst EU countries affected by the economic crisis (alongside Spain, the Baltic Republics and Bulgaria) and 'unemployment remains at over treble its pre-crisis levels in Ireland' (Eurofound, 2011a:3). The unemployment rate in Ireland rose from 4.6 per cent in 2007 to 14.2 per cent in the second quarter of 2011 (OECD, 2011) and it is young people in Ireland – particularly those with low or intermediate qualifications (OECD, 2011) – who have been the most adversely affected by the recession (Sexton, 2010). Those without tertiary education aged under 35 years accounted for 42 per cent of total unemployment (against 23 per cent of the total labour force) at the end of 2010 (OECD, 2011). Eurofound (2011) report that young men are worse affected by unemployment than young women in Ireland and young men are more likely to belong to the group 'not in education, employment or training' (NEETs) and in the group of long-term unemployed workers (more than 12 months) (Eurofound, 2011). The NEET lack of participation in the labour market is costly and, in terms of GDP, Ireland has the largest bill at 2.5 per cent of GDP (alongside Bulgaria also at 2.5 per cent of GDP) (Eurofound, 2011b & Eurofound, 2011a).

Long-term unemployment presents challenges to young people in developing appropriate labour market skills and obtaining appropriate employment (Eurofound, 2011). A recent Eurobarometer survey found that a lack of available jobs in a young person's city or region was cited as one of the main challenges for finding a job by more than 6 in 10 respondents aged 15 to 35 in Ireland (67 per cent) (Flash Eurobarometer, 2011). Indeed, even before the economic crisis hit, concern was expressed about the 'low-quality, low-skilled and low-paid employment that characterised a significant proportion of youth employment' in Ireland (ISFOL, 2008:224).

All regions of Ireland have experienced rising youth unemployment (Dobbins, 2011), with some regions being impacted worse than others. In areas such as Limerick and Waterford, at least half of all young men are estimated to be on the Live Register (ibid.). In Limerick, a

city with relatively high unemployment even during the boom, two out of every three young men are estimated to be unemployed (Dobbins, 2011).

A national multi-employer social partnership agreement concluded in 2006 'Towards 2016' contained a number of initiatives aimed at helping young people's transition from education to work (Dobbins, 2011). A key feature of 'Towards 2016' was the 'Lifecycle Framework' in which the Irish Government and social partners agreed to 'work together to address the particular education, training and employment needs of young adults' (Dobbins, 2011). A particular focus was given to young people and increased training for the low-skilled in employment. However, Dobbins (2011) comments that Ireland's social partnership model broke down in early 2010 which 'hampered engagement between the government and social partners on active labour market policies – relating to young workers' (Dobbins, 2011).

Ireland has implemented measures to increase participation of young people in VET and to enable early school leavers to access the labour market. Although actions to target early school leavers have been prioritised by the Irish Government with significant investments in special educational initiatives at school level (Barry, 2010), the early school leaving rate in Ireland (10.5 per cent) is actually lower than the EU 27 average of 14.1 per cent and it is currently around the EU2020 headline target of no greater than 10 per cent (European Commission, 2011).

In recent years there has been 'an expansion of VET programmes paying allowances, to encourage a greater take-up or return to education and training of disadvantaged persons, particularly amongst early school leavers with low qualifications' (Barry, 2010:80), such as the Youthreach Programme and Post-Leaving Certificate courses under the Back to Education Initiative (see summary table below). The most important reasons identified by young people, in the recent Eurobarometer survey, for entering vocational education and training in Ireland are to improve job opportunities (72 per cent); to qualify for applying to post-secondary or tertiary levels of education (39 per cent) and to acquire practical skills (31 per cent) (Flash Barometer, 2011).

Youthreach programmes and Post Leaving Certificates (PLC) are the most popular routes chosen by school leavers. However, many do not necessarily enter FET directly upon leaving school. In addition the number of new people entering apprenticeships is falling (FÁS, 2011). Work placements as part of third level education are considered to form an 'important part of the learning experience in many programmes' but the quality of these experiences varies and 'a range of approaches are adopted for awarding credits and assessing learning outcomes' (REAP, 2011).

The emphasis in Ireland has been mainly on designing VET to meet national needs, rather than international ones (Barry, 2010). However, in some industries VET provision crosses national boundaries, for example, in aircraft maintenance, where VET is oriented to the international manufacturers and internationally-approved maintenance standards (Barry, 2010). Before the recession, the take-up of mobility opportunities by Irish nationals was generally relatively low and the movement of 'learners until recent times has been mainly inwards with less outward movement' (Barry, 2010:22). However, due to high unemployment, there has been an increase in emigration, particularly amongst young people and apprentices, who have struggled to find appropriate work experience in Ireland to complete their apprenticeships (Barry, 2010). Almost 90 per cent of emigrants are young people and 'prime-age' workers and anecdotal evidence suggests an increasing proportion of highly skilled Irish nationals, including graduates, are entering the labour market abroad (OECD, 2011).

In June 2009, Ireland completed the process of referencing its National Qualification Framework to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and this should 'contribute to increased learner mobility and mutual recognition of qualifications between Ireland and other EU member State countries' (Barry, 2010:6).

Table 1.1: Summary table of main ALMP traineeship programmes in Ireland

Name of ALMP Scheme	Description
Back to Education Initiative (BTEI)	Increases the participation of young people and adults with less than upper secondary education in flexible learning opportunities. Many BTEI courses offer access to work experience. Students in receipt of a Social Welfare payment prior to joining a course will continue to receive their payments.
FÁS Community Training and Community Employment Programme	FÁS Community Training Centres (CTCs) offer specific vocational skills training to early school leavers (16 years plus) as an alternative to second level education, in order to progress levels of skills, knowledge and competencies. The training provided takes many forms and varies from building and restoration projects to IT. Part of the national Youthreach programme (see below). The Community Employment Programme (CE) contains an element of basic training and targets the long-term unemployed and socially excluded persons (Barry, 2010:43).
FÁS Traineeships	Focuses on occupational skills development and combines formal training with FÁS and workplace coaching with an employer. On successful completion of both on- and off-the-job training, all FÁS learners receive a nationally recognised FETAC Award at either Certificate or Advanced Certificate level, mostly at Levels 5 and 6. The traineeships are targeted at new labour market entrants and the unemployed. The course durations vary but are generally between 20 and 43 weeks.
Local Training Initiative	Project-based training and work experience programme carried out in the local community. The programme allows local communities to carry out valuable projects for the community and train participants in areas related to the project work so that they can go on to gain employment or progress to further training. It targets unemployed young people aged 16-25
National Internship Scheme – JobBridge	The Government announced the new National Internship Scheme as part of its Jobs Initiative programme, published on 10 May 2011 and it is part of the National Employment Action Plan (NEAP) and is being used by the Department of Social Protection as a means to activate unemployed people. JobBridge will provide at any one time up to 5,000 work experience placements for jobseekers who are on the Live Register and have been in receipt of Jobseekers Allowance or signing on for credits for at least 3 months (78 days). The duration of individual internship positions are a 6 month or 9 month placement. It will be a time-limited scheme for a maximum of 2 years. The scheme is hoped to assist with 'breaking the cycle where jobseekers are unable to get a job without experience, either as new entrants to the labour market after education or training or as unemployed workers wishing to learn new skills' (JobBridge, 2011b). (JobBridge replaces and expands upon the IBEC managed Gradlink programme).

Name of ALMP Scheme	Description
Skillsnet	State funded, enterprise-led networks which design, manage and deliver specific training and upskilling programmes across a range of sectors. The provision has been extended to include at least 10 per cent of participants that are taken from the Live Register who will train with those who are in employment.
Specific Skills Training	Provides job seekers with employment-led training opportunities that lead to specific job related skills and formal vocational qualifications.
Return to work training	Aimed at the long-term unemployed. The courses facilitate entry to employment or progression to higher level programmes such as FÁS Specific Skills Training or Traineeship programmes.
Youthreach	Part of national programme that offers second chance education and training to 16 – 20 year olds. Targets early school leavers and designed to give young people opportunities to engage in the formal certification process in an 'out-of-school' setting. Full-time year round course where learners receive a weekly training and travel allowance.
Work Placement Programme	Government supported programme, introduced in June 2009, which targets graduates who have achieved an award at Level 7 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications and who have been unemployed for six months and those who do not possess a full award at Level 7. The programme offers a work experience placement for a max. of nine months (extended from six months in November 2009) (FÁS, 2011a).

Source: FÁS; Youthreach.ie; JobBridge.ie

2. Legislative Framework for Traineeships

2.1 Legal framework and governance of traineeships

2.1.1 Governance

FÁS is the National Training and Employment Authority in Ireland and it operates a regional network of 66 offices and 20 training centres. It operates training and employment programmes; provides a recruitment service to jobseekers and employers, an advisory service for industry, and supports community-based enterprises.

FÁS, however, is being disbanded and will be replaced by a new education and training agency called Solas (Seirbhísí Oideachais Leanunaigh Agus Scileanna). It is hoped Solas will bring a more integrated approach to the provision of further education and training in Ireland (Irish Times, 2011). Functions previously carried out by FÁS will be taken over by the Department of Social Protection and the Department of Education. Under the new arrangements there will be enhanced roles for the VECs, which will play a key role in upskilling jobseekers (Irish Times, 2011). The Department of Social Protection will take responsibility for programmes such as the community employment schemes, while further education and training areas will go to the Department of Education and Skills. The Minister for Education in Ireland, Ruairí Quinn, was quoted in the Irish Times saying:

'These programmes will be integrated, flexible, value-for-money and responsive to the needs of learners and the requirements of a changed and changing economy. Solas will implement the significant transformation programme needed to deliver this. The Government is giving the further education and training sector a clear direction for the future.'

(Irish Times, 2011)

Solas will fulfil a role for the further education and training sector similar to that exercised by the Higher Education Authority for higher education institutions. It will draw on the expertise of the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs, which was established in 1997 and advises the Irish Government on current and future skills needs of the economy and on other labour market issues that impact Ireland's enterprise and employment growth (EGFSN, 2011). This group will help Solas identify skills gaps, weaknesses and duplications in existing provision, and link courses more closely to both the needs of the individual and the labour market (Irish Times, 2011).

2.1.2 Legal framework

Trainees do not have a specific recognised legal status in Ireland (Korpelainen *et al.*, 2011: 34) and there is no mechanism acting as a financial incentive for the employment of young workers (Robberecht, 2010:43). However, the National Training Fund (NTF), which was established under the National Training Fund Act 2000, is a dedicated fund to finance a range of traineeship schemes aimed at:

- raising the skills of those in employment
- providing training to those who wish to acquire skills for the purposes of taking up employment
- providing information in relation to existing, or likely future, skills requirements in the economy.

The NTF is resourced by a levy on employers PRSI Contribution in respect of employees in Class A and Class H employments; this represents approximately 75 percent of all insured employees. The National Training Fund was intended to fund existing initiatives aimed at both manufacturing and services companies and operated by agencies such as FÁS (prior to reorganisation), and Enterprise Ireland. The Fund was also intended to support Skillnets and to provide support for Specific Skills Training, FÁS Traineeship and Apprenticeships (DJEI, 2001).

The Social Welfare and Pension Act (2011) provided for a number of measures to facilitate the introduction of the new National Internship Scheme – JobBridge. Participants on this scheme will receive an allowance of €50 per week top up on their existing social welfare entitlements (Department of Social Protection, 2011). The Act also ensures that a person who participates on the National Internship Scheme for periods of shorter than a week (e.g. three days) will not be able to claim social welfare benefits for the remainder of the week.

Since 2003, the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC) assumed responsibility for the many certificates formerly awarded by a range of bodies including FÁS, Fáilte Ireland, NCVA, NCEA and Teagasc (HEA, 2010:121).

2.2 Definition of traineeships and trainees

The Social Welfare and Pension Act (2011) provides the closest to a legal definition of a trainee or intern in Ireland. Section 16 of the Act states that 'a person who is engaged by another person to carry out work or perform any duty or service pursuant to a placement under the work placement programme; the scheme administered by An Foras Áiseanna Saothair (FÁS) and known as the National Internship Scheme, or any variation, extension or

replacement of the work placement programme shall for the purposes of any enactment or rule or law (other than the Tax Acts and the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005), be deemed to be deemed not to be an employee of the other person or to carry out such work or perform such duties pursuant to a contract of service' (Houses of the Oireachtas, 2011).

Before the introduction of the National Internship Scheme in July 2011, the term 'intern' or 'internship' was rarely used in Ireland other than in reference to employment-related situations in higher education such as newly-qualified medical doctors, who, on graduation, must spend a full year as a resident 'intern' in a recognised hospital (Eurocommission, 2008: 2). The National Internship Scheme now defines an internship as providing 'the opportunity to gain valuable experience in a working environment to those looking to explore or gain the relevant knowledge and skills required to enter into a particular career field' (JobBridge, 2011). The intern is, however, not an employee of the host organisation as stated in Section 16 above.

As the concept is considered to include initial training or work experience, part of which may involve a substantive or formal link with a particular employer, and possibly 'residing on site', there are a number of other situations which could be broadly described as 'internships'. These would typically include trainee nurses; trainees for professional posts in tourism (e.g. hotel managers, chefs); Garda (police); army trainees; trainee accountants; and trainee lawyers (barristers and solicitors). Trainee nurses normally reside and work in a recognised hospital during the programme duration (Eurocommission, 2008:2).

The stakeholder interviews confirmed that there is no standard definition of a traineeship in Ireland but amongst all the stakeholder interviews a common defining feature of the traineeship was considered to be collaboration with the employer and focus on the occupational skills specific to the industry. Structure to the traineeship was also considered a key defining principle.

2.3 Legal provisions about aspects of traineeships

National legislation includes conditions for traineeships/apprentices in Ireland and these conditions also apply to transnational trainees from LLP countries, however, these conditions are included in other labour laws, which are not specific to traineeships/apprenticeships (Korpelainen *et al.*, 2011:40). The national legislation covers conditions on the learning or training element of the apprenticeship or traineeship placement (Korpelainen *et al.*, 2011:40). Additional conditions for work placements will be agreed between the sending/host organisation and the trainee and these conditions also apply to transnational trainees from LLP countries (Korpelainen *et al.*, 2011:41).

3. Availability of and Access to Traineeships

3.1 Statistics/Quantitative Information about traineeships

3.1.1 Traineeships as part of ALMPs

In 2010, the number of early school leavers completing training and employment programmes was 2,567 and the rate of completions for early school leavers has been increasing gradually since 2004. The majority of early school leavers completing programmes in 2010 were under 20 years of age (85 per cent) and two-thirds of these were male. Some 3,068 early school leavers started on training and employment programmes in 2010 (FÁS, 2011).

Between 2006 and 2010 (2009 for Youthreach programmes), there were increases in the number of starters on PLC, Youthreach and FÁS Community Training courses (excluding apprenticeship training). The number of first year PLC course enrolments grew by almost a third (approximately an additional 8,000 learners) to reach almost 33,000 in 2010. The number of starters on FÁS training programmes also increased, by 6 per cent. The number of learners at foundation level in Youthreach courses rose by almost a fifth (19 per cent, or 250 additional learners) between 2006 and 2009. (McNobe, 2011:26).

In contrast, the number of new people entering apprenticeships in Ireland has been falling with 1,204 people starting apprenticeships in 2010, 22 per cent less than in 2009 and 68 per cent less than 2008 (FÁS, 2011). The reason for this decline is that the apprenticeship system in Ireland offers training in mostly traditional, male dominated trades and is overly reliant on the construction sector, which has been severely impacted by the current recession (OECD, 2011). The total number of apprentices across all phases of training was 17,578 in 2010 (FÁS, 2011). The number of redundant apprentices increased to 7,407 across all trades in 2010, this increase is again largely attributed to the downturn in the construction industry in which significant numbers of apprentices were employed (McNobe, 2011:26). In the public sector, in October 2010, Dublin City Council launched a work placement scheme to address the issue of redundant apprentices. It was estimated that the unemployed young apprentices in Ireland would require 26-weeks work experience to complete their qualifications, with the majority of these in the construction sector. Other local authorities were being urged to run similar schemes in order to allow unemployed apprentices to complete their training (Dobbins, 2011).

Full-time training programmes for unemployed people and job seekers in Ireland were completed by 36,650 people in 2010 (FÁS, 2011). Some 20,618 people completed Specific Skills Training (SST) courses (up from 15,900 in 2009) and 4,400 completed Traineeships (2,700 in 2009). In addition, some 2,100 people completed training for early school leavers in Community Training Centres, 3,800 people from disadvantaged backgrounds completing Local Training Initiative programmes and 1,300 people with a disability completing Specialist Training Provider vocational training (FÁS, 2011). In 2010, some 4,371 participated in the FÁS Traineeships (FÁS, 2011). The number of new starters on FÁS training programmes (including traineeships, specific skills courses) grew by almost a third between 2002 and 2009 reaching in excess of 35,300 in 2009 (see Table A 1 in the Annex). The Work Placement Programme has reached an estimated 2,400 young workers (FÁS, 2011.) and during 2010, an average of 2,300 early school leavers were in training at any one time, and a total of just over 2,100 people finished their training.

3.1.2 Traineeships as part of formal education

In Ireland, successful completion of technical educational programmes lead to a technical qualification recognised by the labour market and the Ministry of Education (Robberecht, 2010). However, some 60 per cent of students opt for general courses, rather than technical courses (Robberecht, 2010). In third level education in Ireland some 411 undergraduate courses include a work-placement, across 23 HEIs, with 10,577 students annually undertaking a placement in non-clinical programmes (Buckley & EL Amoud, 2010, cited in REAP, 2011).

3.2 Transnational traineeships

Ireland has been allocated €11,118,000 for the duration of the current EU Life Long Learning programme. Due to the funding available from the EU LLL programme, the geographical mobility of Irish learners increased between 2002 and 2010, and the trend has been upwards from 224 learners in 2002 to 435 learners in 2009 (Barry, 2010:23).

The EU-wide Europass programme also helps make national skills and qualifications more easily understood in Europe and promotes geographic mobility for learners (Barry,

2010:23). It was launched in Ireland in November 2005 and the National Europass Centre (NEC) was established in the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI). The role of the NEC is to promote and develop the Europass programme in Ireland, and to act as an information point for both learners and employers looking for access to mobility documentation on VET qualifications and experience (ibid.). The provision of this mobility documentation is an obligatory requirement for those who receive funding for exchange visits and study and work placements under the Leonardo da Vinci Mobility programmes (ibid.). In 2009, some 339 mobility documents were issued to learners (see Table A 2 in the Annex).

The Leonardo da Vinci (LdV) Programme funds several types of projects ('actions') related to vocational education and training. 'Mobility' actions enable individuals to go abroad for learning or training experiences. Between 2000 and 2006, the number of 'beneficiaries' under the Leonardo da Vinci Mobility programmes from Ireland was 2,582 students going abroad. Beyond 2006, data is broken down by year and shows that in 2007, some 267 students went abroad; some 453 did so in 2008; 959 in 2009; and in 2010 some 747 students went abroad (European Commission, f). Incoming students to Ireland under LdV programmes was 17,916 in the period 2000-2006.

Also under LdV, organisations working in the vocational education and training sector in different European countries can collaborate in small-scale partnerships. Between 2008 and 2009, there were 18 funded LdV partnerships in Ireland, which obtained €332,203 in funding from the European Commission. Another LdV programme is the Multilateral Projects, which are larger-scale actions, with 'organisations from different countries working together to develop working practices in the vocational education and training sector' (European Commission, b, 2010). There were 52 LdV II multilateral projects between 2000 and 2006 (obtaining €17,970,190 in grants) and 21 LLP multilateral projects between 2007 and 2009 (obtaining €5,825,709 in grants) (European Commission, b, 2010).

Data from Leargas revealed that some 316 people in the target group 'initial vocational training' participated in LdV programmes in 2009, and an additional 115 people in the target group 'people on the labour market' participated (see Table A 3 in the Annex) (DG EAC, 2012).

Ireland issues employment permits to non-EEA nationals taking part in training in Ireland based companies. In 2010, only four employment permits were issued for training purposes, compared to 18 in 2009 (Behan, 2011). Most of these permits were issued for those training in information technology (Behan et al., 2010). Ireland also offers the IBEC Export Orientation Programme (EOP), which provides graduates of all disciplines with work placements in international business in a sector relevant to their qualifications. Graduates are placed in positions worldwide for durations ranging from 12 to 24 months and the majority of placements have a strong export sales and marketing focus. Graduates receive a bursary to assist with the financial cost and approximately 2,000 graduates have successfully completed the programme since its inception in 1983. Placement retention rates are also high – in excess of 88 per cent (EOP, 2011).

Some 200 disadvantaged and unemployed young people aged between 18 and 28 in Ireland and Northern Ireland have also participated in a mobility programme called 'Wider Horizons'; funded by the International Fund for Ireland (IFI). This involves training and work experience both at home and abroad with most overseas placements in the USA and Canada (Barry, 2010: 24).

A recent Eurobarometer survey of young people in Europe aged 15 to 35, showed that the proportion of respondents in Ireland who said they had stayed abroad for a traineeship in a company or a similar organisation during their higher education was 36 per cent. Some 34 per cent has studied abroad as part of vocational education and training and some 18 per cent had stayed abroad for a traineeship in a company or similar organisation as part of vocational education and training. The most common length of stay abroad was for between three months to one year (13 per cent of all respondents) (Flash Eurobarometer, 2011).

The International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience (IAESTE) is a non-profit organisation that seeks to provide students with paid work experience related to their field of study. The Irish programme is managed by Léargas in partnership with the Department of Education and Skills. The programme is offered to students of Architecture, Engineering, Information Technology and Science who are currently undertaking third-level education in Ireland. In 2010, 18 Irish students from eight different third-level institutions participated in IAESTE traineeships in countries such as Australia, Belgium, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Ghana, Hong Kong, Japan, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia, and the USA. Five international students from Switzerland, Germany, Finland, and Sweden were also hosted in Ireland (Leargas, 2010:32).

Some students in higher education in Ireland also have the opportunity to spend some time overseas as part of their degree programme under the Erasmus Programme. In the academic year 2009/2010, the number of Erasmus students from Ireland reached their highest number with 2,128 students going abroad during that period (studies and placements, of which 528 were work placements). In 2009/10, about a quarter of all Irish Erasmus students went to France (24 per cent), followed by Spain (18 per cent), Germany (12 per cent) and the UK (11 per cent) (European Commission, e). The share of outgoing Erasmus students as a proportion of the total student population in Ireland in 2009/10 was 1.17 per cent (European Commission, e) and as a proportion of the total graduate population it was 3.68 per cent (European Commission, e).

Incoming students to Ireland under ERASMUS (studies and placements) was 5,073 in the period 2009-2010, of which 1,115 were for work placements. Almost all the 32 Erasmus participating countries experienced an annual growth in the number of incoming students for studies and placements. However, Ireland was an exception to this, with a decrease of 1.5 per cent (European Commission, d, 2011). A decrease of -2.5 per cent in the number of incoming Erasmus students for studies in 2009/10 contributed to this decline.

3.3 Sectors where traineeships are prevalent

3.3.1 Traineeships as part of ALMPs

The FÁS Traineeship Programmes are targeted at occupations which are not designated as apprenticeships and cover activities such as Business and Secretarial Skills, Computer Studies, Computer Animation, Construction, Art Craft and Design, Multi-Media Production, Theatre and Stage Production, Performing Arts, Child-care and Community Care, Sport and Leisure, Tourism and Hotel and Catering, Sport and Leisure, Equestrian Studies, Horticulture, Applied Languages and Information Technology, Teleservices.

One stakeholder interview revealed that before the economic crisis, sectors such as administration and business had the highest throughput. In particular, FÁS Traineeships for financial advisor assistants used to have high throughput during the property boom due to a skill shortage at the start of the boom years. Supply chain and logistics administrator traineeships also experienced high throughput. This course was introduced because of a future skills need analysis conducted by the sector.

In 2008, the FÁS Traineeships were broken up to accommodate more people using the training centres. For example, significant throughput was through childcare and healthcare practitioner courses, but this course duration was between 40-52 weeks so it was broken down into three parts to allow more people to undertake the course. This course was strongly promoted because of a deficiency in childcare provisions in Ireland and it helped establish occupational standards and lead to a recognised qualification through FETAC. The long duration of the courses, however, were seen as limiting their delivery. One stakeholder considered the recruitment of young people into leisure and sport traineeships, in high

profile occupations in Ireland (i.e. jockey or training groom), is very important as Ireland needs to maintain the numbers entering these valued professions.

The JobBridge Scheme is mainly focusing on multi-national companies that have the capacity to organise quality traineeships. This is a criticism of the programme as it is not making use of the social economy and NGO sector (Stakeholder interview, 2011).

3.3.2 Traineeships as part of formal education

Traineeships as part of higher education are commonly offered in the business sector and multinational organisations, in particular, investment banking, accounting and IT organisations are particularly active in this area and actively use trainees to provide a talent pipeline (Stakeholder interview, 2011). However, higher education institutions which have schools of nursing, occupational therapy and teaching will have more students going into traineeships than business schools or science faculties.

The main sectors offering EU-funded placements (typically Leonardo da Vinci programme and Erasmus placements programme) in Ireland are tourism, hotel, catering and other related services and social work and social care (Korpelainen et al., 2011:15).

3.4 Recruitment process and equity of access to traineeships

3.4.1 Traineeships in the open market

The typical recruitment process for traineeships in the open market is transparent. Most recruitment is driven by career websites and advertised positions (Stakeholder interview, 2011). Leading companies which have graduate entry programmes, will finance their own traineeship programmes and use traineeships as an effective recruitment policy. The traineeships are seen as equivalent to a long interview and induction process (Stakeholder interview, 2011). But displacement can occur if real jobs may have been available within the company but graduates take this traineeship route, however this can still be an effective way of opening up employment opportunities.

3.4.2 Traineeships as part of formal education

Typically, students in third-level education wishing to undertake a work placement have to submit an application form and a CV and are then interviewed by the employer in order to obtain the placement (REAP, 2011).

The REAP project is a Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF) collaborative project aimed at developing a model for partnership between higher education institutions (HEIs) and employers and businesses. The REAP project is consortium led by Cork Institute of Technology- and including Athlone Institute of Technology; Dublin Institute of Technology; Institute of Technology, Sligo; Institute of Technology Tallaght; National University of Ireland, Galway; University College, Cork; and Waterford Institute of Technology. REAP conducted a study in 2011 focusing on work placements and the pathways of postgraduates as well as the opportunities for employers to engage with higher education institutions, through interviews with higher education staff, employers and students. This study found evidence of students being well-briefed in class about the work placement process and receiving help in obtaining the necessary documentation and Garda clearance.

3.4.3 Equity of access to traineeships as part of ALMPs

In Ireland, almost 2,950 training places were made available in 2008, at a total exchequer cost of more than €38.2 million. Some 43 per cent of participants were aged less than 25 years and 65 per cent were women. Almost all participants were previously unemployed for

less than one year (ibid.). The Local Training Initiative (LTI) programme targets young people aged between 16-25 years who are unable to access other FÁS interventions for social, personal or geographical reasons. Some 47 per cent of participants of LTI were classified as having a Leaving Certificate in 2008 (Forfas, 2010a).

One stakeholder commented that there are distinctive class and community backgrounds in Ireland, with most middle class young people following formal education routes, whilst working class or traveller communities will more typically choose alternatives to continuing education. Another stakeholder interview revealed that the socio-economic background of trainees will vary, however, a survey conducted by Franklin in 2009 showed that a high proportion of participants on FÁS Traineeships have Leaving Certificates (cited in a Stakeholder interview). This does, however, depend on the level of the traineeship, for example, the stakeholder would not expect technical operative trainees and security personnel trainees, to have a high education level. It is more likely that young people with third-level education, from middle class backgrounds, will undertake the quality traineeships on offer. The missing link in the state apparatus to encourage people from lower socio-economic groups to engage in traineeships is the counselling and advisory services offered through the public employment service. These services are quite disjointed and currently undergoing structural changes. There seems to be a lack of qualified counsellors and advisors who can steer people in the right direction towards quality traineeships (Stakeholder interview, 2011).

3.5 Evolution of traineeships over time and impact of recent economic crisis on traineeships

The Government over the past two years has introduced a raft of initiatives that have a trainee component. This was a lesson learnt from the 1980s recession that unless interventions are very close to the market they are unlikely to lead to sustainable employment, therefore there has been an emphasis on traineeships. Interventions are typically targeted at the unskilled and provide work placement opportunities. Initially, interventions were for the lower skilled and the Government used a labour market activation fund where educational providers would compete to offer courses which required a training element in areas where there were skills shortages. Similar programmes were launched for third-level education participants, offering conversion courses due to skills gaps in ICT, pharma-chemicals and medical devices. The collapse in the construction sector required skills to be converted and for those in the sector who could not enter third-level education it provided opportunities to develop alternative skills (Stakeholder interview, 2011).

A key impact of the recent economic crisis was a need to develop training and work opportunities for those being made redundant in the construction sector, in particular, apprentices who were unable to complete their apprenticeships. Four initiatives were established following the start of the downturn in 2008 to find additional opportunities for redundant apprentices. Whilst the focus of these initiatives was finding opportunities for apprentices to complete their craft qualification, one initiative provided over 450 redundant apprentices with on-the-job training on a rotation basis in 2009. This initiative was termed the 'Employer Based Redundant Apprentice Rotation Scheme' and was introduced to help employers to provide on-the-job training for redundant apprentices while their own apprentices were attending off-the-job training. An 11-week certified training programme for up to 700 redundant apprentices each year was also established to facilitate redundant apprentices to progress to higher education and training programmes (Barry, 2010).

As stated, the duration of FÁS Traineeships were broken into parts in order to enable higher throughput on the courses during the economic crisis. This action created shorter courses in an attempt to spread resources as widely as possible, but it could be argued these shorted courses are of less value to the individuals involved. Longer term retraining is seen as the

optimal course. Some courses, however, such as the leisure centre and outdoor activity traineeships were not affected to such a degree by the crisis, although the activity centres themselves may have struggled due to a reduction in tourism. Before the crisis, people were emigrating from the 'outdoor activity' regions and for some outdoor activities such as mountaineering, employers were having to recruit from abroad to find instructors, so employers approached FÁS to provide traineeships to increase the number of people entering the profession. These traineeships have now reduced emigration from the rural activity regions (Stakeholder interview).

As a response to the recession the Irish Government increased funding provision for VET for the unemployed (Barry, 2010). Barry (2010) commented that a significant challenge within the VET sector was prioritising investment for high risk individuals in the recession such as people with low skills and few or no qualifications who are vulnerable to both short-term and long term unemployment. This has been prioritised in national strategies such as in the Social Partnership Agreement '*Towards 2016*', the National Development Plan 2007-2013 and the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion (Barry, 2010).

Staff in higher education institutions reported to REAP that employers are more unwilling to offer students work placements, even on unpaid placements, 'who might be seen as additional headcount during times of retrenchment' (REAP, 2011:29).

3.6 Financing of traineeships

Over the period 2007-2013, under the National Development Plan, the Irish Government is committed to investing €7.7 billion in public funds to support training and skills development. An element of the NDP will focus on upskilling the workforce and includes measures to improve training for people in employment; helping to upskill those affected by industrial re-structuring; improving the apprenticeship system and providing progression opportunities for school leavers. A total of €2.8 billion has been provided to support these measures over the NDP period (ISFOL, 2008:244).

For the 2007-2013 Structural Funding period Ireland has invested European Social Fund (ESF) funding in a number of labour market training initiatives and other measures to help people enter the labour market through the Human Capital Investment Operational Programme 2007-2013. Over this seven year period Ireland will receive more than €375 million in assistance from the European Social Fund. With matched funding, this amount rises to almost €907 million of direct Structural Fund support (ESF, 2011).

The programmes in Ireland which have benefited from ESF funding and helped to increase the activation of the labour force include: Skills Training (€528,305,613 total public funding allocated under ESF) and the Back to Education Initiative (€38,027,868). ESF funding has also benefitted programmes which have helped increase participation and reduce inequalities in the labour market such as the Youthreach and Travellers programmes (€73,400,000 total public funding allocated under ESF) (ESF, 2011).

Ireland has also accessed financial support from the European Globalisation Fund to increase its' VET provision in two regions, as a means of overcoming significant unemployment brought about by the effects of the economic downturn on some of its main industrial sectors (Barry, 2010). This Fund was first used in Ireland in 2009 in the Limerick region to part-finance a range of employment re-integration measures for workers who lost their jobs as a result of the closure of the Dell manufacturing plant. As part of this, a special programme of training internships was introduced in the Mid West region in 2010. The traineeships are designed to facilitate skill development through certified training modules combined with periods of structured workplace experience in host companies that are operating in the sectors of employment least affected in the current economic downturn. EGF funding was also approved for workers who lost their jobs as a result of the closures of SR Technics and Waterford Crystal (FÁS, 2011).

Skillnets receives most of its funding from the National Training Fund. The programme provides financial support of up to 75 per cent of the cost incurred by enterprise-led training networks, with the possibility of higher support for certified training and training for low skilled workers.

The Eurobarometer survey of young people in Europe aged 15 to 35, asked how lengths of time spent abroad as part of education or training were financed. Most commonly these trips were privately financed (69 per cent), some 30 per cent of respondents also said trips were funded through national or regional study loans or grants; some 31 per cent were paid partly by the employer and some 16 per cent received EU funded mobility programmes (Flash Eurobarometer, 2011). The same survey showed that 20 per cent of respondents who had not spent time abroad for education, training, working or volunteering purposes cited a lack of funds and the expense of going abroad as the main reason (Flash Eurobarometer, 2011).

With reference to the international traineeships undertaken, traineeships within the Leonardo da Vinci and Erasmus programmes are usually supported by the programmes and not paid for by the employer. In Ireland remuneration is discretionary (in case of some placements, an employer in the host country may provide offer a salary) or an allowance for living expenses, in kind benefits (e.g. transport, accommodation, sustenance or pocket money) can be provided by the host organisation (Korpelainen et al., 2011:13).

The Erasmus budget for mobility actions for Ireland in 2009/10 was € 5,058,000. The average EU monthly grant for Erasmus mobility for studies was €229 in 2009/10; for placements it was €544; and the EU monthly grant for mobility (studies and placements combined) was €291 (European Commission, e). The LdV budget for mobility in 2010 was €1,932,400. This compares with a budget of €1,586,853 in 2009 (European Commission, g).

3.7 Public perceptions about traineeships

Ireland's three-year National Partnership Agreements involving the Government and Social Partners have included policies in relation to education and training. However, Barry (2010) comments that recently there has been some divergence of opinion between the Government, the Social Partners and outside stakeholders, with reference to the extent to which employers and individuals should pay for training, and the amount of financial support that individuals should receive whilst in training. Whilst there has been widespread support for the provision of vocational training by the State at no cost to young people or the unemployed, the concept of participants receiving a form of payment (and the payment amount) whilst undertaking vocational training has been an issue of public debate (Barry, 2010:15).

Ireland has historically had both 'under-resourced and fragmented labour market interventions with the range of training and employment support schemes directed at young people being uncoordinated' (Dobbins, 2011). The Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) has made efforts in awareness raising through its ten-point recovery plan, announced in 2009, - *'There is a better and fairer way'* - around protecting jobs and improving workplace training provision for young workers in response to the economic crisis. The ICTU also called for a €1 billion jobs stimulus, including investment in training, which was supported by the employer's association IBEC. Dobbins (2011) reports that the Irish government committed to a quarter of this investment.

In research conducted by REAP students felt that work placements would help make the transition from education to work easier as work experience is valued by employers. Students also reported a perceived value in building personal contacts and networks through work placements which are useful when applying for jobs (REAP, 2011). Some

students also stated that the provision of a work placement influenced their choice of college course (REAP, 2011).

4. Practices and Content of Traineeships

4.1 Traineeships as part of education and/or labour market entry and integration for young people

In third level education work placements as part of undergraduate courses vary in duration from less than two months to longer than six months and the number of credits available for the placements vary and typically reflect the duration of the placement, for example, a 13 week placement can obtain between 10 and 30 credits (REAP, 2011). In some work placements as part of higher education, the placement will be assessed on a pass or fail basis with no credits applied. In some institutions, 'the successful completion of a learning experience or the completion of a reflective piece, where the student recognises and evidences their learning, is considered and the associated credit is awarded without grading' (REAP, 2011:29).

In reference to transnational traineeships, in 2009/10 the average duration of Erasmus student mobility for studies was 7.1 months, compared with 5.1 months for work placements. The average duration for studies and placements combined in 2009/10 was 6.7 months (European Commission, e).

The practice of planning and managing work placements varies significantly within the different higher education establishments in Ireland (REAP, 2011). Some higher education institutions have central resources and dedicated work placement officers who source, plan and manage work placements; whilst others have a dedicated office managed by administrative staff. In other HEIs resources are allocated at course or department level and academic staff manage the work placement process (REAP, 2011). For example, at Trinity College Dublin, the professional programmes such as medicine and law involve a work practice element. Typically these placements are managed by the academic staff within the department. The schools of engineering, computer science and statistics are also encouraging work placements for their undergraduates as the professional body 'Engineers Ireland' which accredits the university courses is insisting on a different structure to the courses which are moving towards including practical training (Stakeholder interview, 2011).

The REAP (2011) study found that most work placements in higher education had clearly defined learning outcomes, although in some cases the learning outcomes were relatively broad, for example, communication skills, team working ability, and self directed learning. In other examples the learning outcomes addressed the application of 'the specific theoretical knowledge within the discipline' (REAP, 2011:32). There was also evidence in the REAP report of manuals being prepared for all parties – employer, student, and higher education provider – outlining a 'statement of expectations' for all involved. This was particularly evident within social care where work placements tend to be more regulated than within science, business, and engineering disciplines (REAP, 2011). However, REAP found that there is typically no formal placement agreement or formal contract between the parties involved in the work placement and no formal learning agreement, although some employers have worked with HEIs for many years, building informal relationships which support the work placement process (REAP, 2011).

In the host workplace, there is typically a mentor or supervisor available for the student and who acts as a point of contact for the HEI. Typically, the methods of contact before and during the work placement are through site visits, emails and phone calls. In some cases

the supervisor will receive some training from the HEI to support their supervisor role (REAP, 2011).

4.1.1 Traineeships as part of ALMPs

Outside of higher education work placements, under the National Internship Scheme, once an intern finishes a placement the host organisation must complete a completion/reference for the intern, which details the professional development/learning outcomes acquired over the duration of the course and an evaluation form. Failure to do this means the host organisation cannot offer subsequent placements under the scheme (JobBridge, 2011).

A stakeholder interview disclosed that there is also a lot of employer input in the FÁS programmes, with typically employers approaching FÁS to establish a course in order to recruit more people into the sector or to raise occupational standards. The employer will also often be involved in the course design and recruitment for placements.

4.2 Issues about employer practices as regards traineeships

One stakeholder interview revealed that the media and publishing sector is mostly known for having questionable practices for trainees and it is commonplace for radio stations to use trainees as unpaid labour, for which there is little element of training but it is still considered to be an 'traineeship'. Trainees in the media and publishing sector are also well known for working very long hours for free. However, this is not against any legislation (Stakeholder interview, 2011).

In addition, the REAP (2011) study found that some employers suggested they would consider recruiting only from higher education providers that offer work placements.

5. Trainee's Rights and Terms and Conditions

5.1.1 Traineeships as part of formal education

In third level education in Irish HEIs there are subjects in which work placements are generally unpaid, and those in which placements are paid. Whilst students on placements generally received payment in previous years, 'it has proven a lot more difficult to secure paid placements in the current year, and in some cases employers would take students only if they did not have to pay them' (REAP, 2011). Where students take paid placements the remuneration will vary from below a minimum wage stipend to the equivalent of a regular salary. In sectors such as social care, work placements are generally unpaid, however in other disciplines, such as computing and engineering, the placement is typically paid (REAP, 2011).

The REAP project found that only 36 per cent of staff in higher education indicated that all of their work placements were paid, with the majority of responses indicating that work placements are a mixture of paid and unpaid.

Under ERASUS and the LdV programmes a Training Agreement or Training Programme must be negotiated, between the sending and host organisations and the participant. This provides details of the training programme and sets out the tasks for the trainee and a plan for monitoring and evaluation. Through signing the document the student, the sending institution and the host organisation confirm that they will abide by the principles of the Quality Commitment for Erasmus or LdV student/training placements (Erasmus, 2011 & Eurofound, c).

5.1.2 Traineeships as part of ALMPs

A National Minimum Wage was introduced in Ireland on 1 April 2000. From July 2011, the NMW is €8.65 for experienced adult workers (18 or over). Under age 18 the NMW is €6.06. For the purposes of the Act an experienced adult worker is defined as 'an employee who is not in the first two years after the date of first employment over age 18' (NERA, 2011). The National Minimum Wage Act also provides sub-minimum rates which apply to employees who are over 18 and undergoing a course of structured training or directed study that is authorised or approved of by the employer. Since 1 July 2011 the trainee rates provided by the Act are:

- First one-third of training course €6.49 per hour (75 per cent of national minimum wage rate)
- Second one-third of training course €6.92 per hour (80 per cent of national minimum wage rate)
- Final one third of the training course €7.79 per hour (90 per cent of national minimum wage rate)

To determine which one third period the trainee is within, the employer must establish the date the trainee started the course and the date that the employee is expected to finish the course. This period of time is divided by three to establish the duration of each one third period. Each one third period must be at least one month and no more than one year (NERA, 2011). The regulations 'No. 99 of 2000, National Minimum Wage Act, 2000 (Prescribed Courses of Study or Training)' provide a definition of what training courses should include for the purposes of the National Minimum Wage but these provide an insight into what is considered the definition of a traineeship:

- the employee's participation in the course is directed or approved by the employer
- the duration of the course is for a minimum period of three calendar months
- the course takes place during the normal working hours
- the course involves at least 10 per cent of directed study or training, which may be within or outside of normal working hours
- any fees concerned with the employee's participation in the course directed by the employer, are paid by the employer
- the course enables the acquisition of skills and/or knowledge expected to enhance the work performance of the employee at the end of the course
- the course includes directed study or training, workplace training or involves supervision of the employee during workplace training
- includes a system of recording progress and results, which must provide for the retention by the employer for three years after the end of the employee's participation in the course at the premises or place where the employee works or, if the employee works at two or more premises or places, the premises or place from which the activities of the employee are principally directed or controlled
- include an assessment and certification procedure or written confirmation of the employee's completion of the course identifying the level of employee attainment against the objectives, which must include the employee's signature
- the course is the subject of a pre-existing written document or documents detailing the following information: its title and purpose; its objectives; an outline plan of duration and approach; the record system to apply; the assessment and certification procedure
- advice by the employer of any facilities, including any time-off, to be given to the employee during the period of the employee's participation in the course to enable the employee to successfully complete the course, and any changes to the employee's working

arrangements during the period of the employee's participation in the course. (NERA, 2011; Citizens Information, 2011).

Under JobBridge, a standard internship working week is defined as ranging from 30-40 hours a week. Failure to participate on the scheme for this length of time can result in a reduction of the internship allowance. Interns are also entitled to 1.75 annual leave days per month of internship and are entitled to all the Public Holidays (JobBridge, 2011). Both the host organisation and the intern must sign a standard 'internship agreement' before starting on the scheme. The host organisation must assign a mentor to the intern for the duration of the internship to ensure they receive support and a point of contact; an induction; and the opportunity to learn and apply skills as set out in the standard internship agreement (JobBridge, 2011).

The FÁS National Traineeship Programme participants receive a training allowance from FÁS, which varies by age group. These allowances are shown in Table A 4 in the Annex. These allowances are available for almost all FÁS courses. If the participant's social welfare payment entitlement exceeds the training allowance, an allowance equivalent to this entitlement is paid. A training bonus of €20.00 a week is also payable to certain individuals who were on, or began, a FÁS training course on or after 1 January 2011. These categories of people must have completed a minimum period of 12 months in a combination of the below categories, prior to progressing to the FÁS training course:

- those in receipt of Jobseeker Benefit or Jobseeker Allowance for 12 months or more; **or**
- those who progress to FÁS training having completed a minimum of 12 months on a Community Employment programme; **or**
- those who progress to FÁS training having completed a minimum of 12 months on the Job Initiative programme;
- those in receipt of Carer's Allowance for 12 months or more prior to participating on a FÁS training course (effective 1 January 2009) (FÁS, 2011c).

Under FÁS Traineeships there is no contract for trainees but an element of a Workplace Schedule has to be signed off regarding health and safety. The employer also has to include them in insurance but that is the extent of the terms and conditions provision for the trainee (Stakeholder interview). The Irish Business Employers Confederation (IBEC) has raised concerns about the status of trainees in work placements. As stated, trainees are subject to health and safety legislation but beyond this, trainees do not have any contractual entitlement under law (Stakeholder interview, 2011).

6. Quality Assurance of Traineeships

Quality assurance in Irish education and training is underpinned by the Qualifications (Education & Training) Act 1999 and the Universities Act 1997 (Barry, 2010). The Qualifications Act also established the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI) – an agency of the Department of Education and Skills and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Innovation, set up in February 2001. This agency is not an awarding body itself but has responsibility for developing and maintaining the National Framework of Qualifications and establishing and promoting the maintenance and improvement of the standards of awards of the education and training sector (other than in universities); and promoting and facilitating the access, transfer and progression throughout the span of education and training provision (NQAI, 2011). Its quality assurance functions relate primarily to the two awards Councils – the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC) and the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC) – and the Dublin Institute of Technology.

The National Framework of Qualification (NFQ), set up under the Qualifications Act, requires all awards included in the National Framework of Qualifications to be quality assured. The

Government introduced the National Framework of Qualifications in 2003, which covers all awards from schooling to further education and training, including doctorate level. This Framework has provided a system for co-ordinating and comparing awards and facilitating 'progression and mobility for learners irrespective of the point of entry or the education or training path followed' (Barry, 2010:18). It is in line with ECVET, which will have an impact on the recognition of learning outcomes. The Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC) is regarded as a facilitator for integrating ECVET within the existing credit system (Cedefop, 2010).

ECVET in Ireland therefore is mainly implemented through the NFQ and the FETAC offering of Major and Minor awards (Lambkin, 2007). The FETAC Major Awards consist of a specified minor awards (modules). A minor award can typically be completed in 30 or more hours, whereas a major award will take 240 or more contact hours to complete. All programmes with a FETAC accreditation undergo a rigorous quality assurance check and the programme is monitored by FETAC to ensure it delivers to a high standard.

FETAC and the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC), set up under the Qualifications Act in 2001, are both responsible for implementing quality assurance procedures with providers of VET programmes and the monitoring of the standards of these awards (Barry, 2010:53). FÁS aligned its systems to those required under the National Framework of Qualifications and in December 2007, obtained approval of its Quality Assurance System by FETAC and HETAC. The agreement with the two awarding bodies is beneficial for graduates of FÁS training programmes, including apprentices, as it now provides them with direct access to the range of qualifications in the National Framework of Qualifications.

The Irish Higher Education Quality Network was set up 2003 to provide a forum for the discussion of quality assurance issues and for the dissemination of 'best practice' in quality assurance amongst practitioners and policy makers involved in the quality assurance of higher education and training in Ireland. Membership of the network includes the Universities, the Institutes of Technology, the Higher Education Colleges Association, the Higher Education Authority, HETAC, IUQB, Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT), NQAI and the Union of Students in Ireland (USI) (NQAI, 2005; Barry, 2010).

Ireland is also a founding member of the European Network on Quality Assurance in VET (ENQA-VET). This network seeks to establish collaboration in implementation of quality assurance policies across participating countries; exchange experiences and provide a forum to develop shared principles for quality within EU VET systems. 'The main tool of ENQA-VET is the Common Quality Assurance Framework (CQAF), developed by the European Commissions' Technical Working Group on Quality Assurance in VET in 2004. The Irish Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC), was one of the first agencies in Europe to be reviewed in terms of compliance with the standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area' (Barry, 2010: 84).

FÁS Traineeships have an in house learning element and trainees then go into the workplace. Within each training organisation there is a Skills Coach who is briefed by FÁS about what is expected of them; in this sense the company becomes a significant part of the programme. The Skills Coach in the organisation is supported in their role by FÁS and it also provides a development opportunity for this employee by giving them the skills to coach and mentor a trainee. The majority of the FÁS Traineeships take an integrated approach between time spent during the week in a training centre and time with an employer (i.e. three days with an employer and two days at the training centre). This integrated approach works as a quality mechanism as if the experience during the week does not meet expectations, trainees are soon back on site with FÁS to report this failing (Stakeholder interview, 2011).

There is no state governed regulation of vocational trainers, as for example, exists for teachers who are regulated by the Department of Education and Skills and there is no requirement for trainers to have any educational or teaching qualifications; although

typically they have experience in their trade or commercial sector (Barry, 2010). The trainers may operate independently or as private training consultants offering training to companies. However, FÁS funded courses are delivered by approved trainers who are registered on the FÁS Register of Trainers. The minimum qualification demanded for inclusion on this register is a Certificate in Training and Development (Barry, 2010). A series of programmes, however, have been set up in collaboration with Maynooth and Galway Universities and accredited by the National University of Ireland (NUI), ranging from Foundation to Master level. These programmes are available to all wanting to pursue careers as trainers in vocational colleges and in the private, voluntary and community sectors (Barry, 2010).

Other Irish organisations which have their own training programmes for trainers in particular industries are: -F.ilte Ireland (for the tourism and hospitality sector); Bord Iascaigh Mhara (Irish Fisheries Board); Coillte (Irish Forestry Board) and Teagasc (Agriculture and Food Development Authority) (Barry, 2010:70).

Under the National Internship Scheme (JobBridge) host organisations must develop an internship specification setting out the responsibilities of the intern. The internships and the eligibility of the host organisation for the scheme are checked by the scheme provider. To ensure compliance with the scheme, the Department of Social Protection and FÁS are monitoring internships to ensure they are of sufficient quality and that both host organisations and interns are 'abiding by the spirit and the rules of the scheme' (Houses of the Oireachtas, 2011).

One stakeholder interview revealed that there have been issues with the practice of traineeships offered under JobBridge, with companies wilfully or innocently posting placements that appear more like jobs than traineeships. This practice has to be policed, however most instances of this will be innocent, simply due to employers not understanding their responsibilities in reference to this. There are about 2,500 placements available through JobBridge and only a handful of these will be less than optimal placements. There are, however, spot checks and a whistle blowing facility available on the JobBridge website to help tackle this, and this will trigger a visit from the Employment Service. The penalty, however, is simply being blacklisted in terms of eligibility to participate in the scheme.

For transnational placements, under the LdV mobility training placements programme there is a quality commitment for sending and host organisations and for participants. Separate commitments exist for the sending and host organisations and participants. Jointly the sending and host organisation must undertake to negotiate a tailor-made training programme for each participant; agree to monitor and mentor arrangements; implement agreed validation procedures to ensure the recognition of skills and competencies acquired; establish appropriate communication channels and evaluate the progress of the project on an on-going basis and take any appropriate action (European Commission, c).

Similarly, for the Erasmus programme, a Training Agreement and Quality Commitment must be completed by the sending and host organisations and the participant. This Quality Commitment replicates the principles of the European Quality Charter for Mobility and separate commitments are required of the sending higher education institution, the host organisation and the student. Jointly, the host and sending organisations must commit to undertake to negotiate and agree a tailor-made training agreement (including the programme of the placement and the recognition arrangements) for each student and adequate mentoring arrangements; and monitor the progress of the placement and take any appropriate action.

7. Overall Assessment as regards Traineeships

7.1 Benefits and drawbacks of traineeships

7.1.1 Benefits

Traineeships as part of formal education

Benefits of work placements for students identified by higher education staff in Ireland, interviewed by REAP (2011) included opportunities to increase networking, integrating employability skills into the curriculum, and applying theoretical knowledge in practice. The motivations for employers to offer work placements as identified by REAP (2011) are:

- A useful recruitment tool;
- Corporate responsibility;
- New skills and energy from students;
- Developing research links with the HEI (REAP, 2011).

Employers reported that they benefited from 'new skills and energy brought to the workplace' by work placement students but they cautioned that 'this benefit accrues only where the placement is of sufficient duration' (REAP, 2011).

Employers considered the benefits for students of undertaking work placements to be:

- An opportunity to put their learning into practice;
- A chance to develop interpersonal skills;
- Enhancing CV and employability (REAP, 2011).

The benefits of work placements, identified by students interviewed by REAP (2011), included opportunities to develop independence and self-confidence, networking opportunities; the ability to put theoretical knowledge into practice; good preparations for future careers.

An interview conducted with a stakeholder in Ireland considered the benefits of traineeships to be that an opportunity is provided to 'test' young people before hiring them, through placing them on a traineeship. This is seen as a less risky way to introduce new talent. The stakeholder thought that multinationals are 'obsessed with headcounts' and how these numbers are reported centrally and traineeships allow them to bring people in and develop them with a view to recruitment, without it being seen strictly as raising headcount. In the smaller economy, the corporate social responsibility element and reputational benefits are also seen as a reason to engage in traineeships.

REAP (2011) also conducted research with representatives from the tourism industry in Ireland who participate in work placements. These representatives highlighted the importance of work placements in preparing students for the real business world and the need to develop business language – in terms of writing business emails, and social skills including communication, punctuality and work dress code. REAP also cited a number of recent sectoral reports published by Forfas- *Future Skills Needs of Enterprise within the Green Economy in Ireland* (2010), *Future Skills Requirements of the Biopharma-Pharmachem Sector* (2010), *Future Skills Needs of the Wholesale and Retail Sector* (2010), and *Future Skills Requirements of the Food and Beverage Sector* (2009) – which suggest that well structured work placement programmes enhance graduate employability and benefit the student and host organisation.

In reference to transnational placements, the recent Eurobarometer report found that improved job opportunities was the most or second most important benefit of periods of learning mobility period abroad for 25 per cent of respondents, with 34 per cent listing improved academic knowledge (Flash Barometer, 2011).

Traineeships as part of ALMPs

The benefits of the National Internship Scheme are considered to be that 'internships provide real world experience to those looking to explore or gain the relevant knowledge and skills required to enter into a particular career field. Usually short term in nature with the primary focus on getting some on-the-job training internships take what is learned in the classroom or in previous workplace settings and allow application in a workplace setting' (JobBridge, 2011). The internships under JobBridge provide interns with an opportunity to use skills they have learned during training and/or education, 'in a workplace setting, to enhance those skills, understand the workplace environment and context and to benefit from a mentor or supervisor's experience and advice' (JobBridge, 2011).

JobBridge allows interns to achieve objectives such as testing interest in particular careers; testing the work environment to learn how to apply theory to work situations; developing new skills and enhancing existing career skills; enhancing career prospects and opportunities developing 'personal attributes that contribute to effective interpersonal relationships'; and the intern is also provided with a statement from the host organisation regarding the skills demonstrated; their work attitude and ability and is provided with references (JobBridge, 2011).

7.1.2 Drawbacks

Traineeships as part of formal education

Concerns about traineeships undertaken during higher education, which were identified by higher education staff interviewed by REAP (2011), included problems in actually finding work placements in a context of growing demand; a 'lack of alternatives to placements within programmes' and a lack of 'dedicated resources' to organise and check the quality of work placements (REAP, 2011). Employers interviewed by REAP were more concerned with the preparation and lack of clear expectations for stakeholders; the short duration of some traineeships and the communication methods with the higher education institution. Students, however, considered the costs of traineeships and lack of clarity around accommodation, transport and remuneration to be the main drawbacks of work placements. The lack of communication with the higher education institution and lack of feedback and clarity of the job specification were also of concern to students (REAP, 2011).

The REAP (2011) research also identified concerns about a 'lack of clear academic value for the placement, including a lack of confidence in the learning and assessment methodologies' (REAP, 2011). The academic timetable can also place limits on the duration of the placement. REAP also found that stakeholders think that too few placements have written agreements in place which would clarify expectations and the required preparations (REAP, 2011).

Traineeships as part of ALMPs and on the open market

Stakeholder interviews identified drawbacks for companies including the fact that the management of traineeships is a burden for companies and whilst it is difficult to generalise at what stage a company gets payback from a trainee, a period of six months was considered a reasonable assumption (Stakeholder, 2011).

7.2 Effectiveness of traineeships

Traineeships as part of ALMPs

The 2010 DETE/Forfas Review considered 'traineeships to be a good alternative to apprenticeships, providing on-the-job training for specialist skills, but over a shorter period of time, and in a more cost-effective manner' (EEO Review, 2010). A FÁS Follow Up Survey conducted in 2007 revealed that over 70 per cent of participants were in employment 18 months subsequent to completion, and 10 per cent were in training; this level of success is attributed to the direct involvement of employers (EEO Review, 2010). A similar survey of outcomes from the Youthreach programme in Vocational Education Centres, found that 71 per cent of participants had obtained employment or had progressed to further education or training (Barry, 2010, p.40).

Traineeships that are 'closely coordinated with the labour market and provide occupation specific training have been found to be generally effective (OECD, 2011). Although Forfas found that the traineeship programmes aimed at the disadvantaged often have over-qualified participants (2012 cited in OECD 2011).

FÁS Traineeships are developed in responses to identified skill shortages. They are designed to meet the specific needs of a given industry or employer group. Traineeships are reviewed approximately every three years and part of that review involves questionnaires being sent to employers seeking information on the skills of recruits who complete Traineeships, seeking feedback on any changes that might be required for the programme. The overall feedback has been positive (Forfas, 2010). The most recent Forfas review of FÁS labour market programmes and Skillnets Training Networks found that the most effective programmes for the unemployed were the training programmes closest to the labour market and with employer involvement, including the Specific Skills Training and Traineeship programmes. Forfas describes FÁS Traineeships as having the highest employment outcomes of all the programmes reviewed, with 72 per cent of participants entering employment after the programme and 9 per cent engaging in training/education. Some 67 per cent of those that complete the programme are certified – typically at FETAC levels 5 and 6 and/or industry recognised certification. Forfas described traineeships as 'providing a good alternative to apprenticeships, having on-the-job training for specialist skills but over a less lengthy period of time, and in a more cost-effective manner' (Forfas, 2010, :164).

The outcomes of the Specific Skills Programme are also among the best of all the FÁS programmes, with 58 per cent of participants entering employment and 10 per cent progressing to education or training. However, this programme has been less successful in delivering certification to participants (47 per cent in 2008) (Forfas, 2010a). For the Local Training Initiative (LTI) the rate of non-completion is comparatively high (18 per cent in 2008), however there is a 30 per cent progression rate to further training or education across a range of providers, including VEC's and Institutes of Technology (Forfas, 2010a).

One stakeholder we interviewed told us that traineeships are very important in helping young people make the labour market transition. The stakeholder told us there is a lot of employer buy-in in traineeships in Ireland and there are high retention/ placement rates from FÁS programmes. The effectiveness of post-secondary education programmes such as the Post Leaving Certificate and training schemes were expanded in response to the economic crisis but the OECD claim their effectiveness is hampered by the limited duration of some courses eg workplace training provision, with some as short as three weeks (Kris, 2010, cited in OECD, 2011).

The changing labour market as a result of the recession means that 'a reshaping and mobilisation of labour market programmes and services' is required (Forfas, 2010a:5). The main issues for Ireland in relation to traineeships in the period up to 2015 include:

- Avoiding potential skills mismatch by ensuring that training is provided in skills relevant to the needs of organisations for job opportunities that will arise as a result of start-ups, replacement needs and expansions
- The provision of work experience placements for young people leaving education and entering unemployment
- Facilitating improved access to training and education for groups most affected by unemployment
- Ensuring any disincentives in the social welfare payments system and movement into employment are removed (Forfas, 2010a).

Traineeships as part of formal education

One stakeholder interview described traineeships (as part of higher education) as critical in enabling students to make the transition from education to the workplace as they create the opportunity for students to try out a job role in a 'safe environment' without making a sustained commitment to it. Students obtain an understanding of the job role or function and the tasks associated with it and get exposure to the company culture (Stakeholder interview, 2011).

Work placements in higher education were considered by higher education staff, employers and students to generally make a 'valuable contribution to the third level educational experience' (REAP, 2011:5). REAP found through interviews with higher education staff, employers and students undertaking work placements, that work placements were 'considered to enhance the employability prospects of future graduates as the industry competences gained through informal learning in the workplace make individuals more employment ready' (REAP, 2011:5). However, the REAP interviews also identified concerns that the selection criteria for placements and the quality controls which ensure that the placement offers the learning that the students expect, may be overlooked as placements become more difficult to find (REAP, 2011:29).

Research, cited in the REAP report, by Kennedy Burke et al. (2010) revealed that among 117 students who had undertaken work placements through the School of Tourism at the Dublin Institute of Technology, some 91 per cent of students agreed that work placements were a valuable experience and over three-quarters (78 per cent) said that they were satisfied that their learning objectives for the placement had been satisfied and some 84 per cent agreed that they had enjoyed the placement (REAP, 2011).

The recent Eurobarometer report about young people in Europe aged 15 to 35, showed that in Ireland some 83 per cent of young people think that vocational education and training is an attractive option for young people in Ireland, with some 50 per cent thinking the most important reason for embarking on vocational education and training is to improve job opportunities (Flash Eurobarometer, 2011). Another Flash Eurobarometer survey '*Employers' perception of graduate employability*' (No 304) provides insights into the needs and perceptions of graduate recruiters by monitoring the opinions of staff in companies throughout Europe with at least 50 employees across a range of business sectors. In Ireland, 75 per cent of graduate recruiters strongly agreed that work experience was a crucial asset for new recruits. It also showed that in Ireland some 94 per cent of respondents said that their employees with higher education degrees had participated in training and development programmes organised at their workplace (Flash Barometer, 2010).

7.3 Good practice examples and recommendations

Due to the effective performance of the FÁS Traineeship and Specific Skills programmes, Dobbins (2011) states that resources should continue to be allocated to these programmes and consideration should be given to increasing the number of Traineeships to include a

broader range of occupations. Consideration should also be given to other means of developing training programmes with employers' involvement that are more flexible, less expensive and of a shorter duration (Dobbins, 2011). However, it could be considered that ALMPs for young people in Ireland are too fragmented and on too small a scale to make a significant impact and only a coordinated large-scale ALMP/jobs plan stimulus would really improve the situation for young people (Dobbins, 2011).

The REAP (2011) study included employers' recommendations for improvements in work placements. These included having communication between all parties; having proper preparations in place and ensuring all parties know what is expected of them during the work placement. Other recommendations for improvements mentioned by students interviewed by REAP (2011) included increased contact with academic supervisors and assessments of placements.

A key recommendation was implementing traineeships of 'substantial duration'.

Employers interviewed by REAP (2011) recommended that work placements should be longer in duration – longer than six months – in order for all parties to 'significantly benefit'. It was considered that short placements of six weeks did not create value for the host organisation. It was suggested that if HEIs and disciplines varied their placement timing it would avoid HEIs and courses competing for work placement opportunities in the same time period. It was also suggested that work placement durations could be standardised in order to develop a more common understanding of a work placement (REAP, 2011).

Input from the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs stated that employers are 'generally satisfied with the technical competencies demonstrated by graduates' (REAP, 2011:35) but found that communication skills, commercial awareness, problem solving ability and the ability to apply theory to practice were areas where improvements was required. REAP also referenced a submission by the Forum of Enterprise Employers to the National Strategy for Higher Education in which employers recommend 'substantial work placements' to 'help address a perceived deficit in the practical application of theoretical knowledge' (REAP, 2011:35).

One stakeholder commented that the internships offered to graduates by the oil companies are of particular high quality. The UK is a key destination for Irish graduates and the investment banks have a reputation for offering quality internships. In the Irish market the accountancy firms are good examples of short term 10-12 week internships. Accountancy firms also offer six to nine month traineeships for those on cooperative courses which involve students undertaking a traineeship as part of the academic programme and may span part of the academic year (Stakeholder interview, 2011).The stakeholder considered a quality internship to involve defined pieces of meaningful work against which performance is measured; a transparent recruitment process and social integration into the organisation.

The OECD (2011) recommended that programmes should be focused on re-skilling the unemployed for employment in new sectors providing them with the specific skills which will match labour market needs, instead of the expansion of short courses which 'will not suffice to retrain former construction workers' (OECD, 2011:24). A policy response to the rising number of redundant apprentices has been to subsidise organisations which employ redundant apprentices to complete on-the-job training. The OECD (2011) recommend ending these subsidies and closing new apprentice registrations to the construction trades and instead increasing the set of trades covered by apprenticeships according to labour market need (OECD:2011:25).

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Annex

Table A 1: Number of FÁS New Starters (2002 to 2009)

Year	FÁS New Starters (Other training programmes)*
2002	26,669
2003	22,338
2004	25,028
2005	26,822
2006	23,971
2007	25,009
2008	24,972
2009	35,316

**Includes the following training programme types: Bridging Foundation; Community Training Workshops; Linked Work Experience; Return to Work; Specific Skills Training; Traineeship; Job Training Scheme; Community Training; Specialist Training Agencies; the data excludes evening courses and work sponsored training. (McNaboe et al., 2010:.25).*

Table A 2: Mobility documents issues to learners since 2006

Year	Number of mobility documents issued
2006	173
2007	174
2008	147
2009	339

Source: Barry, 2010:23.

Table A 3: LdV participation 2007 to 2011

Call	Target group	2007*	2008*	2009*	2010	2011*
Planned participation	Initial vocational training	203	346	645	472	259
	People on the labour market	2	110	210	178	229
Participants	Initial vocational training	164	279	316	n/a	n/a
Valid to 01.01.2011	People on the labour market	0	117	115	n/a	n/a

Table A 4: FÁS training allowances effective 1 January 2011

Age Group	Full-time €	Part-time €
Course Participants Aged 16 years	76.65	44.10
Course Participants Aged 17 Years	95.75	55.10
Course Participants Aged 18 Years & Over	188.00	108.20

Source: (FÁS, 2011C).

National Report on Traineeships Italy

Flavia Pesce, IRS

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1. Traineeships as part of Member State's Youth Policy Measures

A series of critical factors characterise the status of young people in Italy:

- *A higher unemployment rate than that of the overall working-age population.* In 2009 the unemployment rate¹ in Italy was 7.8 per cent, thus lower than the EU 27-state average (8.9 per cent); whereas the rate for young people (aged 15 to 24)² was 25.4 per cent, thus higher than the EU average (19.8 per cent). It is also worth noting that Italy's 2009 youth unemployment rate represented an increase of more than four percentage points on the previous year. Indeed, young people make up one of the categories hardest hit by the economic downturn, partly due to their more widespread reliance on unstable forms of employment than in other age groups³. The deepest effects of the economic crisis have been on non-standard contracts, which were down by fully 240,000 jobs in 2009 (63 per cent of the overall drop in employment), while the number of standard (full- and part-time) job contracts shrank by 140,000.
- A significant portion of young people are neither enrolled in an education or training programme (school or university, or vocational training supported by regional government) nor gainfully employed. In Italy, the so-called 'NEET' population (not in education, employment or training) came to slightly more than two million young people in 2009 (the most recent year for which statistics are available). This represents some 21.2 per cent of the population between the ages of 15 and 29. Young women account for a disproportionate share of this cohort, with a rate of 24.4 per cent, versus 18.2 per cent for young men. Comparisons with other countries reveal that Italy is the country where this phenomenon is most pronounced. Italian NEET youth (between the ages of 15 and 29) amounted to 19.2 per cent of their age group in 2008, while the average for OECD-member EU countries was 12.2 per cent⁴.
- *A significant portion of young people risk exclusion from the labour market.* The share of those between ages 18 and 24 who have only earned a middle school diploma (who left school before obtaining a high school diploma) is 19.2 per cent. This places Italy at the bottom of the list of 27 EU countries, where the average was 14.4 per cent in 2009. Furthermore, the participation of young Italians in the training system after the end of compulsory education is 82.2 per cent (aged 15 to 19) and 21.3 per cent for 20 to 29 year-olds. These are respectively 2.7 per cent and 3.8 per cent less than average EU 27 values (on 2008 data). These are very significant figures, given the fact that statistics highlight an important trend whereby the likelihood of finding and keeping a job increases with educational achievement.
- *Mismatch between labour supply and demand.* Even at the height of the economic crisis, many Italian companies could not find people with the qualifications they sought, which testifies to the difficulties in matching labour-force supply with labour-force demand in Italy. Estimates place last year's shortfall at some 76,319 unfilled technical positions (according to *Confindustria*) and 23,446 craftspeople (according to *Confartigianato*). ISTAT estimates Italy's unfilled jobs at 85,000. If we take the sum of *Confindustria* and *Confar-*

¹ The unemployment rate is calculated as the number of people 15 years of age and over who are looking for work, as a percentage of the labour force (which is the sum of those with jobs and those seeking employment). The definition of a person looking for work refers to the concept of actively seeking employment, i.e. have performed at least one job-seeking action of a certain type within the 30 days prior to the interview.

² The youth unemployment rate is calculated as the number of people aged 15 to 24 years seeking employment, as a percentage of the labour force (those employed and those seeking employment) in the same age bracket.

³ Calculations based in ISTAT labour-force data show that 30 per cent of employed people between the ages of 15 and 29 have contracts of limited duration, which compares with 8 per cent of the remaining population.

⁴ For full details, see ISTAT data available at [http://noi-italia.istat.it/index.php?id=7&user_100ind_pi1\[id_pagina\]=78&cHash=2ea1b16f9a5b66e9ca0c6a0f9de2064d](http://noi-italia.istat.it/index.php?id=7&user_100ind_pi1[id_pagina]=78&cHash=2ea1b16f9a5b66e9ca0c6a0f9de2064d).

tigianato figures (which obviously cannot count the same job twice) in 2009 vacancies amounted to approximately 99,765.

Given the critical nature of this situation, the need to promote an effective connection between training and the demand for labour has repeatedly been identified by various levels of government, both regional and national.

As early as 22 December 1998 the 'Social Contract for Development and Employment' recognised traineeships as a necessary link between the education and training system and the labour market, affirming *'the need to implement traineeships in all education and training programmes as an indispensable tool for establishing cohesion between the education/training system and the labour market'*.

More recently, in 2010, the *Ministry of Labour and Social Policies* and the *Ministry of Education, Universities and Research*, presented an Action Plan⁵ aimed at enhancing the employability of young people through the integration of education and work experience. Projections for the year 2020 see Italy facing serious demographic, occupational, and growth difficulties. This has strengthened the conviction that: *'...the future of jobs for young people in Italy depends primarily on more efficient correlation and better integration between training/education and the labour market. Compared to those in the same age bracket in other countries, young Italians come into the workforce too late in life and, for the most part, without adequate skills. This is partly due to lack of actual contact with the world of work, which is rooted in the widespread prejudice that says those who study must not work and those who work must not study.'* Consequently six areas for priority action have been identified to achieve full employability of young people:

1. easing the transition from school to work
2. enhancing of technical and vocational training
3. promotion of apprenticeship contracts
4. rethinking the use of formative traineeships, promoting work experience during education, training for workplace safety, and instituting pension plans starting in schools and universities
5. rethinking the role of university training
6. orienting doctoral programmes to the labour market.

The Action Plan clearly states that while traineeships have certainly represented an invaluable opportunity for young people to come into contact with the labour market and a useful channel for actual employment, they have been widely misused and thus need to be reworked.

This concept was subsequently reaffirmed in the 27 October 2010 accord which was signed by the Italian Government, the regions, autonomous provinces, and the social partners to re-launch apprenticeships⁶. This has more recently been affirmed in the regulations implemented in summer 2011.

⁵ Ministry of Labour and Social Policies and Ministry of Education, University and Research, *Italia 2020 - Piano di azione per l'occupabilità dei giovani attraverso l'integrazione tra apprendimento e lavoro (Italia 2020 - Action Plan for the employability of young people through the integration of education and employment)*, 16 June 2010.

⁶ It notes the urgency of coming to *'a more rational and efficient framework for vocational and orientational traineeship so as to take advantage of its potential in terms of employability and to prevent abuse and misuse of vocational and orientational traineeships and of other types of contracts (especially employer-coordinated freelance work) in competition with apprenticeship contracts.'*

Table 1.1: Types of training and work experience in Italy

Traineeship Programme	Brief Description Education
Curricular traineeships aimed at orientation in high schools	Field of Education: traineeship included within high schools programmes governed directly by the academic regulations of the schools. They are part of a formal course of education and their purpose is not to facilitate direct work placement but to refine the learning and training process with a so-called 'alternation' method.
Summer traineeships aimed at orientation in high schools	Field of Education: orientation summer internships are offered during summer vacation for young people enrolled in university studies or any level of school, with orientational or practical training aims. The regulation of summer orientation internships pertains to vocational training, which falls under the Regions' exclusive jurisdiction.
Curricular traineeships aimed at vocational training in courses of advanced post-diploma technical training, parallel to university programmes (Higher Technical Institutes)	Field of Education: traineeships included within Higher Technical Institutes programmes governed directly by the academic regulations of the schools. They are promoted by educational organisations and institutions in the interest of their own enrolled students within the time frame of attendance of the course of study/training.
Curricular traineeships within university degree programmes	Field of Education: traineeships included within a study plan at a university as part of a formal course of education, governed directly by the academic regulations of the university.
Traineeships within university master's programmes at first and second ESF levels	Field of Education: traineeships included within university master's programmes governed directly by the academic regulations of the schools.
Traineeships in vocational training programmes	Traineeships in vocational training programmes, incorporated into scholastic curricula and addressed to students of vocational training courses. They are promoted by educational organisations and institutions in the interest of their own enrolled students within the time frame of attending the training.
Traineeships in programmes that integrate education with training	Traineeships in integrated teaching/training programmes. They are promoted by educational organisations and institutions in the interest of their own enrolled students within the time frame of attending the course of study/training.
Training and job-orientation traineeships (non-curricular)	Vocational and orientational non-curricular traineeships are designed to facilitate young people's occupational choice and employability in the transition phase from school to the workforce, through training and direct experience in the workplace. They are defined and regulated by laws at regional and national level. These traineeships may be offered only to recent high school or university graduates within 12 months of having earned their diploma or degree, while also al-

Traineeship Programme

Brief Description Education

Traineeships aimed at integration or reintegration into the workforce (non-curricular)

allowing on-going students to take part.

These traineeships are aimed primarily at the unemployed, including re-employable workers, or other programmes targeting the never-employed, and regulated by the Regions.

Training and orientational traineeships for the disadvantaged (non-curricular)

Traineeships designed for workers with physical, psychological, or sensory disabilities (for whom the terms of Article 11, paragraph 2, of Law No. 68 of 12 March 1999 remain in effect) or for psychiatric patients, drug addicts, alcoholics, non-detained convicts, immigrants within the quotas of the population-flow decrees, asylum seekers granted international protection, categories of the disadvantaged targeted by special workforce integration or reintegration initiatives launched by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the Regions and the Provinces.

2. Legislative Framework for Traineeships

Italy features many different types of traineeships⁷ that relate to different contexts.

- 1. The field of Education and the field of Vocational Training:** this category includes programmes incorporated into scholastic curricula and addressed to students (curricular traineeships in high schools⁸, curricular traineeships in post-diploma vocational training courses, curricular traineeships within university degree programmes and first- and second-level master's programmes, traineeships in vocational training programmes and integrated teaching/training programmes); summer traineeships in high schools; training and job-orientation traineeships (non-curricular); traineeships aimed at integration or reintegration into the workforce (non-curricular); and training and orientational traineeships for the disadvantaged (non-curricular).
- 2. The field related to the Labour Market:** Italy has recently introduced new regulations (D.Lgs. no. 167 of 14 September 2011, 'Comprehensive Apprenticeship Law') providing a complete framework for apprenticeship envisaging permanent employment contracts with the objective of providing occupational training to young people. Three different types of apprenticeship are contemplated: a) apprenticeship for a professional qualification leading to a formal diploma; b) professional apprenticeship; c) higher training and research apprenticeship.

⁷ As will be seen more clearly below, although Italian legislation on this matter uses the word *tirocinio* (traineeship), in the literature and in practice the terms *tirocinio* and *stage* (the French term for internship) are used synonymously; in either case referring to a period of on-the-job training to facilitate entry into the job market. The traineeship may be structured primarily to provide vocational training or orientation/career counselling (although a given traineeship may often entail both) without implying the establishment of employment relations in either case. See: Tiraboschi M., Bollettino Adapt n. 2/2001 'I tirocini formativi e di orientamento e il quadro legale'; ISTAT, 'Proposta di classificazione dei rapporti di lavoro subordinato e delle attività di lavoro autonomo: analisi del quadro normativo', 31/1/2002 (Seminario 'Il Laboratorio sul mercato del lavoro: attività e prospettive').

⁸ Since Italy's enactment of Education Reform (Law No. 53 of 28 March 2003 'Mandate to the Government to define general standards on education and set basic levels for services in the fields of education and vocational training', Article 4)[□] and subsequent implementation measures (Legislative Decree 77/05) established a system to promote alternation of work and school throughout the country's high schools – and, even earlier, since the so-called 'Third Area of Professionalisation' introduced internships into Istituti Professionali di Stato (IPS) vocational schools (Ministerial Decree of 15 April 1994 – the use of internships has become part and parcel of vocational and curricular instruction in many higher secondary schools. This is especially true at technical and vocational schools but also applies to lyceums. In recent years, internships have also become widespread in university curricula.

3. The field related to the access to the so called 'liberal professions' (doctors, lawyers, architects, etc.): admission to the state qualifying examination for these professions is only possible after a compulsory training period. The rules for this type of internship (praticantato) differ from one profession to another. They generally specify the duration of the internship, candidate requisites (e.g. a university degree), and documentation attesting that the internship effectively took place (signatures, references to candidate in meeting minutes and reports, etc.). Regarding the obligations of the various parties involved, given that no specific form of contract exists, either some sort of standard work contract is used or, as often happens, the internship is completely unregulated.⁹

Although we have chosen to mention apprenticeships because of the importance attributed to them in recent training and employment policies, this type of vocational training is beyond the scope of this report. In the following paragraphs we will thus focus on traineeships within the education and vocational training system, taking an in-depth look at their place within the Italian legislative framework; their distinctive characteristics; the means of implementation; and any critical areas therein.

In addition to these types, there are **traineeships performed by Italian citizens abroad**, to which Italian legislation affecting traineeships does not apply because such relationships are regulated by the laws of the host country.¹⁰ For more qualitative and quantitative information about transnational traineeship and European mobility projects, please refer to Box 1 below.

Box 2.1: Transnational traineeships

Various channels are available to Italian citizens to take part in traineeships abroad:¹¹

- The EU Leonardo da Vinci Lifelong Learning Programme (for those in school, apprentices at the start of training, workers, freelance workers and the unemployed, including those with a university degree) and the Erasmus Programme (for university students).
- Internships at EU institutions and bodies, which issue calls for interns from time to time;¹²
- Institutional internships at Italy's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

⁹ Practising internships for 'liberal professions' are the responsibility of the professional, who answers to their professional association. Unlike with the vocational internships, there is no formal legal obligation to define the intern's rights or contractual duties. Nor are there specific legal protections in terms of insurance or compensation. It would, however, appear that new steps have been taken in this direction with Article 3, paragraph 5c) of Legislative Decree No. 138 of 13 August 2011, that establishes the principles which must be transposed during reform of the professional associations (to be enacted within one year from the date the decree takes effect) for internships that grant access to association-accredited professions: '*Regulations affecting internships for access to the profession must adhere to criteria that ensure the actual performance of the training activity and its constant revision to meet the needs of guaranteeing the best practice of the profession. The intern shall be paid fair compensation as an indemnity, proportional to her/his actual contribution*'.

¹⁰ In this regard, Michele Tiraboschi has stressed that the situation is perfectly in keeping with the conceit of Law 196/97 itself, which '*mandates (as a starting principle) the application of Italian legislation to foreigners performing internships in our country (the so-called principle of territorial sovereignty)*'. In addition, '*in the absence of specific provisions, we can imagine stipulating an ad hoc internship agreement drafted along the lines of the one outlined in Decree No. 142/1998, taking pains to ensure that the intern who goes abroad will have adequate guarantees for third-party liability and protection against accidents.*' See Tiraboschi M., *I tirocini formativi e di orientamento e il quadro legale*, Collana Adapt No. 2/2001.

¹¹ More information about Italian young people's periods abroad for education or training purposes is available in the recent Eurobarometer survey (Flash Eurobarometer (2011) 319b: *Education and Training, Mobility, Employment and Entrepreneurship. Youth on the Move*, which is available online at: http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_319b_en.pdf).

¹² Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA); European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA); European Central Bank (ECB); European Investment Bank (EIB); European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML); European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP); European Economic and Social Committee (EESC); European Commission; Council of the European Union; Committee of the Regions (CoR); European Court of Auditors (ECA); Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU); European Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS); European Medicines Agency (EMA); European Parliament; Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market (OHIM); European Ombudsman's office.

- Institutional internships of the Fondazione CRUI, the operating arm of the Italian University Rectors' Conference.
- Institutional internships at the Italian Institute for Foreign Trade (I.C.E., formerly Italian trade Commission).
- Internships at international organisations (e.g. European Space Agency, UNHCHR, World Bank, IMF, UNICEF, WTO, ILO, OECD, etc.).

In recent years European Mobility projects have been extended to encourage people to gain practical work experience abroad. International traineeship can be part of the Erasmus or Leonardo da Vinci (LDV) programmes, regulated by EU directive and managed by Universities or National Agency.

Erasmus student mobility for placements enables students at higher education institutions to spend a placement (traineeship/internship) period between three and 12 months in enterprises or other host organisations (training centres, research centres, etc.) in another participating country¹³. Prior to their departure, students are provided with a 'placement agreement' (grant agreement) covering the mobility period and signed by the student and their home higher education institution; a 'training agreement' regarding its specific programme for the placement period; and a 'quality commitment' setting out the rights and obligations of all the parties, specifically for placements abroad.¹⁴

LDV Mobility actions enable people who travel abroad to have a learning or training experience, through various types of actions: 1) People in Initial Vocational Training (IVT) can do work-related training abroad. Participants can still be at school or college or in alternative VET schemes (apprentices). 2) People in the labour market (PLM) actions enable people after graduation in vocational training or higher education to have a work-related training abroad in order to improve their employment potential. 3) Professionals in vocational education and training (VETPRO) can exchange experiences abroad to improve their skills and knowledge. Content and duration differ among actions¹⁵ but are regulated by quality framework and managed by national agencies.¹⁶

Statistical data

International mobility is also becoming more popular in recent years. The total number of outgoing **Erasmus** student for studies and placements combined in 2009/10 was 21,039. This is an increase of 8.6 per cent with respect to 2008/2009, and greater with respect the total amount of the Erasmus student in the 32 participating countries (+7.4 per cent). From 2000/01 to 2009/10 almost 168,000 Italian students have benefited from the Erasmus programme. As far as the traineeships abroad, a total of 1,921 Italian students undertook placements in 2009/10. This is an increase of 18.4 per cent compared to the previous academic years. Italy also received a high number of incoming placement mobility (1,962 in 2008/2009 and 2,253 in 2009/2010).

The average duration for an Erasmus student placement was four months. The average monthly EU grant, decreased from €586 per month the previous year to €557 per month in 2009/2010¹⁷.

Italy is also participating in the **Leonardo da Vinci (LDV) programme**, which promotes transnational mobility by helping people to gain a working or learning

¹³ http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc894_en.htm.

¹⁴ Further information regarding the Erasmus Student Charter can be found at the link http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc1057_en.htm.

¹⁵ http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/what_en.htm.

¹⁶ Also the Leonardo da Vinci programme envisages a quality framework setting out the student's rights and obligations of the trainee and of the host organisation (http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/doc/quality_en.pdf).

¹⁷ http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc920_en.htm.

experience abroad, supporting in particular initial vocational training mobility for trainees; apprentices and students in vocational education and training; mobility for people in the labour market, with the emphasis on learning mobility for people with a vocational degree or for university graduates, employed or not; and mobility for vocational education and training (VET) professionals¹⁸. In the period 2007-2009 Italy planned 13,035 mobility projects; and a further 13,415 for the period 2010/2011, 14,887 of which were already realised by 01/01/2011. Of the mobility projects in 2010-2011, 47.9 per cent are initial vocational training, 42.5 per cent are referred to people in the labour market, and the remaining 9.6 per cent are for VET professionals¹⁹.

Financing of traineeship

Transnational mobility within the Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci (LdV) programmes are financed by the respective programmes and co-ordinated by the National Agency, and are not paid for by the employer. Most of the outgoing students finance their mobility from the grants offered by the educational institution.

For the Erasmus programme, Italy has benefitted from €37,781,000 in the academic year 2009/2010, a slight increase compared to 2007/2008 (€34 million) and almost the same amount as for 2008/2009 (€37,969,833)²⁰.

Italy was also granted €40,063,175 for the Leonardo da Vinci programme in 2007-2009; while in 2010 the total envisaged for mobility projects reached €16,907,156²¹.

2.1 Legal framework for and governance of traineeships

Overall, the traineeship models included within high schools, universities and in vocational training programmes²², known as 'curricular traineeships' (defined below), are governed directly by the academic regulations of the schools and universities.

Vocational and orientational (non-curricular) traineeships are defined and regulated at the national level by the following laws:

Box 2.2: National regulation of vocational and orientational traineeships

- Law No. 196 of 24 June 1997 '*Norme in materia di promozione dell'occupazione*' (Measures regarding the promotion of employment), Article 18 (the so-called 'Pacchetto Treu').
- Interministerial Decree No. 142 of 25 March 1998 '*Regolamento recante norme di attuazione dei principi e dei criteri di cui all'articolo 18 della legge 24 giugno 1997, n. 196, sui tirocini formativi e di orientamento*', regulations for implementing principles and criteria in Article 18 of Law No. 196 on vocational and orientational traineeships.
- Italian Ministry of Labour and Social Security Circular No. 92 of 15 July 1998 '*Tirocini formativi e di orientamento*', vocational and orientational traineeships.
- Italian Ministry of Labour and Social Security Circular No. 52 of 9 July 1999 '*Stage in azienda*', traineeships in companies.

¹⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc82_en.htm.

¹⁹ http://ec.europa.eu/education/pub/pdf/vocational/leonardo15_en.pdf.

http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/doc/stat/italy_en.pdf.

²⁰ http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc/stat/0910/countries/italy_en.pdf.

²¹ http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/doc/stat/italy_en.pdf.

²² As regards internships performed at companies by young people enrolled in vocational training as part of projects co-financed by the European Social Fund cf. the Ministry of Labour Circular 52/99.

- Interministerial Decree of 22 March 2006 *'Svolgimento dei programmi di istruzione e formazione da effettuarsi nei Paesi d'origine dei cittadini extracomunitari'*, carrying out education and training programmes to be held in the countries of origin of non-EU citizens.
- Legislative Decree No. 138 of 13 August 2011 *'Ulteriori misure urgenti per la stabilizzazione finanziaria e per lo sviluppo'*, further urgent measures for financial stability and development, Article 11 (*'Livelli di tutela essenziali per l'attivazione dei tirocini'*, essential levels of protection for activating traineeships), converted with modifications into Law No. 148 of 14 September 2011.
- Italian Ministry of Labour and Social Policy Circular No. 24 of 12 September 2011.

Following Sentence 50/2005 of the Italian Corte Costituzionale, which declared summer traineeships unconstitutional and definitively established that the Italian Regions have exclusive jurisdiction over vocational and orientational traineeships²³, national legislation has been applicable only in the absence of regional legislation. This was further affirmed by the recent Legislative Decree No. 138 of 13 August 2011 (converted into Law 148/2011).

Careful analysis of Italy's administrative regions shows that only a few regions (seven of twenty) have already regulated the procedural aspects of traineeships (and only in three cases have they done so independently of national legislation). Another nine have envisioned regulations that have only been implemented in a fragmentary or incomplete way or have remained mere statements of principle (contained in Regional Council minutes but never enacted into law). The remaining regions have no laws on traineeship.²⁴

Table 2.1: Regulations on vocational and orientational traineeship region by region

Type of regional regulation on vocational and orientational traineeship

Type of regional regulation on vocational and orientational traineeship	Regions
Legislation enacted	Autonomous Province of Bolzano*, Emilia Romagna, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Lazio, Piedmont*, Sicily, Tuscany*
Incomplete laws or operative regulations merely refer to Article 18 of Law No. 196/1997.	Abruzzo, Basilicata, Calabria, Campania, Liguria, Lombardy, The Marches, Sardinia, Veneto
In the absence of dedicated regulations Article 18 of Law No. 196 of 1997 is still operative.	Aosta Valley, Apulia, Autonomous Province of Trento, Molise, Umbria

* Regions with autonomous traineeship regulatory frameworks independent of national legislation.

Regarding the target groups for traineeship initiatives, Decree No. 142/1998 implementing Law 196/97 explicitly identifies the recipients of vocational and orientational traineeships, covering rather diverse categories:

- Secondary school students.

²³ In detail, Corte Costituzionale Sentence 50/2005 nullified Article 60 of Legislative Decree 276/03, which regulated orientational summer internships (offered during summer vacation for young people enrolled in university studies or any level of school, with orientational or practical training aims). Following challenges to the law's constitutionality brought in the regions of Emilia-Romagna, Tuscany, and the Marches, it was established that regulation of summer orientational internships, *'set up without any connection to employment agreements, and not predetermined in immediate terms to possible hiring, pertains to vocational training, which falls under the regions' exclusive jurisdiction'*.

²⁴ For more complete treatment, see the region-by-region analysis by Serena Facello and Francesca Fazio (on which Table 1.1 is based). Cf. *La mappa dei tirocini formativi e di orientamento in Italia and Schede riepilogative della regolamentazione regionale del tirocinio formativo e di orientamento* in Bollettino Speciale Adapt 20 July 2011, No. 44.

- Those who have never had jobs.
- The unemployed (including those registered in re-employment lists).
- The disadvantaged/disabled.²⁵
- Students at state vocational schools or in vocational training courses or enrolled in post-diploma or post-degree programmes up to eighteen months following completion of their educational programmes.
- University students, including those attending university degree courses, pursuing a doctorate, or enrolled in masters or specialisation courses/ programmes, non-university post-secondary courses, or schools of specialisation up to eighteen months following completion of studies.

It should further be stressed that the law on vocational and orientational traineeship does not specify age limits for the traineeship, though it does make explicit reference to completion of compulsory education (under Law No. 1859 of 31 December 1962).

The chance to participate in traineeships is also given to EU citizens who seek work experience in Italy, possibly as part of EU exchange programmes; and to non-EU citizens, in keeping with principles of reciprocity, as discussed below.

However, the recent Italian Ministry of Labour and Social Policy Circular No. 24 of 12 September 2011 introduced some changes by stipulating that vocational and orientational traineeships may be offered only to recent high school or university graduates within 12 months of having earned their diploma or degree, while also allowing on-going students to take part (including those working towards a bachelor's, master's or doctoral degree).²⁶ In theory, therefore, such students may take part in either curricular traineeships regulated by schools and universities or in vocational and orientational traineeships regulated by national and regional laws.

On the other hand, the new regulations in Legislative Decree No. 138 of 13 August 2011 do not apply to the unemployed or the never-employed eligible for workforce integration/reintegration traineeships. Nor do they apply to the disabled or disadvantaged who are eligible for traineeships for the disadvantaged.

2.2 Legal provisions about aspects of traineeships

The legislative framework mentioned above regarding vocational and orientational traineeship specifies details about several aspects of the traineeship, which are summarised here.

1. Trainee status

Article 1, Paragraph 2 of Ministerial Decree 142/1998 stipulates that the relationships maintained by public-sector and private-sector employers with those they host do not constitute employment relationships.

²⁵ Those who are physically, psychologically or sensorily disabled, those in psychiatric treatment, drug addicts, alcoholics, working-age minors from troubled families, convicts eligible for alternatives to detention under the terms of Articles 47, 47bis, 47ter, and 48 of Law No. 354 of 26 July 1975 and Law No. 663 of 10 October 1986, and those to whom Legislative Decree No. 1577 of 14 December 1947 and subsequent amendments apply.

²⁶ Such participation may take place *'on the condition that [... internships] are promoted by schools and universities and performed within the schedule of attendance in the related course of study or training programme even if [...] not in direct relation to the recognition of academic credits'*.

2. Duration of traineeship

Article 7 of Ministerial Decree 142/1998 established the maximum duration of traineeships (including any extensions) on the basis of the various types of potential trainees.²⁷ However, the recent Legislative Decree No. 138 of 13 August 2011 (Article 11) and the clarifications in the subsequent Circular No. 24, issued by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy on 12 September 2011, amend the limits on the maximum traineeship duration (for placements formally approved after 13 August, since the legislation is not retroactive). The new decree stipulates that vocational and orientational traineeships cannot last for more than six months, extensions included, and may be offered to new graduates exclusively within 12 months of having earned their diploma or degree.

3. Compensation

Because the traineeship does not constitute an employment relationship, the host company or organisation is not obligated to provide the trainee any compensation. Nevertheless, the company or organisation may of its own accord decide to issue the trainee expense allocations (travel or meal vouchers, etc.) or scholarship funds or awards, arbitrarily establishing any amounts.

4. Formal roles and obligations for the parties involved

The traineeship experience involved three parties: the trainee (whose rights and responsibilities are discussed in paragraph 5), the host company, and the organisation that promotes the traineeship.

The promoting organisation²⁸ and the host company are required to draw up an agreement and establish a training plan²⁹ specific to each trainee (which the trainee will also sign).

The party promoting the traineeship is also legally obligated to insure the trainee against workplace accidents through a specific policy with the *Istituto Nazionale per l'Assicurazione contro gli Infortuni sul Lavoro* (INAIL, National Institute of Workplace Accident Insurance) and against third-party liability through an authorised insurance company. This insurance must cover any activities performed outside the organisation as part of the training and orientation project (cf. Article 3, Ministerial Decree 142/98). The promoter shall also provide an educational-organisational mentor who will verify the proper fulfilment of the training plan and represent a point of reference should any problems arise with it. The promoter is

²⁷ Decree 142/1998 established the maximum duration of traineeships as follows: a) Four months for secondary school students. b) Six months for the unemployed or never-employed, including those registered on the re-employment rolls. c) Six months for students at state vocational institutes, in vocational training courses, and in post-diploma or post-degree training, even during the 18 months subsequent to completion of education. d) Twelve months for university students, students attending university diploma programmes, research doctorates or specialisation courses and schools, even outside the university, even during the 18 months subsequent to completion of studies. e) Twelve months for the disadvantaged (excluding those specified in point f). f) Twenty-four months for those with disabilities.

²⁸ Article 11 of Legislative Decree 138/2011 stipulates that '*vocational and orientational traineeships may be promoted only by entities that meet the specific criteria predetermined by regional law so as to suitably ensure proper completion of the initiatives themselves*'. In the absence of specific regional regulation we apply national legislation that specifies the types of organisation that may promote vocational and orientational traineeships: employment agencies or organisations with analogous tasks and purposes identified by regional law; universities and university-education institutes, of the state or not, licensed to grant academic degrees; local education authorities, state and non-state scholastic institutes that issue legally recognised diplomas, including those issued in the context of legally mandated curricula; public or publicly sanctioned centres for vocational education or orientation, as well as centres that operate under the terms of conventions with their region or province; rehabilitation centres, auxiliary organisations, and social cooperatives, provided they are entered in the pertinent regional registry, where such exists; workforce integration services for the disabled run by public organisations with a mandate from their region; not-for-profit private educational institutions, with specific authorisation from the region, subject to revocation (article 2 of Ministerial Decree No. 142). Parties enabled to perform intermediation per Art. 2, Letter b of D.Lgs. 276/2003 are also entitled to act as promoting organisations.

²⁹ The training and orientation programme specifies the aims and methods of each internship or traineeship (thus assuring students that it will be relevant to their course of study at their home institution), its duration, and the time frame within which it is to be performed. These specifications also include the industry to which the company of placement shall belong, the identities of the insurers as per Article 3 of Ministerial Decree 142/98, and the names of two mentors representing the promoting organisation and the host company (the teaching and organisational mentor and the company representative in charge of trainee placement, respectively, cf. Article 4, Ministerial Decree 142/98). These two mentors are the trainee's referents for special needs or any problems in carrying out her/his internship project.

also responsible for certifying the competencies acquired by the trainee in his/her personal training record.

Through the figure of the company mentor, the host company is responsible for the trainee's on-the-job training, in conformity with the activities in the training plan.³⁰ There is no obligation on the company's part to hire at the end of the traineeship.

5. Barriers to the use of traineeships by foreign students

On the issue of vocational and orientational traineeships used by non-Italian citizens, Article 8 of Decree No. 142/98 gives EU citizens seeking work experience in Italy the right to perform educational traineeships in Italy, including those offered in the context of and in compliance with EU programmes. It also extended this opportunity to non-EU citizens, albeit contingent upon issuance of dedicated interministerial regulations defining the criteria and methods for applying traineeship to these foreign nationals. Such regulations were issued as Interministerial Decree of 22 March 2006 published in the Gazzetta Ufficiale No. 159 of 11 July 2006, thus making it possible to use a traineeship track as an educational and orientational tool that aims to integrate into the workforce even citizens of countries from outside the EU, regardless of whether these foreign nationals are legal residents of Italy or located abroad.

3. Traineeships Availability and Access

3.1 Statistics/quantitative information about traineeships

Given the great variety of traineeships offered in Italy and the differing levels of government responsibility for each type, there is no single comprehensive, nationwide source of information or data regarding traineeships. Quantitative and qualitative data on traineeships from different data sources need to be considered and integrated in order to obtain a comprehensive national overview, although accurate estimates are almost impossible.

The principal source of quantitative data on traineeships in Italy is **Unioncamere's Excelsior Training and Employment Information System**. As part of an annual survey carried out in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and the European Union to provide a forecast of employment demand and of professional and training needs expressed by companies, the system also quantifies the number of traineeships hosted by private companies during the year preceding the survey.

In 2010, 13.3 per cent of companies interviewed were willing to host young trainees, mainly for short periods³¹ (with larger companies generally being more willing to host) and a total of 310,820 traineeships were implemented. Of these, over 38,000 (12.3 per cent of the total) transformed into employment with a limited-term or a permanent contract.³²

³⁰ There is clear legislative intent to address the issue of hosting trainees in relation to the company's activities and to its size. Companies with no more than five permanent employees may host one trainee at a time. Companies with six to 19 permanent employees may host no more than two trainees at a time. Companies with more than 20 permanent employees may host trainees representing no more than 10 per cent of the number of permanent employees.

³¹ Some 40.2 per cent of internships last one month; 52.7 per cent last from two to six months; and only 7.1 per cent last more than six months.

³² Excelsior hiring projections probably underestimate the actual rate of transition, since their measurements include alternative traineeships performed by secondary school students, whose aim is not immediate placement with the company but the earning of academic credits needed to complete a course of study. Hiring projections would thus probably have been greater, had only extra-curricular internships and traineeships been taken into account. On the basis of a recent ISFOL-Repubblica survey of interns (see *Gli stagisti italiani allo specchio. Il sondaggio ISFOL-Repubblica degli stagisti*, 2010), about one fifth of interns stay with their host company at the end of the internship (2 per cent on a permanent contract, 6 per cent on a limited-term contract, and 13 per cent on non-traditional contracts).

Traineeships in Public Administration were not included in the *Excelsior* survey. The Repubblica degli Stagisti, making projections on the basis of *AlmaLaurea* data, estimates these as ranging from 150,000 to 200,000 each year.

A reasonable estimate of the number of trainees in private enterprise and public administrations in Italy is on the order of half a million every year.

3.2 Sectors where traineeships are prevalent

The service sector leads demand for trainees: according to *Excelsior* data, 71.1 per cent of traineeships initiated in 2010 were in the service sector, compared to 19.4 per cent in industry in the strict sense, 8.7 per cent in construction, and a small amount in public utilities (energy, gas, water, environment). The drop in the number of traineeships in 2010 is principally attributable to the service sector, mainly in what has historically been the prime segment for such on-the-job training: hotel and restaurant services (11,000 fewer traineeships).

The ISFOL-Repubblica degli Stagisti study also surveys a number of company functions/areas (for all business types) with an accentuated 'statistical vocation'. These comprise, first and foremost, company communication (external relations/press office, marketing/advertising), also human resources management, and research & development.

3.3 Evolution of traineeships over time and the impact of recent economic crisis on traineeships

The *Excelsior* study allows us to track the development over time of traineeships offered by Italian companies in the private sector. We observe a systematic and significant increase in recent years: from 228,450 traineeships in 2006 to 256,340 in 2007 (+12.2 per cent); 305,400 in 2008 (+19.1 per cent with respect to the previous year); and nearly 322,000 in 2009. An increase in just three years of nearly 41 per cent. A small dip was observed in 2010 (310,820 new traineeships, -3.5 per cent compared to 2009). However, this cannot be considered extremely significant when viewed in the context of general shrinkage of the job market due to the crisis.

It is also significant that in 2009, a year with strongly negative employment figures, traineeships nevertheless increased by 5.4 per cent over 2008, in spite of the on-going recession. This figure, especially if evaluated in light of the trend in apprenticeship contracts (-8.5 per cent during the same year), suggests that companies may be taking improper advantage of traineeships. Feeling the stress of a difficult economy, in some cases companies may abuse traineeships to lower their labour costs.

We must certainly also consider the increasing share of curricular traineeships within this trend. These traineeships have continued to grow since the reform of the educational system and following an increase in the number of placement offices at universities.³³

3.4 Financing of traineeships

Given the lack of compensation, it is generally the trainee's family who bear the costs of the traineeship. In certain cases the Regions provide scholarships for trainees, especially as part of programmes designed to facilitate the entry of selected groups into the job market and sometimes drawing on resources from the European Social Fund (ESF).

³³ See annex for details of these data.

3.5 Public perceptions about traineeships

Concern for the proper application of traineeships in Italy is found both at the institutional level and broadly among young people. Significant in this sense was the experience of the website *La Repubblica degli Stagisti*, originating as a blog in 2007 to collect information and experiences regarding traineeships. Working together with ISFOL, the website produced an online survey seeking to gain a better understanding of the characteristics of trainees and traineeships in Italy.

4. Practices and Content of Traineeships

4.1 Traineeships as part of education and/or labour market entry and integration for young people

Circular No. 24 of 12 September 2011, specifying applicability limits of Article 11 of Legislative Decree No. 138 of 13 August 2011 in terms of minimum protection levels in promoting and implementing traineeships, introduces the first explicit distinction between **vocational and orientational traineeships** *'expressly designed to facilitate young people's occupational choices and employability in the delicate transition phase from school to the workforce through training and direct experience in the workplace'* and other types of traineeships. These include:

- **Curricular traineeship** within a study plan at a university or scholastic institute on the basis of regulated standards or other experience designed as part of a formal course of instruction or education, whose purpose is not to facilitate direct work placement but to refine the learning and training process with a so-called 'alternation' method, promoted by educational organisations and institutions in the interest of their own enrolled students and pupils within the time frame of attendance of the course of study or course of training even if not directly in relation to the attribution of academic credit.
- **Workforce integration/reintegration traineeships** aimed primarily at the unemployed, including re-employable workers, or other programmes targeting the never-employed and regulated by the regions.
- **Traineeships designed for workers with physical, psychological, or sensory disabilities** (for whom the terms of Article 11, paragraph 2, of Law No. 68 of 12 March 1999 remain in effect) or for psychiatric patients, drug addicts, alcoholics, non-detained convicts, immigrants within the quotas of the population-flow decrees, asylum seekers granted international protection, categories of the disadvantaged targeted by special workforce integration or reintegration initiatives launched by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the regions, and the provinces.

5. Trainee's Rights, Terms and Conditions

The rights of trainees in Italy and the conditions under which vocational and orientational traineeships are to be held are broadly defined by laws in effect. Because traineeship does not constitute an outright labour contract (unlike what happens in the case of apprenticeship), the trainee cannot claim remuneration for any training time with the company (although in practice, the host organisation may choose, at its own discretion, to reimburse expenses, award meal vouchers, and so forth). Compensation, in this case, consists of the training itself. In other words, the benefit of the opportunity for orientation and training represents retribution.

Overall, it can be stated that the trainee's rights depend on the agreements among the various parties, established in the contract between the promoting organisation and the public or private-sector employer, and in the training and orientation programme. According to clarifications issued in Labour Ministry Circular No. 92 of 15 July 1998, the trainee:

'is responsible for performing the activities specified in the training and orientation project, obeying workplace health and safety regulations; keeping proper privacy for data, information or knowledge of products and production processes acquired during the traineeship, following mentors' instructions, and referring to mentors any organisational issues of other contingencies'.

6. Quality Assurance of Traineeships

There is now widespread awareness regarding the existence of significant critical aspects influencing the quality of traineeships in Italy. Indeed, in the planning document titled *Italia 2020* we read:

'For a long time, traineeships have been one of the few channels – along with on-the-job-training contracts and apprenticeships – for transitioning young people into the job market. Nevertheless, alongside good practices, there have been reports of troubling phenomena that often see vocational and orientational traineeships used as a low-wage workforce recruitment channel with no training value or even actual orientation.'

The interviewed stakeholders were almost unanimous in affirming that, in spite of a regulatory framework that sets rules and limits regarding many aspects of the traineeship (duration, the parties involved and their respective obligations, possible beneficiaries, the number of trainees allowed in relation to the size of the company, etc.), no adequate mechanisms are as yet in place to ensure the quality of the traineeships.

Detailed and timely information may be reported to the parties responsible for the promoter-host agreement and the training and guidance plan (and to the Region, the local offices of the Ministry of Labour and of the social security administration responsible for inspections, company union representatives, or the local bodies of the most representative trade union on the national level [cf. Art. 5 of DM 142/98]). While this is certainly useful – much like the final evaluation made by the parties involved in the traineeship experience (trainee, educational-organisational mentor, and company mentor) – it is not a wholly sufficient means for monitoring traineeships.

To date, the inspections explicitly referenced in the most recent Circular (no. 24 of 12 September 2011) of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies have proven completely inadequate.

In the words of the stakeholders, alongside more regular verifications, the factors that would doubtlessly contribute to improving the quality of traineeships are more active mediation by the promoter, serious and attentive mentorship, and a real training plan. Opinions regarding compensation, on the other hand, are mixed; the debate is still open. One side is represented by supporters of fair remuneration for the time and effort dedicated by the trainee (with the added benefit of lowering the economic barriers that might prevent those less wealthy from taking advantage of a traineeship). On the other, there are concerns that a minimal compensation might increase, rather than decrease, abuse of the system.

7. Overall Assessment of Traineeships

7.1 Benefits and drawbacks of traineeships

As emphasised by all stakeholders during the interviews, along with the many advantages for those who choose to undertake a traineeship, there is also the risk of finding oneself in a condition of exploitation where the traineeship is not a formative experience but rather an unedifying job in all respects (except that of being paid due compensation and having government contributions made on one's behalf). This risk is aggravated during economic crises, when many companies make exclusive recourse to this instrument, thus forcing the young aspiring worker to undertake an unending series of traineeships.

Recent national legislation to mitigate these risks provides stricter controls, on the one hand, while limiting the timeframe for undertaking a vocational or orientational traineeship to a certain number of months (12) after receiving one's educational certificate (a diploma or university degree).

Box 2. Benefits and drawbacks of traineeships

For the trainee

Advantages. Traineeship offers an opportunity, even before completing one's education, to come to terms with the workplace where one will later have to fit in. On the one hand, this makes it possible to obtain practical vocational experience to enrich one's background. On the other, it provides support for future occupational choices by yielding direct contact with the workplace. The trainee thus has a way to round out their own knowledge, which is often too theoretical, to verify their own aptitude, and to test out the behaviour and relationships that are features of a work environment; consequently increasing their employability. In addition, if evaluated in terms of academic credit awarded by the promoting institution, the traineeship may be used 'to start an employment relationship', under the terms set out as early as Article 18 of Law 196/97. If properly certified by the promoting organisation, activities performed during vocational and orientational traineeships may be entered on the student's or employee's record. Such records can then be used to apply for public-sector placement services designed to match labour supply with labour demand (Article 6, Ministerial Decree 142/1998).

Disadvantages. Being placed in an inappropriate work context where the traineeship is not a true occasion for learning but actually a deceptive means for a company to obtain low cost labour. Job seekers risk completing many traineeships without obtaining any concrete employment opportunities.

For promoter

Advantages. For the educational organisation that promotes it, the traineeship represents a precious opportunity to verify the relevance of the programmes it offers to the demands of the labour market. Bringing the education system and the production system closer together and into communication allows the education system to fit its supply to the demand, thus acknowledging in less time, with more reliable mechanisms, transformations of the workplace and the changing requirements that constantly emerge from it.

Disadvantages. Excessive time demanded by a long series of bureaucratic steps in implementing traineeships.

For the company

Advantages. The host company is able to garner the collaboration of generally highly motivated young people who have good theoretical-practical grounding, without substantial outlay. Traineeship can be an opportunity to find human resources that, once properly trained, can be hired.

Disadvantages. Dedicate time to training an intern who will not necessarily be hired by the company.

7.2 Effectiveness of traineeships

Traineeships can doubtlessly continue to represent an effective instrument for developing the employability of young people, both in terms of acquiring specific knowledge and skills, and regarding the development of suitable workplace behaviours. All interviewed stakeholders agree, however, that the main problem requiring urgent attention is the quality of the traineeship itself. There is, without doubt, room for improvement in the effectiveness of this instrument, which could be pursued through a multitude of actions:

- Development of a regional database to monitor traineeships and allow co-ordination and control both during and after traineeships, initiated by local promoters.
- Limiting the maximum length of traineeships (in accordance with the recent national legislation on minimum oversight levels for the implementation of traineeships).
- Prohibition against companies who have laid off workers (*cassa integrazione*), have placed workers on the re-employment lists (*mobilità*), or have recently fired workers.
- Provision of tax benefits and lower social security payments for companies that hire trainees at the end of the traineeship.
- Substantive and structural improvements to the training plan, instead of merely ensuring that it meets formal requirements.
- Improvements in the effectiveness of the mentor, who must not merely be a formal presence as stipulated in the master agreement, but a figure providing concrete support to the trainee (appropriate training and compensation might be provided for the mentor).
- Increased responsibility for promoters, who must exercise real control over the quality and the conformity of the training experience they promote and not limit themselves to acting as an automatic mechanism for balancing supply and demand.
- Promotion of appropriate attitudes in young people, who must be strongly motivated and actively choose the workplace where they will invest their time as trainees if they are to be successful.
- Increase in the share of curricular traineeships (as part of scholastic studies at a young age) and reduction of traineeships initiated after having completed one's schooling or (in any case) at a later age.

7.3 Good practice examples and recommendations

- As part of its exclusive administration of vocational and orientational traineeships, the Region of Tuscany started a project designed to increase the protection of trainees. The *Giovani sì* project (Yes to Youth) calls for the region to reimburse trainees' expenses while obligating the companies to adhere to a protocol on traineeship quality, the '*Carta dei tirocini e stage di qualità in Toscana*' (<http://www.giovanisi.it/>).
- The online newspaper *La repubblica degli stagisti* promotes the 'Intern Rights Charter' (*Carta dei diritti dello stagista*), a nine-point manifesto describing a quality traineeship,

as well as the *ChiaroStage* and *OK Stage* initiatives whereby companies are given a sort of quality seal by committing to respect transparent and dignified traineeship conditions along the lines of a voluntary corporate social responsibility model, see:

- (<http://www.repubblicadeglistagisti.it/initiative/okstage/bollino-ok-stage/la-carta-dei-diritti-dello-stagista/>).
- Regional Law No. 34/2008 of the Region of Piedmont explicitly introduces a prohibition against implementing traineeships in companies which have laid off workers (*cassa integrazione*) or have reduced their personnel through firings or by placing workers on the re-employment (*mobilità*) lists in the six month period prior to initiation of the traineeship.

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Italian Case Study Report

Traineeship focus for this case study:

Extracurricular Post-Graduate Traineeships

Policy Framework

The **national and regional policy framework** regarding the traineeships which are the focus of this case study is similar to the one illustrated in the Italian National Report. However, the reform of the university system (MURST Decree no. 509 of 3 November 1999 regarding the curricular autonomy of universities, and subsequent amendments in the MURST Decree no. 270 of 22 October 2004) has also had a significant impact on the implementation of traineeships in universities. Furthermore, in 2006 the Ministry of Labour started to provide funding in order to support the transition of young people into the employment market through this type of traineeship: the FIXO (*Formazione e Innovazione per l'Occupazione*) Programme for training and innovation in employment, which continues to be managed by Italia Lavoro, a technical agency of the Ministry of Labour.

Unlike the traineeships envisaged as part of university curricula during the period when the student is enrolled and which are regulated by university policies (curricular traineeships), the principal target group for extracurricular post-graduate traineeships are graduates who have received their degrees within the past 12 months. That said, participation is also open to currently enrolled students (including those pursuing a bachelor's, ie laurea, master's degree or doctorate).

These traineeships, regarded essentially as a period of voluntary on-the-job training, aim at facilitating the transition from university to employment. Their purpose is to promote an effective match between supply and demand and the acquisition of competencies which can only be developed in real-world company contexts.

Falling into the broad category of vocational and orientational traineeships, post-graduate university traineeships are also subject to regional legislation and, where such legislation is absent, to national legislation regarding vocational and orientational traineeships (discussed in greater detail in Section 2 of the National Report).

Organisation of Traineeship under Study, Relevant Stakeholders and their Role

Legislation regarding vocational and orientational traineeships formally defines the parties involved and their reciprocal relations, roles and responsibilities: (i) the trainee; (ii) the host company/organisation; and (iii) the promoter. In the case of the traineeships under study, the promoter is the university. Its tasks include management and co-ordination of the entire traineeship process through the promotion, matching and pre-selection of candidates; the bureaucratic and administrative formalities (including drawing up the master agreement between the university and the host company/organisation, and the training plan subsequently signed by all parties); the educational-organisational mentoring of trainee; and the monitoring, oversight and assessment of the traineeship.³⁴

Other stakeholders may then become involved into this three-way promoter-host-trainee relationship with various roles and functions. Such stakeholders may include Regions and Provinces, which may provide funding to trainees via scholarships or hiring incentives to companies, and Chambers of Commerce, representing the business community. The latter

³⁴ See National Report Section 2 and Section 5, regarding monitoring of conformity between the training plan and the effective content of the traineeship, for a more detailed discussion of these aspects.

have created the POLARIS Programme (Project for Vocational Orientation and for Interchange between Businesses and Training Systems), representing a physical and virtual network of service points (provided, respectively, at the facilities of the Chambers of Commerce or their Special Agencies, and via the POLARIS portal³⁵) offering services for orientation, vocational traineeships, and the promotion of a closer liaison between educational establishments and employers through the alternation of schooling and work. The POLARIS service point often acts as a liaison between the university traineeship service point (traineeship applications) and companies, collecting company traineeships offers/vacancies in a dedicated online database.

Funding & Resource Allocation

There is no legal obligation to compensate trainees (because the traineeship is not defined as an employment relationship) and host companies/organisations are free to choose whether, and to what extent, to compensate trainees for expenses. In university-promoted post-graduate traineeships, compensation for expenses by the host organisation (with the exception of Public Authorities) now appears to be the rule, albeit with a great deal of variability in the amounts paid out. In some cases (but not in all universities), direct involvement of the university is also possible via a scholarship for traineeships, especially if these take place abroad.

In certain cases, the provision of scholarships to trainees is handled at the Regional and Provincial level (in large part benefiting from resources from the European Social Fund - ESF), but these scholarships programmes are generally neither continuous nor systematic.

Finally, there is no structured system of funding at the national level, apart from the above-mentioned FIXO Programme. The initial phase of FIXO, implemented in 2006 and becoming fully operational in 2007, primarily involved the establishment or enhancement of trainee placement offices in Italian universities (in line with Italian Law 30/2003). The latter sought to promote labour market reform and, *inter alia*, included universities among the new intermediaries between labour supply and demand in the world of employment. In parallel with the organisation of trainee placement services, financing was provided for a significant number of Employment Traineeships (TIL – *Tirocini per l’Inserimento Lavorativo*). These are vocational and orientational traineeships aimed at university graduates with the explicit purpose of promoting their integration into the workforce, providing a modest stipend to the trainee for expenses and an incentive to the host company to hire the trainee upon the completion of the traineeship.

In the second phase (FIXO II, 2010-2011), an attempt was made to upgrade the services, offering a range of opportunities to university graduates in the programme. These have included a pilot experiment involving the implementation of some 700 six-month ‘project work’ slots involving training at the university (individual or classroom) combined with a traineeship at a company. This is seen as part of project work aimed at developing and/or testing innovative processes or products and is linked with a more generous scholarship offer (totalling between €5,000 and €7,000). It is estimated that some €60 million have been allocated for this programme over the period 2006-2011.

FIXO Scuola e Università (2011-2013), currently in the implementation phase, is the first programme which is not envisaging direct payment of work stipends to trainees. Instead, it aims to use public funds to strengthen trainee placement services (with a view to rewarding services offered and policies promoted by individual universities in favour of their graduates) and to develop and consolidate quality, Region-certified traineeships. It moves in the direction of more highly structured relationships between Regional Administrations and the university system to support the transition from academic education to employment. The Ministry of Labour, in partnership with the Ministries of Youth Policy and

³⁵ www.polaris.unioncamere.it

Education, University and Research (MIUR), has earmarked an overall total of €115 million for this project.

Description Of Traineeship Under Study

Content and Practices related to the Traineeship under Study

In spite of a formal framework comprising specific rules regarding the maximum duration of traineeships (6 months, including extensions), the obligation to provide mentoring through the university educational-organisational mentor and the company mentor throughout the duration of the traineeship, and the agreements between the parties (master agreement and training plan), in practice we observe an extreme variability in the effectiveness of mentorships, which in certain cases look good on paper, but have rather poor learning content and offer little substance. Furthermore, there are currently no programmes to train or prepare the mentors themselves. The actual formative/learning content of projects may vary in terms of clarity or lack specificity which, in turn, makes it difficult to assess the degree of alignment between the initial project aims and the activities which were effectively carried out as part of the traineeship.

Traineeship Contract and Trainee's Terms and Conditions

Post-graduate extracurricular traineeships are regulated by legislation pertaining to vocational and orientational traineeships. This legislation defines the status of the trainee; the documents required to initiate and monitor a traineeship; trainee remuneration, social security coverage and insurance requirements (personal liability and accident insurance); etc.³⁶

Quality Assurance Mechanisms

As is the case with other vocational and orientational traineeships, the quality assurance mechanisms relating to extracurricular traineeships for university graduates are generally limited to ensuring compliance with legal requirements. This mainly applies to the dual aspect of mentoring (availability of both university and company mentors to support the trainee) and the explicit definition of the traineeship content and focus in a training plan (specific to each trainee).

Furthermore, there is a great amount of variability among universities in the types of traineeship-related services offered, the way these are monitored and evaluated, and the tools used.

The yearly survey carried out by the National Agency for the Evaluation of the University System and Research (ANVUR), in collaboration with the universities' own evaluation bodies, reveals that in 2010, of the 87 universities offering a traineeship service, 65.5 per cent had a post-traineeship evaluation system in place to assess all traineeships, 10.3 per cent had a system only for some traineeships, while 24.1 per cent had no such system. Where it did exist, at least in partial form, 92.4 per cent of the universities used student opinion questionnaires, 80.3 per cent surveyed their graduates (for post-graduate traineeships), 93.9 per cent surveyed host companies/organisations, and 34.8 per cent distributed a questionnaire to university mentors.

The survey of university trainee placement services and activities undertaken within the FIXO Programme also highlights the fact that less than two thirds of the universities systematically verify applicant information and record it in their management information system. Furthermore, provisional data regarding all extracurricular vocational and

³⁶ See Sections 2 and 5 of the National Report for further detail.

orientational traineeships (including those not within the FIXO Programme) undertaken in 2010 show that only 22 of the 69 universities involved can provide information regarding the employment outcomes of their traineeships.

Although widely used, the final evaluation forms completed by trainees and company mentors vary among universities. This, in turn, makes it difficult to define minimum quality standards for traineeships.

Current Debate

Public debate on post-graduate traineeships does not differ significantly from that relating to the more general vocational and orientational traineeships. The major issues in both cases include: (i) the possibility of companies to rely on successive traineeships to address staff shortages; and (ii) in parallel, the risk of graduates finding themselves caught up in an endless series of traineeships and/or vocational training programmes without moving closer to sustained and secure employment. This problem is found across the board, ie both in the public sector (characterised by recruiting exclusively via civil service competitions) and the private sector.

In an attempt to address these issues, legislators have recently lowered the maximum duration of traineeships and set a time limit after graduation (not more than 12 months). However, not all stakeholders agree on the effectiveness of the measure. Some managers of university trainee placement programmes argue that these limits not only fail to resolve the problem of turnover, often exploited by companies, but also actually reduce traineeship opportunities, preventing them from undertaking more than one traineeship. In their opinion, it would be much more effective to introduce compulsory reimbursement for expenses, which would provide a more effective barrier against irresponsible behaviour and/or questionable practices by host organisations.

Effectiveness of Case-Study Traineeships: Outputs and Results

Unlike the situation relating to vocational and orientational traineeships, there is a relatively accurate means for monitoring university traineeships, both curricular and post-graduate. The yearly surveys conducted by ANVUR provide a complete picture of traineeships implemented by universities. In the academic year 2009-2010 there were a total of 29,615 post-graduate traineeships organised by Italian universities (excluding master's and doctoral programmes), indicating an increase over previous years. Of these, 94 per cent took place in Italy, 4.7 per cent elsewhere in Europe, and 1.3 per cent outside Europe. In most cases, however, the university traineeship offices do not track traineeships to determine whether they actually lead to employment and thus fail to monitor the real effectiveness of this instrument in achieving its core purpose.³⁷

In this regard, data regarding Employment Traineeships (TIL) taking place during the first phase of the FIXO Programme (2007-2009) may represent a good proxy. Out of a total of 13,826 young people completing a traineeship, these data show an employment rate of approximately 10 per cent under various types of contracts.³⁸

³⁷ A survey conducted in December 2009 by the Fondazione CRUI (agency of the Conference of Rectors of Italian Universities, operational since 2001 with responsibility for a 'Traineeship Programme' which represents one of the major opportunities for Italian university students to undertake traineeships abroad) on the current status of placement services in 70 Italian universities reveals that only 56 per cent have implemented a traineeship monitoring system and even fewer track the effective hiring and sustained employment of their graduates. Cf. Fondazione CRUI, I servizi di job placement nelle Università italiane. Un'indagine della Fondazione CRUI, April 2010.

³⁸ The figure is probably underestimated because it is calculated on the basis of the number of host organisations which have received the hiring subsidy from Italia Lavoro. Indeed, because of the bureaucratic complexity of the programme, a number of companies which have kept the trainee on their staff after completion of the traineeship have not gone through the process of requesting the subsidy.

The latest study conducted by the Consorzio Almalaura on the employment conditions of university graduates in Italy³⁹ is a useful source of information regarding the effectiveness of traineeship programmes as regards job placements. The study contains a section focussing on the added value of post-graduate traineeships, which highlights the existence of a difference between those who completed a post-graduate traineeship and those who have no analogous experience (and similarly, between those who undertook a traineeship during their studies and those who did not). For those completing a second level (5-year) degree in 2009, the employment rate for those completing a vocational traineeship after receiving their degree was 65 per cent, as opposed to 58 per cent for those who did not (a difference of 7 per cent). This difference was greater if limited to graduates who were not already employed when they received their degree: in this case the employment rate was 60 per cent for those completing a post-graduate traineeship as opposed to 44 per cent for those who did not (a difference of 16 per cent).

Companies often use post-graduate traineeships as a means for screening candidates, a sort of 'trial period' for testing the competencies and compatibility with the organisational context and culture of potential new recruits. At the same time, companies benefit from significantly reduced labour costs and the opportunity to draw from a pool of highly skilled, well educated and highly motivated young people. Although no specific surveys or studies have been carried out recently regarding the traineeship-related benefits to companies, the overall positive attitude toward hiring graduate trainees seems to be confirmed by a progressive upward trend in the number of traineeships.

Conclusions

Post-graduate traineeships promoted by universities unquestionably represent a useful tool for facilitating the transition from education to employment and a device for bringing the academic world closer to the labour market needs. Crucially, these are areas where the links in Italy (as in other Mediterranean countries) have historically been weak, inadequate and insufficient.

In a labour market where young people, including those with a high level of education, face serious obstacles to access employment, traineeships offer the advantage of enabling them to acquire the work experience demanded by employers, thus enhancing their employability and employment chances. At the same time, in the medium to long term, both curricular and post-graduate traineeships can help universities develop a better understanding of company needs and perhaps adjust their study curricula suitably.

As part of the reform of the university system—which also introduced the obligation to establish training programmes to promote access to the labour market and facilitate students' choice of profession via direct knowledge of and exposure to the world of work by making explicit reference to vocational and orientational traineeships—all universities have set up placement offices for organising and co-ordinating traineeships. This, in turn, represents a positive development and can be seen as a strong benefit in terms of creating closer ties with the labour market.

One of the drawbacks, on the other hand, relates to difficulties in monitoring the current trainee placement systems at Italian universities. All too often they seem to limit themselves to managing the administrative aspects of the traineeships without implementing the necessary measures aimed at verifying the effectiveness of the training/learning and the extent to which such placements lead to actual employment. There seems to be a widespread perception that on-the-job experience provides valuable training per se, without examining how it fits into the larger picture. However, if the traineeship is to offer a real advantage in terms of allowing new graduates to capitalise on and acquire more professional knowledge, the training plan must include activities which are

³⁹ Almalaura, (2011). *Condizione occupazionale dei laureati. XIII indagine 2010*

directly related to the trainee's university studies. At the same time, this close link between focus of studies and content of traineeship must be constantly monitored.

An interesting case regarding the issue of career/employment guidance is the experience of the Pathways to Employment (PIL – *Percorsi di Inserimento Lavorativo*) implemented by the University of Ferrara, which can be seen as being halfway between curricular and post-graduate traineeships. Aimed at students nearing graduation, they consist of integrated programmes of university teaching and in-company training in the form of traineeships, followed by employment by the same company for one year under a standard contract. The overall duration of the pathway is approximately 18 months.

Another very important aspect, as emphasised by more than one interviewee, is the continuity of relations between universities and companies and the creation of a solid network which will ensure both a better match between supply and demand and the exclusion of companies characterised by improper conduct toward recent graduates on traineeships.

In this sense, an example of good practice which may be transposed into other contexts is the SOUL (University-Employment Orientation System) Project, established in 2008 as a collaborative effort between the Universities and Region of Lazio with the support of ESF resources. SOUL has developed an information system and a portal which can be used by both companies and trainees. It involves all public universities in the Region and maintains close relations with other institutions in the area (Provinces, public employment centres, etc.). The information system allows constant monitoring of all implemented traineeships and their employment outcomes. It also makes it possible to identify and exclude, almost in real time, host organisations for which questionable practices have been reported, adding them to a black list and replacing them with companies with a proven good track record towards young trainees.

Lastly, two other policy implications emerging from the study relate to the need for more careful certification of the competencies acquired through the traineeship experience, preferably by means of a personal Vocational Development Record.⁴⁰ Similarly, there is a need for creating stronger ties with university structures and/or Regional and Provincial Administrations tasked with ensuring the availability of adequate financial support for trainees, eg through trainee scholarships (especially if the trainee is obliged to move, either within Italy or abroad). Such financial support for trainees is deemed essential in order to address the enduring issue of unequal access to traineeships. In other words, such support will help young people access traineeships regardless of family income.

⁴⁰ The Vocational Development Record established by the Inter-Ministerial Decree of 10 October 2005 is an instrument which documents learning experiences and competencies acquired in formal, non-formal and informal contexts. Designed to enhance the marketability of the competencies and thus the employability of its holder, the Record is issued and managed by the Regions and Autonomous Provinces as part of their exclusive jurisdiction over vocational training and certification of competencies. However, it has not yet found widespread application on the national scale.

National Report on Traineeships Lithuania

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1. Traineeships as part of Member State's Youth Policy Measures

1.1 Overview of current situation of young people and traineeships as part of youth policy measures

The Assessment Report of the Long-term Consequences of the Economic Crisis 2009 predicts that by the beginning of economic recovery the number of unemployed people may be three times larger in Lithuania than at the beginning of the worldwide recession as a consequence of long-term unemployment and emigration. Young people and those over 50 are most likely to suffer from the situation. During the estimated recovery of the economy (2012–2015) there is a risk that a large share of the unemployed will not be able to compete in the labour market due to low qualifications and a lack of skills.¹ On the bright side, analysis of in-work poverty² has showed that the lowest risk of poverty is found among employees aged 18–24, the risk being only 5 per cent in comparison to the 9 per cent EU25³ average.⁴

A high level of educational attainment correlates to better salaries even more than in most other European countries.⁵ Then again, the soaring youth unemployment rates are not promising: the unemployment rate of young adults aged 25–29, who are more active in the job markets in comparison to younger age groups, has increased from 6.1 per cent in 2008 to 20.8 per cent in 2010. The negative change is visible among the 20–24 year olds as well, whose unemployment rates increased from 12.1 per cent to 33.2 per cent in the same period. The unemployment rate of 15–19-year olds has risen from 27.6 per cent in 2008 to 60.9 per cent in 2010, which is quite a dramatic development, even though the age group is not the most active in the labour market, according to labour force rates.⁶

Part of the unemployment may be structural rather than caused by the worldwide economic crisis. According to the Lithuanian Innovation Strategy for the Years 2010–2020, the country's economy is in need of modernisation. Traditional manufacturing that dominates the country's industry is oriented towards processing raw materials, and only one-fifth of sales constitutes of manufacturing that utilises at least moderately advanced technologies. Markedly, the strategy paper does not anticipate diminishment in the role of manufacturing industries, but emphasises the utilisation of advanced technologies. In the worst case, the most talented students and scientists may leave the country if Lithuania is not able to compete in the international markets. For the country, it is critical that the fields of engineering and natural sciences attract students, instead of other popular specialist subjects, so that the supply of qualified labour force remains sufficient. Together with sectors of high added value and market potential, Lithuania also concentrates on those fields where highly educated people are available.⁷

Youth is a characteristic of the Lithuanian student population – out of all of the bachelor's and master's students 88 per cent are under 25 years old.⁸ Currently Lithuania is the

¹ ReferNet Lithuania: ReferNet Lithuania: Lithuania. VET in Europe – Country Report 2010. 2010:28

² An income below 60% of the national median indicates that the employee is in risk of poverty.

³ EU25 (AT BE CY CZ DE DK EE ES FR GB GR HU IE IT LT LU LV MT NL PL PT SE SI SK)

⁴ Zabarauskaite R.& Blažienė I.: Working poor in Europe – Lithuania. 6.4.2010. European Working Conditions Observatory. I.

⁵ Zabarauskaite R.& Blažienė I.: Working poor in Europe – Lithuania. 6.4.2010. European Working Conditions Observatory.

⁶ Statistics Lithuania: M3030905: Labour force, employment and unemployment by age, sex.

⁷ Government of the Republic of Lithuania 2010: Resolution. Lithuanian Innovation Strategy for the Year 2010-2020. p. 2-8

⁸ Orr D., Gwosc C., Netz N.: Social and Economic Conditions of Student Life in Europe. Synopsis of Indicators. Eurostudent IV. 2011.

leading country among EU members for the number of people, in proportion to its population size, who are aged 20-29 and specialised in social and engineering sciences and humanities. Also the attainment of higher or post-secondary education is one of the highest among EU member states.⁹

Nevertheless, despite high levels of enrolment, the higher education (HE) system has been under reform. The situation is such that expenditure per student and research output is among the lowest in Europe and many capable students prefer to study abroad. With the new Law on Higher Education and HE reforms, renewal of funding, research practices and governance are possible.¹⁰

Two thirds of students in tertiary education prefer universities rather than colleges. However, from 2009 onwards, fully state-funded HE is available only for the best upper-secondary education graduates. The aim of the renewed system is to balance the number of students between universities, colleges and vocational schools. Students who perform below average risk losing the state funding after half their study period. On the other hand, study costs are still compensated for the best students studying at their own expense. Partly because of changes in the funding structure, bachelor's degree awarding colleges are expected to attract a larger share of students in the future.¹¹

It remains to be seen what the effects are of renewing the funding structure, because student income among HE students is scarce in Lithuania. The respondents in the Eurostudent IV 2008–2011 had a monthly income, including transfers, of less than €300 on average. As a whole, 47 per cent of the student income was provided by parents or family, 7 per cent from public sources, 35 per cent self-earned and 11 per cent from non-specified sources. In addition, more than one-fifth of Lithuanian bachelor's students' monthly expenses are dedicated to study fees.¹²

Table 1.1: Summary table of main traineeship programmes

Main traineeship programmes & initiatives	Brief description	Web link (if available)
ALMP	The focus of ALMPs is not youth oriented. For the most part the training activities are funded by the ESF. ALMP wages are regulated, for example unemployed and those who have been given a notice of dismissal have the right to receive 70 per cent of the monthly minimum wage during participation in vocational training for the unemployed and non-formal education programmes. The labour market training is considered an efficient measure in terms of economic effectiveness and employment, but the employment promotion methods are criticized because lack of focus on the youth unemployment.	http://esparama.lt/es_parama_pletra/failai/fm/failai/Vertinimas_ESSP_Neringos/Ataskaitos_2010MVP/ESF_uzimtu_mo_vertinimo_sant_auka_EN.pdf

⁹ Government of the Republic of Lithuania 2010: Resolution. Lithuanian Innovation Strategy for the Year 2010-2020. p.5.

¹⁰ Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania: Higher Education and Research Reform in Lithuania. Resetting the system towards competitive future. 2011. p. 6-7

¹¹ ReferNet Lithuania: ReferNet Lithuania: Lithuania. VET in Europe – Country Report 2010. 2010: 47

¹² Orr D., Gwosc C., Netz N.: Social and Economic Conditions of Student Life in Europe. Synopsis of Indicators. Eurostudent IV. 2011.

Main traineeship programmes & initiatives	Brief description	Web link (if available)
VET	<p>Vocational education and training programmes are developed by VET providers in co-operation with the representative of employers. VET study programmes are competence-based, with clearly defined training objectives. Main requirements of the programmes include a compulsory practical training in a company or at a school based workshop. The share of practical training is 60-80 per cent of the training programme, so the duration of training can be up to 15 weeks. The recommendation is that half of the time allocated for practical training should be spent in working environment. VET schools lack public funding, which results in outdated practical training and increases the costs for employers. Vocational schools may establish co-operation with different social partners quite freely.</p>	<p>http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/eu/pub/cedefop/vetreport/2010_CR_LT.pdf</p>
Professional Higher Education / colleges	<p>Non-university HE programmes last from 3 to 4 years and contains practical training at least one third of the time. Practical training requirements comprise a traineeship placement in an actual working environment. A major part of the practical training is although conducted at schools, in a workshops and laboratories. Colleges may establish co-operation with different social partners quite freely. Vocational education legislation is closely connected to labour market policies.</p>	<p>http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/eu/pub/cedefop/vetreport/2010_CR_LT.pdf</p> <p>http://www.kpmc.lt/Skelbimai/Etude_Quebec_Lituanie_ANGLAIS_2010-en.pdf</p>
University	<p>In the case of some regulated professions traineeships are compulsory and a traineeship certificate is required to be able to be employed, for example Lithuanian health professionals undergo compulsory traineeships and physicians and odontologists must obtain a medical diploma and a traineeship certificate in order to be able to be employed. State loans and social scholarships are available to students at private and state universities. Universities may establish co-operation with different social partners quite freely. The Lithuanian universities are in charge of the administration of practical work placements of students.</p>	<p>http://trc.lsmuni.lt/media/dynamic/files/404/study_regulations_luhs.pdf</p> <p>http://www.hsmigrants.lt/files/UserDocuments/Englischn.pdf</p> <p>http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.forma_e</p>

2. Legislative Framework for Traineeships

2.1 Legal framework for and governance of traineeships

According to a study on transnational mobility for placements at enterprises, trainees have a specific recognised legal status, which applies to foreign trainees as well. The national legislation includes a set of conditions for traineeships and apprenticeships.¹³

In general, the need for reforming the HE system and the laws governing it started in 1990s when Lithuania gained independence from the Soviet Union. The Soviet system was characterised by a very limited autonomy of HE institutions, but during the 1990s legislative reforms introducing the autonomy of higher education institutions (HEI) were approved.¹⁴ In 2000, the Law on Higher Education was passed and it legitimised non-university higher education. Another major reform plan regarding HE was launched in 2009 when it was decided that the funding, management and legal status of state academic institutions should be revised.

As a consequence of the reforms, the state has increased its higher education funding and agreed to fund the studies of almost 19,000 first year students both in universities and in colleges in 2010.¹⁵ Tuition fees are covered by a student voucher system and the funding of student loans is increased. Study vouchers are awarded to the best students based on their secondary education graduation results. There will be separate yearly established voucher quotas both for universities and colleges. The aim of the voucher quota system is to balance the number of students between universities, colleges and vocational schools. An interesting detail is that state loans and social scholarships are now available to students at private and state universities, whereas before the funding was possible only for students at state owned HEIs.¹⁶ Finally, by the end of 2011, the state universities and colleges will obtain full autonomy and gain the right to freely use their real estate and their earnings.¹⁷

The vocational education and training (VET) system has also been developed in 2000s, as the legislation allowed the first higher non-university education institutions to be established. The reform was completed in 2004. The vocational bachelor's degree came into legislation in 2006, prior to which graduates of vocational HE received a vocational diploma. Short study cycles remain unrecognised.¹⁸ It is worth mentioning that vocational education legislation is closely connected to labour market policies. The legal conditions for vocational training for unemployed people, with the purpose of awarding qualifications and/or developing professional skills, were defined by the Law on Support for Employment in 2006. The training is carried out in accordance with the Law on Vocational Education. As compensation for participating in a training programme, the unemployed people receive a grant.¹⁹

Apart from strictly legislative measures, there also are regulatory research and other institutions that influence the study programmes. The Vocational Education and Training

¹³ Korpelainen S., Nikolova N.: Order 117 – Study on a possible framework to facilitate transnational mobility for placements at enterprises. 2011.

¹⁴ Daniunas & Radzeviciene: Lithuanian Higher Education System: State of the Art. 2009. Vilnius Gediminas Technical University.

¹⁵ Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania: One Year in Reforming Higher Education and Research: Work Done and New Steps. 01.06.2010.

¹⁶ Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania: Higher Education and Research Reform in Lithuania. Resetting the system towards competitive future. 2011.

¹⁷ Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania: One Year in Reforming Higher Education and Research: Work Done and New Steps. 01.06.2010.

¹⁸ Tūtlys, V., Spūdytė I: Implementing a national qualifications framework in Lithuania. Journal of Education and Work. 2011, 24, 3-4, 429-448.

¹⁹ ReferNet Lithuania: Lithuania. VET in Europe – Country Report 2010.

Council functions as an advisory body that comments on strategic questions regarding VET on a national level. On a regional level, county councils play an advisory role.²⁰ The system of non-formal adult education is regulated by the Non-formal Adult Education Council, which establishes basic principles of the structure, activities and management of non-formal adult education.²¹ The Methodological Centre for Vocational Education develops vocational training standards and the Centre for the Assessment of the Quality of Studies is responsible for the development of HE regulations.²²

VET study programmes are competence-based, with clearly defined training objectives.²³ However, it has to be noted that some vocational qualifications have not been through standardisation and the vocational training institutions prepare temporary standards of their own for the basis of a curriculum. Universities have the right to design and develop their syllabi according to the requirements in the Order of the Minister of Science and Education of the Republic of Lithuania.²⁴

In November 2011, Lithuania amended the Law on Employment Support thus changing the system of training unemployed people by introducing 'voucher based' financing. The amendments were due to come in force from 1 January 2012.

2.2 Definition of traineeships and trainees

According to a study on transnational mobility for placements at enterprises, a generally recognised or a national definition of a trainee exists, and the definition is separate from the established definition of an apprentice.²⁵ On the other hand, SYSDM experts are of the opinion that there is no official legal definition of a trainee in Lithuania.²⁶

In many cases, traineeships and apprenticeships are fairly close in terms of definition. The apprenticeship form of organising vocational education refers to training which is carried out in the workplace under a guidance of a freelance teacher. Even in the case of an apprenticeship arrangement, the theoretical part of training may be performed at a vocational training establishment or in any other school. In the vocational field, by law practical training means development of occupational skills at a vocational training establishment, or in any other establishment and/or enterprise.²⁷

2.3 Legal provisions about aspects of traineeships

According to a study on transnational mobility for placements at enterprises, trainees are entitled to social benefits, such as unemployment benefits, sickness pay, social security, pension funds, health insurance, liability insurance and safety insurance against accidents.

²⁰ Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania; Methodological Centre for Vocational Education and Training: Vocational Education and Training in Lithuania. 2009. p.11

²¹ Blaziene, I.: Lithuania: Collective bargaining and continuous vocational training. 6.2.2009. The European Industrial Relations Observatory On-Line.

²² Tütlys, V., Spūdytė I: Implementing a national qualifications framework in Lithuania. Journal of Education and Work. 2011, 24, 3-4, 429-448.

²³ Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania; Methodological Centre for Vocational Education and Training: Vocational Education and Training in Lithuania. 2009. p.20

²⁴ Tütlys, V., Spūdytė I: Implementing a national qualifications framework in Lithuania. Journal of Education and Work. 2011, 24, 3-4, 429-448.

²⁵ Korpelainen S., Nikolova N.: Order 117 – Study on a possible framework to facilitate transnational mobility for placements at enterprises. 2011.

²⁶ System Experts network questionnaire summary: Annex 1. Internships: Factual background information on the legislation and practice of internships in the 27 EU Member States.

²⁷ Law on Vocational Education 2011, Article 2

In the case of safety and health insurances, the sending organisation is responsible for arranging the insurances in Lithuania.²⁸

The Law on Higher Education and Research, which has come into effect in 2009, stipulates that in a case when a study programme provides for a student's traineeship, a contract of practical training has to be drawn up. The establishment or organisation in which the traineeship takes place; the student; and the HEI are defined as the parties to the training agreement. The Ministry of Education and Science approves the model forms of the contacts. It is also specified that a higher educational institution is responsible for the organisation of traineeships if the traineeships are part of the study programme. In terms of teaching staff's responsibilities for the directing of practical training activities, the law stipulates that assistants at the Lithuanian universities are in charge of the administration of practical work placements of students.²⁹

A 2006 edition of the Law on Vocational Education introduced apprenticeships as a form of vocational education and training.³⁰ According to the 2011 amended Law on Vocational Education, the vocational education system comprises of primary vocational education, continuing vocational education and vocational guidance. The law gives a permission to a vocational education establishment to make such an arrangement that practical education may take place at the workplace. A provider of vocational education concludes employment and vocational education contracts. A provider of vocational education can be by definition e.g. an organisation, enterprise or establishment whose main activity does not comprise vocational education, as long as the provider has otherwise legal rights to implement or prepare vocational training programmes.³¹

3. Availability of and Access to Traineeships

3.1 Statistics/Quantitative Information about traineeships

A large scale quantitative HEDESGO (Higher Education as a Generator of Strategic Competences) project survey among HE graduates shows that 68 per cent of Lithuanian respondents participated in a work placement or a traineeship, but the data also shows that the traineeship was not an essential element of the study programme as it was not strongly emphasized in the studies. The data collection for the HEDESGO graduate survey took place in 2008, four to five years after the time of graduation.³²

Research into the compatibility between the generic skills of Lithuanian university and college graduates and labour market needs in 2003 produced similar results on the role of traineeships and work placements as the HEDESGO-survey. Little over 1,000 graduates from 14 universities and 5 colleges filled in the survey questionnaire, and ranked work placements and traineeships as the least used teaching-learning method during their studies.³³

The First steps into the labour market International survey of HE students and graduates gives more recent information on the current role of traineeships. The research was

²⁸ Korpelainen S., Nikolova N.: Order 117 – Study on a possible framework to facilitate transnational mobility for placements at enterprises. 2011.

²⁹ Law on Higher Education and Research 2009, Article 58

³⁰ Methodological Centre for Vocational Education and Training: Overview of VET System in Lithuania in 2007. Thematic overview. 2008:7

³¹ Law on Vocational Education 2011, Articles 5, 15

³² Allen, J. and Van der Velden., R. (eds.): Report on the Large-Scale Graduate Survey: Competencies and Early Labour Market Careers of Higher Education Graduates. 2009.

³³ Pukelis, K., Pileickiene, N.: Improvement of Generic Skills Development in Study Programmes of Higher Education: the Graduates' Viewpoint. 2010. In Quality of Higher Education.

organised by Deloitte and it was carried out as an internet questionnaire in January and February 2011. In total, 3,618 students and graduates from the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Lithuania and Latvia took part in the survey. At a country level, 712 Lithuanian students (94 per cent) and graduates (6 per cent) participated in the survey.

Almost one quarter of Lithuanian respondents had been on a domestic traineeship which was related to their studies. Another quarter of respondents stated that they had been on a traineeship which was not related to their studies. In comparison to the average traineeship participation rate of the survey, which was 63.4 per cent for study related and 37.3 per cent for non-study related traineeships, the Lithuanian involvement with traineeships was relatively low.

In searching for a traineeship, the most important criteria for choosing a placement was the acquirement of new skills and opportunities to gain professional experience came second. Employment opportunities played the third most important role in the selection process. Regarding working conditions, the aspects valued the most by Lithuanians were attractive training possibilities (62 per cent) and co-operation with experts (43 per cent) instead of high salary (15 per cent) or international working environment (11 per cent).³⁴

Study field related traineeships abroad had attracted almost 5 per cent of respondents whereas non-study related traineeships were slightly more popular with nearly 8 per cent. In comparison to other countries, Lithuanian participation in traineeships abroad and mobility programmes (e.g. Erasmus) was lower than with most others nationalities. Then again, Lithuanians were more active in voluntary work activities (37.9 per cent) and self-employment (30.5 per cent). Student government participation (17.1 per cent) was also strongly present among Lithuanian respondents. When asked about professional experience gained through job/self-employment/traineeship, over half of Lithuanian students in the survey had gained some kind of experience. Also questions regarding hopes for the wage level during a traineeship were presented. Lithuanian students in HE estimated that an average full-time traineeship (40 h/week) is paid €435 (LTL 1500) per month. If the students had a choice, they would like to be paid €490 (LTL 1692) per month for a traineeship.³⁵

Foreign placements are mainly provided by the Erasmus Student Mobility for Placements and Leonardo da Vinci –programme. Erasmus is a programme that enables students at universities and other HE establishments to go on a traineeship in an enterprise or an organisation for the duration of 3–12 months. In Lithuania, the number of outgoing Erasmus student placement participants has increased steadily from 261 outgoing trainees in 2007/2008 to 725 outgoing trainees in 2009/2010. The average duration of student placement mobility is 3.1 months which is shorter than the typical study mobility duration of 5 months. The statistics regarding Erasmus placements have been gathered since study year 2007/2008.³⁶ ³⁷ In 2009 there were 611 participating initial vocational training and 63 people on the labour market via Leonardo da Vinci programme (Table 2. in annex).³⁸

Despite the increasing success of Erasmus programme, it appears that Lithuanian HE students are not keen on having study-related experiences abroad – only 5 per cent of Eurostudent IV 2008–2011 respondents had studied abroad, but even less (2 per cent) had

³⁴ Franczak H., Kwiecien K. &Rostkowski T.: First steps into the labour market International survey of students and graduates. 2011. Deloitte Lithuania: Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited.

³⁵ Franczak H., Kwiecien K. &Rostkowski T.: First steps into the labour market International survey of students and graduates. 2011. Deloitte Lithuania: Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited.

³⁶ Education and Culture DG: Lithuania-LT. Erasmus Student Mobility.

³⁷ European Commission – Education & training – Erasmus statistics - Lithuania

³⁸ LLP 2007–2013 Leonardo da Vinci Subprogramme - Lithuania

been on a traineeship abroad. Moreover, 81 per cent of Lithuanian HE students had not been enrolled abroad nor were planning to do so.³⁹

The Youth on the move survey, which was carried out in January 2011 via telephone interviews in EU27 member states, provides a somewhat more mobile picture of Lithuanian students. The survey indicates that 14 per cent of Lithuanian young people aged 15–30 have lived abroad for education or training purposes. In this respect, Lithuanians belong to an average activity group among the surveyed countries regarding educational or training related visits abroad. Out of the group that have stayed abroad, studying abroad as part of HE has been experienced by 44 per cent of respondents, whereas 47 per cent have studied abroad as part of VET. In comparison, 27 per cent out of the respondents who have stayed abroad have been on traineeship outside Lithuania as part of HE studies and 27 per cent have been on a traineeship as part of VET studies. For 56 per cent of respondents, private savings covered the expenses of staying abroad, which was below the average. Almost one third of those Lithuanians who had not stayed abroad were of the opinion that the reason for not going abroad was due to lacking the necessary funding.⁴⁰

In terms of internationalisation of enterprises, it has been reported that practical challenges, such as language barriers, accommodation and dealing with new learning, are the biggest obstacles that prevent Lithuanian organisations from taking on international trainees.⁴¹ However, in the period between 2007 and 2010, the number of incoming Erasmus trainees has increased from 64 to 178.⁴²

3.2 Sectors where traineeships are prevalent

SYSDM Expert network questionnaire results from 2008 indicate that both private and public sectors are active in recruiting trainees, but traineeships are not particularly common in any sector in Lithuania.⁴³

According to a study on a possible framework to facilitate transnational mobility placements from 2011, sectors offering placements to trainees are mainly health and healthcare (e.g. nursing, medicine, as well as other human health related areas); scientific, technical and mechanics (e.g. mechanical engineering); education, schools (including academic and vocational); and R&D; architecture.⁴⁴ Main types of organisation offering traineeship placements are VET schools (e.g. secondary technical schools, secondary VET schools); small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs); public institutions at local and regional levels; and NGOs, research centres and associations.⁴⁵

There is no available information on traineeship practices of all of the industries, but for instance, in 2006–2007, 20 per cent of the chemical industry and 18 per cent of production of other non-metal mineral products enterprises hosted trainees from universities, colleges and vocational schools.⁴⁶

³⁹ Orr D., Gwosc C., Netz N.: Social and Economic Conditions of Student Life in Europe. Synopsis of Indicators. Eurostudent IV. 2011.

⁴⁰ Flash Eurobarometer: Youth on the move summary. 2011.

⁴¹ Korpelainen S., Nikolova N.: Order 117 – Study on a possible framework to facilitate transnational mobility for placements at enterprises. 2011.

⁴² Erasmus statistics

⁴³ Sysdem Expert network questionnaire summary: Annex 1. Internships: Factual background information on the legislation and practice of internships in the 27 EU Member States.

⁴⁴ Korpelainen S., Nikolova N.: Order 117 – Study on a possible framework to facilitate transnational mobility for placements at enterprises. 2011.

⁴⁵ Korpelainen S., Nikolova N.: Order 117 – Study on a possible framework to facilitate transnational mobility for placements at enterprises. 2011.

⁴⁶ Methodological Centre for Vocational Education and Training: Study of Fuel, Chemicals, Rubber, Plastic and Mineral Products Industry. Research report on skill needs. 2008.

In addition, there are some potential sectors that might take on trainees more actively in the future. Apprenticeships and employing foreigners have been suggested as a solution for developing skills in construction, hospitality, logistics, communication and financial sectors.⁴⁷

3.3 Profile/Patterns of traineeships

According to the Regulated Professions Database of the European Commission there are 67 regulated professions in Lithuania all of which there is not available information on traineeship practices. The main group among regulated professions appears to be physicians and other health professionals.⁴⁸

Lithuanian health professionals undergo compulsory traineeships. Physicians and odontologists must obtain a medical diploma and a traineeship certificate in order to be able to be employed.⁴⁹ For example, clinical geneticist (MD) who as a physician trained in genetics has a right to offer specialised genetic services participates in a one year traineeship after six years of studies in medicine. Residency in genetics follows the traineeship.⁵⁰ According to the Regulation of the Studies of the First and Second Level and Continuous Studies of the Lithuanian University of Health Sciences, continuous studies in medicine, odontology and veterinary profiles comprise a traineeship.⁵¹ A traineeship is included in the sixth year of studies at the Lithuanian University of Health Sciences Faculty of Medicine.⁵²

On the whole, based on the available information, it appears that traineeships in regulated health professions are prevalent.

3.4 Recruitment process of and equity of access to traineeships

According to the First steps into the labour market- survey report makers, low activity in obtaining traineeships in certain countries stems from lack of supply in small markets rather than lack of need. Correspondingly, 46 per cent of Lithuanians in the survey considered that the availability of traineeships is scarce and/or the offers are completely unsatisfactory. Unsuitability of offers and/or too high entry requirements were reported by 33 per cent. Only 6 per cent saw the availability of traineeships as sufficient.⁵³

The notion that traineeships are not available is supported by a study on transnational mobility for placements at enterprises: apprenticeships are a new category of learning, and thus there are not many schools or employers providing placements.⁵⁴ Similarly, there is lack of traineeships among university students, but there is at least some motivation to find traineeships despite their scarcity. For instance, Vilnius University

⁴⁷ Methodological Centre for Vocational Education and Training: Monitoring Demand and Supply of Skills. Analysis Report on Labour Market and Education and Training Indicators. 2008.

⁴⁸ European Commission: Regulated Professions Database. Regulated Professions by Country. Lithuania.

⁴⁹ Valys F., Gilytė I.: Job Opportunities in Lithuania of Highly Qualified Specialists from non-EU countries. 2009. European Foundation for the Integration of third country nationals.

⁵⁰ Kučinskas, V., Steponavičiūtė, D., Kasnauskienė, J.: Educating and training non-MD medical geneticists: development of the system in Lithuania. Acta Medica Lituanica. 2007. Vol. 14. No. 2. P. 111–122

⁵¹ Lithuanian University of Health Sciences: Regulation of the Studies of the First and Second Level and Continuous Studies at the Lithuanian University of Health Sciences General Provisions. Amended March 25, 2011.

⁵² Lithuanian University of Health Sciences: Lithuanian University of Health Sciences. Faculty of Medicine. 2011. International Relations and Study Centre: Kaunas.

⁵³ Franczak H., Kwiecien K. & Rostkowski T.: First steps into the labour market International survey of students and graduates. 2011. Deloitte Lithuania: Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited.

⁵⁴ Korpelainen S., Nikolova N.: Order 117 – Study on a possible framework to facilitate transnational mobility for placements at enterprises. 2011.

Career Centre informs that student jobs are not an obstacle to finding a traineeship, but the lack of appropriate placements is a real problem. Most students are willing to leave their non-study related job for three months if a good traineeship position becomes available.⁵⁵

On the other hand, perhaps as a consequence of low supply of placements, only half of Lithuanian First steps- survey HE student respondents looked for traineeships or employment. In general, lack of response to previous applications and strong competition in the labour market discouraged Lithuanian students from applying for jobs. Dissatisfaction with the role of the universities may affect participation as well. 63 per cent of Lithuanian respondents were of the opinion that university studies do not prepare students for their future jobs. Moreover, 81 per cent of the Lithuanian students believed that the educational system does not prepare them for job search. In conclusion, the Lithuanian group was the most dissatisfied with their studies in respect to work life preparedness.⁵⁶

3.5 Evolution of traineeships over time and impact of recent economic crisis on traineeships

The high youth unemployment rate in Lithuania has been debated about ever since the beginning of the economic crisis in Europe. The government responses to the youth unemployment have not directly involved traineeships, but there might be indirect effects that may enable the employment of young people and encourage the establishment of traineeship programmes.

One goal of the government actions has been to promote the employment of graduates who do not have extensive work experience.⁵⁷ In 2010, the parliament made amendments to Law on Support for Employment to encourage employment of young people under the age of 29. In the same year, the Law on State Social Insurance was amended in such a way that it exempts employers from a major part of social security payments for a period of a year if a young person is employed.⁵⁸

In the field of continuing vocational training, The Labour Market Training Centres under the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs have provided vocational training for those in the risk of becoming unemployed. Also student have had possibilities to re-qualify or update their competencies through the services.⁵⁹ Starting from 2010, vocational education institutions are going to be merged together with the labour market training centres in order to comply with the new Law on Vocational Education that entered into force in 2007.⁶⁰

In addition to state co-ordinated measures, also other actors have started to become active in the traineeship front. For instance, an employer organisation is creating its own traineeship portal. A concurrent theme has been the lack of practical knowledge and skills among graduates. For this reason, employer organisations have been active in initiating projects, events and discussions round the subject of practical training. One of the projects

⁵⁵ Public Policy and Management Institute: Competencies of Graduates of Master's Students and the Needs of the Lithuanian Economy. 2005. p. 348-349

⁵⁶ Franczak H., Kwieciński K. & Rostkowski T.: First steps into the labour market International survey of students and graduates. 2011. Deloitte Lithuania: Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited.

⁵⁷ Blaziene, I.: Lithuania: EIRO CAR on 'Helping young workers during the crisis: contributions by social partners and public authorities.' 2011. The European Industrial Relations Observatory On-Line.

⁵⁸ Blaziene, I.: Lithuania: EIRO CAR on 'Helping young workers during the crisis: contributions by social partners and public authorities.' 2011. The European Industrial Relations Observatory On-Line.

⁵⁹ Tūtlys, V., Jovaiša, T., Gurskienė, O., Spūdytė, I.: Qualifications Frameworks: Implementation and Impact - Background case study on Lithuania. 2010. Skills and Employability Department, ILO. p. 9

⁶⁰ Tūtlys, V., Jovaiša, T., Gurskienė, O., Spūdytė, I.: Qualifications Frameworks: Implementation and Impact - Background case study on Lithuania. 2010. Skills and Employability Department, ILO. p.10

by the Lithuanian Confederation of Industrialists (LPK) aims at creating a database for students and companies interested in traineeships.⁶¹

Apart from global economic recession, emigration of young and educated people has affected Lithuania in various cultural and economic ways in the recent years. In fact, an interesting traineeship programme has been created by the Vytautas Magnus University which organised in 2010 a summer traineeship programme (LESI – Lithuanian Emigrant Students Internship) for 50 Lithuanian emigrant students from Canada and USA. The trainees spent the summer in national institutions, hospitals, art groups and non-governmental institutions with the aim of improving their language skills and renewing contacts to Lithuania.⁶²

3.6 Financing of traineeships

Funding of the vocational training institutes is weakly connected to performance e.g. employment results.⁶³ As a consequence, it may be disputable whether the effectiveness of traineeships is sufficiently taken into account when planning the curriculum.

There appears not be sufficient state funding to support companies who accept VET trainees. According to employers, lack of state support for taking trainees is an obstacle to invest time and effort into the training. Another problem is also that VET schools lack public funding, which results in outdated practical training and increases the costs of employers.⁶⁴

On the other hand, financial support for employers is not non-existent. The Law on Corporate Income Tax stipulates that some staff training costs are possible to deduce from the calculated amount of corporate income tax. In addition, the employer is entitled to claim compensation from an employee for the costs of training over the last working year if the employee terminates the job contract without a valid reason.⁶⁵ The rule applies to in-service training, traineeships and employee's training, but different procedures for compensation may be established in collective agreements.⁶⁶

In 2009, sources for the unemployed training funding were redistributed, and the expenditure for employment benefits increased in comparison to 2008. For the most part, the training activities are funded by the European Social Fund.⁶⁷ The focus of ALMPs is not youth oriented.⁶⁸

The actual costs of ALMPs vary depending on the type of measure: Vocational training for unemployed costs €9 (LTL 32) per day for one unemployed person as part of the ESF funded Human Resources Development Programme (HRDP) submeasure Integration of job-seekers into the labour market. The costs of the unemployment training in question approximately correspond with the daily costs of training of one vocational student. ESF funded employee trainings in enterprises costs €52 (LTL 181) per day for one person.⁶⁹

⁶¹ Blaziene, I.: Lithuania: EIRO CAR on 'Helping young workers during the crisis: contributions by social partners and public authorities.' 2011. The European Industrial Relations Observatory On-Line.

⁶² Vytautas Magnus University: Academy of World Lithuanians – for Diaspora Studies and Practice. in 2010. For Kaunas, Lithuania, World.

⁶³ PricewaterhouseCoopers, ProBaltic Consulting: Efficiency Evaluation of Employment Promotion Measures Financed by the ESF Agreement No 14 P- 47.

⁶⁴ Tūtlys, V, Šidlauskienė, D, Baidokaitė R.: Preconditions for the Development of Apprenticeship in the VET system of Lithuania. 2011.

⁶⁵ Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania; Methodological Centre for Vocational Education and Training: Vocational Education and Training in Lithuania. 2009:21

⁶⁶ Labour Code, Article 95

⁶⁷ ReferNet Lithuania: Lithuania. VET in Europe – Country Report 2010.

⁶⁸ PricewaterhouseCoopers, ProBaltic Consulting: Efficiency Evaluation of Employment Promotion Measures Financed by the ESF Agreement No 14 P- 47.

⁶⁹ PricewaterhouseCoopers, ProBaltic Consulting: Efficiency Evaluation of Employment Promotion Measures Financed by the ESF Agreement No 14 P- 47.

Apart from funding of traineeships and ALMPs, the European Regional Development Fund and the Republic of Lithuania shall co-finance sectoral practical training centres which provide modern equipment for vocational practical training. Services are intended to be open for everybody. The budget of the project is €293 million and the plan is to open 42 practical training centres.⁷⁰

The transnational mobility programs, Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci, award grants for the transnational traineeships. The average monthly grant for an Erasmus trainee was €417 in 2009/2010. The total Erasmus budget for mobility actions⁷¹ was €5,679,000 in 2009/2010.⁷² The grants⁷³ assigned by the Leonardo da Vinci –programme totalled €1,830,843 in 2010.⁷⁴

3.7 Public perceptions about traineeships

In previous decades, especially in the first years of independence, employers and human resource managers had a negative attitude towards official qualifications and formal education. Both VET and HE popularity decreased in 1990s.⁷⁵ Despite the vocational education and training system nowadays being open towards employer initiatives, there is a lack of motivation to participate in the preparation of educational standards, training agreements and curriculum.⁷⁶ Representatives of vocational education institutions have expressed the sentiment that employers' overall participation is very fragmentary. On the other hand, Lithuanian industrial companies considered the curriculum outdated and impractical during interviews carried out during the Leonardo da Vinci research project.⁷⁷

Representatives of HEIs have also reported that businesses are reluctant to arrange traineeships for students as a result of previous negative experiences and lack of resources. Survey results indicate that both the representatives of universities and students consider traineeships as the most important form of employer participation in the development of Master's programmes. Employers rated thesis work placements as the most important form of co-operation.⁷⁸

Despite a previous lack of interest in traineeships among employers there are also signs of willingness and enthusiasm to develop traineeship practices. The Lithuanian Business Confederation ICC Lithuania is a major business advocate, uniting service, trade, and high-tech companies throughout the country. Algimantas Akstinas, the Director General of ICC Lithuania, is aware of the problem areas regarding academic traineeships. Akstinas is of the opinion that "more thorough and effective communication between schools and business organizations will improve the traineeship experience." The statement made by ICC Lithuania, in connection to a launch of a partially EU funded traineeship development project for financial and insurance sector students, reflects willingness to participate in the development of traineeships. The system which ICC Lithuania is devising advises those responsible for traineeships in academic institutions and businesses to organise trial traineeships and collect information about traineeships for students to be put on the internet by 2012.⁷⁹

⁷⁰ Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania: EU structural assistance to Lithuania. 2011.

⁷¹ *Including both transnational studies and traineeships*

⁷² European Commission – Education & training – Erasmus - Lithuania

⁷³ *Including grants for initial vocational training, people on the labour market and VET professionals*

⁷⁴ European Commission – Education & training – Leonardo da Vinci - Lithuania

⁷⁵ Tütlys, V., Jovaiša, T., Gurskienė, O., Spūdytė, I.: *Qualifications Frameworks: Implementation and Impact - Background case study on Lithuania*. 2010. Skills and Employability Department, ILO. pp. 6

⁷⁶ Ibid. 2010: 9

⁷⁷ Tütlys V., Kaminskiene L.: *Social partnership in accrediting Lithuanian VET qualifications*. European journal of vocational training 2008, 45, 3, 32-49.

⁷⁸ Public Policy and Management Institute: *Competencies of Graduates of Master's Students and the Needs of the Lithuanian Economy*. 2005. p. 345-346

⁷⁹ The Lithuanian Business Confederation ICC Lithuania: *Projects*.

4. Practices and Content of Traineeships

4.1 Traineeships as part of education and/or labour market entry and integration for young people

Traineeships are most prevalent in professional HE⁸⁰ and VET. In the case of some regulated professions, traineeships are compulsory at universities as well: For example, general physicians and odontologists must obtain a medical diploma and a traineeship certificate in order to be able to be employed.⁸¹ Teacher training may take place either at colleges⁸² or universities. One year traineeship is a compulsory part of the curriculum for pedagogy students.⁸³

The provisions in the National Education Strategy 2003-2012 include actions that aim to open schools towards the labour market. Ensuring that at least half of the allocated time for the acquisition of vocational qualifications in the field of technology should be dedicated to training in a workplace is one of the measurable targets of the strategy paper. Another work-life related objective is that continuous matching of qualifications with the demand on the labour market should be developed.⁸⁴ Since 2003, structures of vocational training have been renewed.

Vocational education and training programmes are developed by VET providers in co-operation with the representatives of employers. A provider of vocational education may be a VET institution or any other provider e.g. freelance teacher or enterprise with the right to develop and implement VET study programmes. The Minister of Education and Science approves of general standards and requirements regarding VET study programmes. Main requirements of the programmes include a compulsory practical training in a company or at a school based workshop. The duration of the training can be up to 15 weeks.⁸⁵ In total, the share of practical training is 60–80 per cent of the training programme. The recommendation is that half of the time allocated for practical training should be spent in working environment.⁸⁶

Non-university HE programmes are provided by colleges. Graduates from college study programmes are awarded with professional bachelor's degrees. The duration of the programmes varies between 3 to 4 years of which practical training should constitute at least one third. Practical training requirements comprise a traineeship placement in an actual working environment.⁸⁷ A major part of the practical training is conducted at the school. The students practice at work shops and laboratories, after which they move on to learning trade-related tasks in actual work environment.⁸⁸

Administrative and financial autonomy allows colleges and universities to establish co-operation with different social partners quite freely. Vocational schools as well are free to enter into co-operation agreements. The bylaws, statutes and internal management documents of each individual educational institution set out the conditions for partnerships.

⁸⁰ Non-university tertiary education is provided by colleges in Lithuania

⁸¹ Valys F., Gylytė I.: Job Opportunities in Lithuania of Highly Qualified Specialists from non-EU countries. 2009. European Foundation for the Integration of third country nationals.

⁸² Teacher training for pre-schools, primary schools and lower secondary schools takes place at colleges.

⁸³ Finnish Institute for Educational Research: TENDER N° EAC/10/2007. Education and Training 2010: Three studies to support School Policy Development Lot 2: Teacher Education Curricula in the EU. Final Report Annexes. 2009.

⁸⁴ Government of the Republic of Lithuania: Resolution. Re. Provisions of the National Education Strategy 2003-2012. 2003. Vilnius.

⁸⁵ ReferNet Lithuania: Lithuania. VET in Europe – Country Report 2010. pp. 37-38

⁸⁶ ReferNet Lithuania: Lithuania. VET in Europe – Country Report 2010. pp. 52

⁸⁷ ReferNet Lithuania: Lithuania. VET in Europe – Country Report 2010. pp. 47-48

⁸⁸ Gouvernement du Québec; Republic of Lithuania: Roles, Responsibilities and Partnerships in the Management of Educational Institutions Offering Vocational and Technical Training in Quebec and Lithuania. 2010:117

The types of partnerships between the educational institution and the labour market are not restricted to any specific type in the Law on Higher Education.⁸⁹

For example, Vilnius College of Technologies and Design has been able to make over 300 agreements with businesses. With the help of the agreements, students can be provided traineeship placements, as all of the studies in the college involve a practical training component. The college, the enterprise and the student enter into a trilateral agreement at the end of which the enterprise has the option to hire students. Traineeship agreements provide businesses with access to the student work force and an opportunity to comment on the competencies of the trainees. Business partners also review study programme contents and take part in the development of new programmes at the Vilnius College.⁹⁰

In the initial vocational education sector the partnership opportunities are similar. In cases in which a sector is in need of employees with vocational education backgrounds, it is possible to establish a training centre where the purpose is to train employees in the required field of expertise. For instance, the national association of road freight carriers, Linava, has set up its own training centre to train truck drivers, but the association works closely together with other vocational education and training institutions by providing material and practical training opportunities.⁹¹

One of the latest developments in the national traineeship related policies is the establishment of the Sectoral Centres of Practical Training, which is still underway and funded by the European Union. The centres are meant to form partnerships with businesses and serve the purposes of vocational training and higher education. The centres may attract students for the acquirement of practical skills from across the country. There already existing centres concentrate on mechatronics and agriculture. However, it has been reported that the centres have difficulties due to lack of financial support to cover costs (e.g. transport for the trainees).⁹²

Apart from positive experiences in partnering, it is still quite possible that strained relations prevent employers taking full advantage of traineeships. In contrast to the newly established partnership models all over the educational sector, there are long traditions of centralised and school oriented VET. Introduction of social partners has been a major change and the concept of a social partner is in the process of being formulated into concrete and systematic strategies.⁹³

4.2 Issues about employer practices as regards traineeships

In connection to the Leonardo da Vinci Transfer of Innovations Project Devapprent on the development of Lithuanian VET apprenticeship practices, several stakeholders were interviewed on the current state of apprenticeships.

According to a representative of the Ministry of Education and Science employers have misunderstood the role of apprenticeships by utilising apprentices as a source of cheap but unskilled labour, which leads to lack of appreciation of the intended training and learning functions. A representative of the Centre for Development of Qualifications and Vocational Training of Lithuania shared similar concerns over exploitative practices, and considered

⁸⁹ Gouvernement du Québec; Republic of Lithuania 2010: 115-117, 123

⁹⁰ Gouvernement du Québec; Republic of Lithuania 2010: 115-117, 123

⁹¹ Tūtlys, V., Jovaiša, T., Gurskienė, O., Spūdytė, I.: Qualifications Frameworks: Implementation and Impact - Background case study on Lithuania. 2010. Skills and Employability Department, ILO. pp.12

⁹² Tūtlys, V., Jovaiša, T., Gurskienė, O., Spūdytė, I. 2010: 9

⁹³ Tūtlys, V., Jovaiša, T., Gurskienė, O., Spūdytė, I. 2010: 10-11

employers to have aims to solve their momentarily deficits of workforce by the use of cheap labour.⁹⁴

5. Trainee's Rights and Terms and Conditions

Trainees are entitled to social benefits, such as unemployment benefits, sickness pay, social security, pension funds, health insurance, liability insurance and safety insurance against accidents. In the case of safety and health insurances, the sending organisation is responsible for arranging the insurances in Lithuania.⁹⁵

There is not much information available on traineeship remuneration practices as part HE or VET traineeships. However, ALMP wages are regulated. In 2007 amended version of the Law on Support for Employment necessitates that unemployed and those who have been given a notice of dismissal have the right to receive 70 per cent of the official minimum monthly wage during participation in vocational training for the unemployed (incl. in-service programmes) and non-formal education programmes. In addition, travelling and accommodation expenses are reimbursed.⁹⁶

6. Quality Assurance of Traineeships

Practical training supervisory mechanisms and quality monitoring systems which involve developers of labour market vocational programmes, employers and labour market professions and scientists are non-existent.⁹⁷ Unfortunately, trade unions do not have the resources to invest time into the development of education, skills and qualifications for the improvement of traineeship practices. Lack of trust between employers, VET institutions and trade unions results in imbalanced supply and demand situation.⁹⁸

On an institutional level, the Development of National Qualifications Framework (NQF), approved by a government decree in 2010, has the potential to improve the balance between practical and theoretical skills in education. There are two agencies which develop and accept standards for educational programmes. The Methodological Centre for Vocational Education develops vocational training standards, and the Centre for the Assessment of the Quality of Studies is responsible for the development of HE regulations.⁹⁹

In organisations and enterprises, in-company trainers are most often full-time employees. The guidelines for trainers are company-specific, but if the students are from VET schools, VET school guidelines are followed as well. The quality of in-company training is not regulated by the state. The quality of training depends on the co-operation between VET

⁹⁴ Tūtlys, V, Šidlauskienė, D, Baidokaitė R.: Preconditions for the Development of Apprenticeship in the VET system of Lithuania. 2011.

⁹⁵ Korpelainen S., Nikolova N.: Order 117 – Study on a possible framework to facilitate transnational mobility for placements at enterprises. 2011.

⁹⁶ The Law on Support for Employment.

⁹⁷ Junevičius R., Gruževskis B.: Benefits of VET. 2010. In National Research Report (NRR). Lithuania 2009. Lithuania: Qualifications and Vocational Education and Training Development Center – KPMPC. pp.9.

⁹⁸ Tūtlys, V, Šidlauskienė, D, Baidokaitė R.: Preconditions for the Development of Apprenticeship in the VET system of Lithuania. 2011.

⁹⁹ Tūtlys, V., Spūdytė I: Implementing a national qualifications framework in Lithuania. Journal of Education and Work. 2011, 24, 3-4, 429-448.

institutions and enterprises. Additionally, many large companies have established their own training centres that co-operate with the education system to a varying degree.¹⁰⁰

In vocational schools, quality of education depends largely on the resources of educational staff to pass on work life relevant information to the students. In order to improve VET teachers' understanding of the realities of the work environment and technology, there have been efforts to establish traineeship programmes for the teachers, but part of the employers' organisations are against the schemes due to expected additional expenses.¹⁰¹

There is limited amount of information available on general quality assurance practices and mechanisms of HE traineeships. For instance, in professional HE and university study programmes, pedagogical traineeships involve supervisors assigned by the school in which the traineeship is carried through, but it is notable that practices and regulations may vary depending on the study field.¹⁰²

There are quality control commitments which concern both Erasmus- and Leonardo da Vinci traineeships. The commitments define the roles and responsibilities of all participants of traineeship (the sending organisation/higher education institution, the intermediary organisation, the host organisation and the student).^{103 104}

7. Overall Assessment as regards Traineeships

7.1 Benefits and drawbacks of traineeships

Lack of participation and initiatives from social partners leads to government institutions playing a larger role in the recognition and development of qualifications.¹⁰⁵ At times, the relationship between vocational education and training institutions and employers is problematic, because relevant information does not reach all the relevant stakeholders. For example, the Confederation of Industrialists of Lithuania claims that neither has it been consulted about the VET framework nor are its members aware of the contents of vocational qualifications.¹⁰⁶

In the field of HE it is difficult to define which aspects of traineeships are clearly beneficial or harmful towards the stakeholders as the responsibilities and roles remain debated among the employers and educational establishments. Lack of attention on traineeships together with lack of co-operation between educational institutions and employers may be risk in a sense that the availability and quality of partnerships suffers. HEDESGO interviews conducted in 2009 give an overview of the main issues and benefits attached to traineeships on an administrative level. In two years' time, many issues are likely to remain the same, but since 2009 the Lithuanian government has tackled many of the problems areas, such as the financing structure of the HEIs.

¹⁰⁰ Bykova O. & Loogma K.: Country Report Lithuania. In Eurotrainer. Making lifelong learning possible. A study of the situation and qualification of trainers in Europe. Final Report January 2008.

¹⁰¹ Tütlys, V., Jovaiša, T., Gurskienė, O., Spūdytė, I.: Qualifications Frameworks: Implementation and Impact - Background case study on Lithuania. 2010. Skills and Employability Department, ILO.

¹⁰² Finnish Institute for Educational Research: TENDER N° EAC/10/2007. Education and Training 2010: Three studies to support School Policy Development Lot 2: Teacher Education Curricula in the EU. Final Report Annexes. 2009.

¹⁰³ Quality commitment for Erasmus student placements

¹⁰⁴ Leonardo da Vinci mobility quality commitment - training placements

¹⁰⁵ Tütlys V., Kaminskiene L.: Social partnership in accrediting Lithuanian VET qualifications. European journal of vocational training 2008, 45, 3, 32-49.pp. 47

¹⁰⁶ Tütlys, V., Jovaiša, T., Gurskienė, O., Spūdytė, I.: Qualifications Frameworks: Implementation and Impact - Background case study on Lithuania. 2010. Skills and Employability Department, ILO. pp.12.

In 2009, in total 150 HEDESGO (Higher Education as a Generator of Strategic Competences) project interviews were carried out among HEIs and employers in Lithuania, Poland, Hungary, Slovenia and Turkey. On a country level, 15 interviews took place in HEIs and 15 interviews in enterprises. In all of the countries, HEIs assigned themselves as the most important actors in the development of competencies. Only in Lithuania and Turkey both the HEIs and employers assigned the most important role of competency development to themselves.¹⁰⁷

In the interviews with the universities it was indicated that the lack of financial resources was the pressing matter rather than organising practical work experience or traineeships in the future.¹⁰⁸ The representatives of HEIs believed that active teaching methods are important in developing competences, but neither practical learning at the workplace nor traineeships were ascribed a similar importance. Practical oriented issues were one of the most important themes of the future for employers, but even so the responds were reported to be ambiguous.¹⁰⁹

Lithuanian responses of HE representatives go well together with the finding that almost 75 per cent of all the HE interviewees in all of the countries ignored the role of practical learning in the work place.¹¹⁰ On the other hand, practical training was ranked as the highest priority in Lithuania when it comes to co-operation with employers, but anyhow the Lithuanian employer side felt that the HE sector was passive towards the employers.¹¹¹ Then again, the HE side representatives remarked that the partnership culture is still developing and convincing employers to build partnerships is difficult.¹¹² Many Lithuanian universities considered the greatest potential of co-operation to be vested in getting feedback from companies in the implementation and planning of the programmes. National subsidies for employers who employ students were also brought up as a suggestion to improve the relations.¹¹³

The interviews with the employers revealed that the most important co-operation method was practical training in all of the HEDESGO countries. In Lithuania, the companies felt traineeships gave them the opportunity to get new ideas and to recruit the best talents.¹¹⁴ Based on the individual comments on the employer side, there appears to be anecdotal evidence on the lack formal contracts with the university and lack of feed-back gathering on the part of the educational institution.¹¹⁵ One employer also expressed specific concerns over the quality of support measures offered to the students who perform practice: educational institutions do not appear to care about the achievements during the practice and students are treated as free labour force by the employers.¹¹⁶

In the field of vocational education, practical training is implemented in stages; first in a school and secondly in real work environment. It has been seen as positive development that the practical training period takes 70 per cent of the vocational studies. The duration of

¹⁰⁷ Akkuyunlu, A: Teaching and Training Modes of Competence Development. 2009. In Pavlin S. (ed.): Report on the Qualitative Analysis of Higher Education Institutions and Employers in Five Countries: Development of Competencies in the World of Work and Education. pp. 22-26

¹⁰⁸ Pavlin S., Svetlik I.: Future Development of Higher Education. 2009. In S. Pavlin (ed.): Report on the Qualitative Analysis of Higher Education Institutions and Employers in Five Countries: Development of Competencies in the World of Work and Education. pp.62-64

¹⁰⁹ Akkuyunlu, A: Teaching and Training Modes of Competence Development. 2009:41

¹¹⁰ Akkuyunlu, A: Teaching and Training Modes of Competence Development. 2009:38-42

¹¹¹ Kovačič, H.: Collaboration between Employers and Higher Education Institutions. 2009. In S. Pavlin (ed.): Report on the Qualitative Analysis of Higher Education Institutions and Employers in Five Countries: Development of Competencies in the World of Work and Education. pp.47-52.

¹¹² Kovačič, H.: Collaboration between Employers and Higher Education Institutions. 2009: 53

¹¹³ Kovačič, H.: Collaboration between Employers and Higher Education Institutions. 2009: 49, 54

¹¹⁴ Kovačič, H.: Collaboration between Employers and Higher Education Institutions. 2009: 49

¹¹⁵ Kovačič, H.: Collaboration between Employers and Higher Education Institutions. 2009: 53-55

¹¹⁶ Pavlin, S., Svetlik, I.: Future Development of Higher Education. 2009:64

practical and theoretical training is relatively well-balanced in most programmes, but for some professions the time spent in practical training activities is insufficient.¹¹⁷

A review of research works on the benefits of vocational education shows that in the case of labour market vocational training it was deemed that employees had sufficient practical knowledge in most cases, but there were shortcomings in individual practical skills, capabilities and personal attributes.¹¹⁸

7.2 Effectiveness of traineeships

According to a research conducted in 2007, practical training for the unemployed, either in educational institutions or on the job, proved to have some significant advantages for unemployed people, such as development of an ability to take into account changes in the labour market and needs of the employer. The shortcomings were related to lack of assessment tools and supervisory mechanisms. The system is partly ineffective because the quality monitoring process does not involve developers of the programmes, employers, labour market professionals and education scientists as group.¹¹⁹

In the case of labour market vocational training, employees have sufficient practical knowledge in most cases, but there are shortcomings in individual practical skills, capabilities and personal attributes. Nevertheless, labour market training is considered an efficient measure in terms of economic effectiveness and employment.¹²⁰ An assessment report by the PricewaterhouseCoopers and ProBaltic Consulting criticizes Lithuanian employment promotion methods for their lack of focus on the youth. The ALMP measures within the ESF funded Human Resources Development Programme (HRDP) in the period 2007/2013 have not sufficiently been directed to the prevention of youth unemployment, which is problematic as youth unemployment increases emigration. During economic recovery it will be likely that unemployed skilled workers return to their earlier jobs, which results in difficulties in finding employment for the young job seekers.¹²¹

In the field of university education, more than half of study programme managers have reported that study programme quality improvements are dependent on teachers' gaining experience on a traineeship abroad. On the other hand, college study programme managers do not emphasize the importance of the teachers' international traineeships. In any case, assessing the popularity and significance of going on a traineeship abroad among the teaching faculty is difficult based on numerical information as most universities and colleges are not able to provide participant statistics on the topic.¹²²

7.3 Good practice examples and recommendations

Lithuania has developed its legislation towards more traineeship and practical training oriented direction in the recent years. In addition to legislative measures that have enabled the utilisation of traineeships and apprenticeships in education, development of national quality frameworks for the organisation of traineeships and apprenticeships might increase the quality and comparability of traineeship practices between different sectors and

¹¹⁷ Junevičius R., Gruževskis B.: Benefits of VET. 2010. In National Research Report (NRR). Lithuania 2009. Lithuania: Qualifications and Vocational Education and Training Development Center. 2010: 9

¹¹⁸ Ibid. 2010: 5-14

¹¹⁹ Stravinskienė I., Misiūnas, M.: Effectiveness and quality assurance of VET and VET institutions. 2010. In National Research Report (NRR). Lithuania 2009. 2010. Lithuania: Qualifications and Vocational Education and Training Development Center. pp.31

¹²⁰ R. Junevičius & B. Gruževskis: Benefits of VET. 2010: 5-14

¹²¹ PricewaterhouseCoopers, ProBaltic Consulting: Efficiency Evaluation of Employment Promotion Measures Financed by the ESF Agreement No 14 P- 47.

¹²² Pukelis K., Pileickiene N.: Study Programme Quality Peculiarities at Some Lithuanian universities and Colleges: Study Outcomes Paradigm. 2006. In Quality of Higher Education.

education institutions. There are not plenty of information sources on traineeship recruitment processes and their equity, which indicates that access to traineeships and reasons behind lack of access should be more thoroughly researched.

As traineeships and apprenticeships are a relatively new aspect of the Lithuanian education system, the state should consider encouraging employers to take trainees by supporting the employer's training efforts financially. Nevertheless, the quality and quantity of traineeships and apprenticeships cannot be improved before different stakeholders are willing to agree on the objectives of the procedures. At the moment, relations between different stakeholders appear to be strained to an extent that forming fruitful co-operation requires strenuous effort.

As a reward for the efforts, traineeships could prove out to be a measure which improves practical competencies of young people and eases their transfer from education into the job markets. Tackling youth unemployment should be a priority as educated young people prefer to move abroad if it is not possible to find employment in Lithuania.

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Annex

Table A 1 Leonardo da Vinci – programme. Lithuania - Mobility¹²³

Call	Target group	2007*	2008*	2009*	2010	2011*
Participants	Initial vocational training	489	551	450	777	745
(planned)	People on the labour market	16	40	61	108	108
Participants	Initial vocational training	568	623	611	n/a	n/a
Realised till 01.01.2011	People on the labour market	17	40	63	n/a	n/a

¹²³ European Commission – Education & training – Leonardo da Vinci

National Report on Traineeships Luxembourg

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1. Traineeships as part of Member State's Youth Policy Measures

Even though general unemployment is relatively low in Luxembourg (below five per cent), it appears to be mainly concentrated on younger and older workers: youth unemployment is almost four times higher than the general unemployment rate and accounts for 16.5 per cent of total unemployment in Luxembourg in September 2010. Important disparities can be found within this age group, the 15-24 age group being worse off than those aged 25-29. Nevertheless it should be emphasised that the proportion of young job seekers has reduced as a result of the economic crisis – mainly because of the rise in other populations' unemployment.

Table 1.1: Unemployment Rates in Luxembourg in 2007 and 2010 as compared to EU-27 average

	2007 (%)	2010 (%)
LU 15-64	4.2	4.5
EU-27 15-64	7.2	9.7
LU 15-24	15.6	15.6
EU-27 15-24	15.7	21.1

Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Surveys

On average it takes two years for a young person to access stable employment in Luxembourg, but this figure is highly dependent on educational attainment. Nevertheless, the median waiting period is only three months. (Lawson 2010). This indicates that the vast majority of graduates find a job very quickly. Although the average age of labour market entry is 23, (ETUC report), which is in line with Luxembourg's neighbouring countries, between 2000 and 2007 it has risen by three years.

As in other countries, the lack of qualifications is a key factor in youth joblessness in Luxembourg: 75 per cent of registered job seekers have no – or very poor – qualifications. However, a much bigger challenge for Luxembourg is its high number of early school leavers.

Fixed-term/temporary employment contracts remain relatively limited, i.e. 7 per cent of the active workforce was on a temporary contract in 2008, mostly in hospitality and catering. The economic crisis triggered an increase in fixed-term/temporary employment, especially for young people (the share of young people on a temporary contract rose by 6 percentage points between 2008 and 2010) based on Eurostat data. This relatively low figure is attributed to labour market regulations, which guarantee good social protection. That said, it has also led some observers, including *BUSINESSEUROPE*, the OECD and ETUC, to argue that Luxembourg has a very rigid labour market (Lawson J., 2010; Robberecht A.-M., 2010; *BusinessEurope*, 2011).

The national minimum wage in Luxembourg is €1,758 (gross per month), and applies to all workers, irrespective of age.¹ The only exception to this applies both to traineeships where there is no minimum wage for trainees and to those enrolled in ALMPs. With regard to the latter, the minimal remuneration depends on the specific programme, but never falls below 80 per cent of the national minimum wage).

¹ http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Minimum_wage_statistics

The labour market in Luxembourg is characterised by the importance of migrant and cross-border workers, who not being residents are not entitled to labour market measures or social benefits. They are also not accounted for in national unemployment statistics, which might limit the observable effect of the crisis on the labour market. In addition, they provide strong competition vis-à-vis the national workforce. For example, young people make up for 37 per cent of the population, and 47 per cent of them are foreign nationals (national report of young people in Luxembourg). Jobs requiring low or medium level qualifications are now extensively occupied by cross-border and migrant workers, who are sometimes over-qualified for these jobs (Lawson 2010). Cross-border labour mobility is also of particular importance for Luxembourg's burgeoning financial sector. The latter employs about 30 per cent of the workforce, who are mainly non-resident and reports skills mismatches, i.e. existing skills in Luxembourg do not match this growing sector's needs. This persistent labour market/skills mismatch has led to what the government refers to as 'Luxembourg's paradox', i.e. the co-existence of numerous job opportunities and a large number of unemployed job seekers.

Luxembourg has a tradition of a well-developed social dialogue. This has, in turn, ensured that since the beginning of the crisis many crisis-related measures have been implemented with the active cooperation of social partners. In particular, in order to address the persistently high levels of youth unemployment in Luxembourg, the government introduced two main reforms. The first has been an extensive education reform as stipulated in the 2009 *Loi sur la réforme de la formation professionnelle*. Crucially, this reform, focussed especially on vocational education, sought to expand work-based training and education in an attempt to create closer links between the worlds of education and work. To this end, 18 training schemes have been amended to include compulsory traineeships; second chance schools have been created; and work experience recognition has been improved.

The second reform aimed at the creation or modification of active labour market policies (ALMPs) targeted at young people with an increased focus on work placements and traineeships. Youth unemployment was on the agenda even before the beginning of the crisis, but new measures have been implemented as a result of this severe economic downturn. Three schemes have been created for and are specifically targeted at young people: *Contrats d'auxiliaires temporaires*, *CAE (Contrat d'appui à l'emploi)*, *CIE (Contrat d'insertion professionnelle)*, *CIE-EP (contrat d'insertion professionnelle)* which are specifically intended for younger jobseekers (under 30 years old). ADEM, is the public employment service in Luxembourg which administers these programmes and thus has an extensive range of training programmes covering 25 per cent of registered jobseekers, and 18 per cent of the 15-29 years old (Thill 2010).

Table 1.2: Summary of traineeship programmes

Traineeship programmes & initiatives.	Brief description	Web link (if available)
<i>Contrats d'Insertion Professionnelle – experience pratique.</i>	12 month contracts for young job seekers, paid 80 per cent of the national minimum wage, renewable once, and subject to social security exemptions if the trainee is later hired.	http://www.guichet.public.lu/en/entreprises/ressources-humaines/contrat-travail/elaboration-contrat/cie/index.html
<i>Contrats d'appui à l'emploi</i>	3 to 12 month contracts, for registered job seekers below the age of 30. The traineeship is paid at least 80 per cent of the national minimum wage depending on qualification, and is subsidised up to 85 per cent by the public employment services	http://www.adem.public.lu/demandeur/servicejeunes/cae/index.html

2. Legislative Framework for Traineeships

2.1 Legal framework for and governance of traineeships

The 2009 Reform of the education system, *Loi sur la reforme de la formation professionnelle*² aims at bridging the gap between education and the labour market, not least by promoting and improving the organisation of traineeships. To this end, the law makes compulsory both the existence of a tutor for the trainee, and the evaluation of the traineeship, i.e. trainees now have to produce an assessment report about their traineeship. This law has also introduced control and monitoring structures in order to ensure that employers respect the educational purpose of the traineeship. Specifically, trainees are encouraged to report wrongful traineeships to union representatives at the place of traineeships and to their training provider involved in organising the traineeship.

Traineeships are under the responsibility of a variety of ministries including the Ministry of Family and Integration, the Ministry of Work and Employment, and the Ministry of Education. Traineeship-related policies are implemented by ADEM (Luxembourg's public employment services), the National Service for Youth (*Service national de la Jeunesse*) or training providers, which arrange traineeships as part of an ALMP or educational programme. The National Employment Fund (*Fonds National pour l'Emploi*) provides the necessary funding for most employment-related ALMPs.

Interestingly, it also appears that social partners are very involved in traineeship-related arrangements. Their involvement is primarily through the tripartite coordination committee (Comité de Coordination Tripartite), thus affecting both the traineeship-related policy design, through the Chambers of Commerce, and their assessment. Social partners are also involved in the direct implementation of traineeship schemes. On top of these institutional arrangements, a number of sectoral initiatives have also been launched. For example, Luxembourg's financial sector has launched the Fit4job initiative³, aiming at increasing traineeships in the financial sector. It is expected that this type of initiatives may be extended to other sectors in 2012.

² http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Luxembourg/Luxembourg_recueil_lois_formation_professionnelle.pdf

³ <https://www.fit4job.lu/about>

The described above legislation mainly applies to traineeships linked to ALMPs; it does not apply to traineeships as part of specific training or in the open market.

In addition to the legislation described above, 'Law 5611' of December 2006 promoting job retention also greatly amended ALMPs aimed at young people.

Three main measures regarding traineeships for young job seekers in Luxembourg were implemented in late 2009. These were supposed to last until the end of 2010, but were extended until the end of 2011. These measures are as follows:

1. *Contrats d'insertion professionnelle* (Professional insertion contrats, formerly SIE, stages d'insertion professionnelle, professional insertion traineeships). The change was made in 2007. These are 12 month contracts for young job seekers (below 30 years old). They include remuneration of at least 80 per cent of the national minimal wage, but employers often provide a bonus covering the extra 20 per cent. This contract can be renewed once. After this period, the enterprise can benefit from total exemption from social security contributions for 18 months if they decide to hire the former trainee without a trial period.
2. *Contrat d'insertion professionnelle – experience pratique/CIE-EP* (Professional insertion contract – practical experience). Even though CIE has been changed from a traineeship to a formal work contract and re-focused on skilled young job seekers in 2007, there is still the *contrat d'insertion professionnelle – experience pratique* (professional insertion contract – practical experience) dedicated to skilled young workers. Such a contract lasts between 6 and 24 months, and a minimal trainee remuneration of between 120 and 150 per cent of the national minimum wage is paid by the employer (depending on the degree). For monitoring purposes, the Ministry of Work and Employment holds a copy of this contract. In case of an agreement the National Fund for Employment may reimburse up to 40 per cent of the wages paid to the trainee. A lump sum is paid to the enterprise – amounting to 30 per cent of everything the enterprise paid during the traineeship – if, upon completion of the traineeship, the trainee is recruited on an open-ended contract with no further probation period. Former trainees also have priority, should the company hire after the end of their CIE-EP. This scheme has been designed with the active cooperation of employers' representatives and Chambers of Commerce.
3. *Contract d'appui a l'emploi*, (CAE) is for registered young job seekers (below 30), either skilled or unskilled. It combines a formal training period – at least 16 hours a month - with a work placement. A contract is signed between ADEM, the public employment agency, and the trainee. These contracts last between 3 and 12 months, and can be renewed once. A trainee remuneration of at least 80, 100 or 120 per cent of the national minimal wage is compulsory, depending on one's level of qualification. Eighty-five per cent of wages, and all social security contributions are reimbursed by the National Fund for Employment. A lump sum is also paid to the enterprise if the former trainee is hired after the traineeship is completed. In this case, the enterprise also enjoys exemption from social security contributions for 18 months. There is no hiring priority in this case.

2.2 Definition of traineeships and trainees

Traineeships are defined by the *Loi sur la reforme de la formation professionnelle* as a training period in an enterprise. It is commonly understood that traineeships take place during initial vocational and education training, even though there is no legal obligation that the trainee should be a student. In spite of the existence of traineeships as part of ALMPs, or opportunities for job shadowing, the common understanding of traineeships in Luxembourg relates to students.

The trainee has to respect the company's rules and regulations, including health and safety provisions, and to successfully complete the tasks assigned to him/her. In exchange, the company undertakes the commitment to provide work-based training to the trainee.

If the trainee is a student, he retains this status during the traineeship. All regulations on youth work, including restrictions on night work or exclusion from performing certain tasks, apply, as do provisions included in collective bargaining agreements, if relevant. Crucially, collective provisions on wages do not apply, unless they specifically mention traineeships.

2.3 Legal provisions about aspects of traineeships

There is no legal definition of traineeship per se. For traineeships in the open market, the two parties involved most of the times sign a traineeship contract – but this is not compulsory. In this case, since May 2011, unless the total duration of the traineeship does not exceed three months, the trainee is regarded as a regular employee concerning social security arrangements.

For traineeships which form part of a training/educational programme all parties, i.e. the student, the educational establishment/training provider and the company have to sign a traineeship agreement. In this case, the trainee is still regarded as a student and the enterprise does not have to provide social security and/or insurance coverage. The law on professional training requires the training provider to ensure that the traineeship agreement is respected and defines a range of tasks pertinent to traineeships. The training agreement must include the production of a report by the end of the traineeship and a formal evaluation.

Trainees are entitled to 25 days of leave annually (pro-rata). For other provisions, including working hours, the laws regulating the activity of young workers apply.

Non-resident trainees have to prove that they are covered in their home country by insurance in case of an accident, otherwise the company has to provide such insurance which, in turn, might be an obstacle for transnational mobility.

There is no regulation regarding either the duration of the traineeship or remuneration for traineeships outside ALMPs. Although trainee compensation is allowed, this is not legally regarded as a wage.

Companies are not allowed to hire trainees to carry out tasks that would normally be undertaken by regular staff, or to cope with a temporary increase in business volume. Moreover, it is said that the tasks carried out by the trainee have to be relevant to the trainee's own training needs. To ensure that this aspect is respected, union representatives are allowed to:

1. review the cases where the enterprise decides to hire someone using the CIE-EP or CAE scheme;
2. check that the traineeship retains and fulfils its training purpose;
3. safeguard that the trainee is not a replacement for a regular employee.

Trainees are also encouraged to report questionable employer traineeship-related practices to unions or to the relevant educational establishment/training provider.

3. Availability of and Access to Traineeships

3.1 Statistics/Quantitative Information about traineeships

The only available data for Luxembourg concerns traineeships related to labour market policies (CIE-EP or CAE). In 2009, according to the Ministry of Work and Employment, 507 people were enrolled in CAE, and 943 in CIE-EP.

Transnational traineeships are organised by ANELO, the national agency in charge of European mobility programmes.⁴ Many programmes are in operation and receive European funding. The main ones are – both study and work placements – and Leonardo da Vinci. In 2008/09, 55 students completed traineeships abroad as part of the Erasmus programme, while 229 came to Luxembourg to complete a traineeship with this programme⁵.

Other mobility programmes organised by ANELO with European funding allowed 138 young students or professionals to complete a traineeship abroad.

All in all, European funding for work placements in Europe given to ANELO amounted to €662,000 in 2009, mainly for the LdV programme⁶.

There is no comprehensive numerical data on either traineeships relating to a formal education programme, or in the open market. It has, nevertheless, been noted that there has been a dramatic increase in apprenticeship offers as a result of the economic crisis (Thill, 2010). One could assume that a similar upward trend can be observed for traineeships, although no hard evidence of this could be found in the existing literature.

3.2 Sectors where traineeships are prevalent

Considering the lack of information on open market traineeships or on traineeship as part of study curricula, it is difficult to evaluate the number of trainees in each industry. Sectors with flexible work patterns – such as hospitality and catering, where the prevalence of temporary contracts is higher – are more likely to employ trainees. Since apprenticeships are prevalent in manufacturing, construction hospitality and crafts, one can also assume that traineeships are more likely to be prevalent in these sectors as well (although there is no hard evidence to back this assumption at this stage).

National agencies also report numerous traineeships in tourism, hotel, catering and other related services; health and healthcare (eg nursing, medicine, as well as other health and care related areas); education/teaching/schools (both academic and vocational).

The banking sector accounts for 30 per cent of the workforce in Luxembourg, and is the sector which attracts most trainees. The 2010 activity report from the Ministry of Work and Employment shows that the financial sector increasingly uses traineeships. As a matter of fact, since the beginning of the crisis, most job offers are traineeships. Most of the time these traineeships are unpaid, or their remuneration is below the national minimum wage. The banking sector has also launched the Fit4work initiative whose aim is to provide job seekers – including young ones – with traineeships in the financial sector. This programme includes better guidance and training for young residents who were made redundant in the financial sector.

Interestingly, the Luxembourg Bankers' Association (Association des Banques et Banquiers Luxembourg) has reported having trouble finding staff with the right skills. It has also launched a pilot project, called fit4work in October 2010.

Finally, Luxembourg Employers' Association (UEL), the unions and the Chambers of Commerce have publicly called their members to make use of the measures aiming at reducing youth unemployment, some of which include the promotion of traineeships.

The aforementioned Luxembourg paradox, i.e. the mismatch between job opportunities and existing skills might also result in certain sectors having unfilled traineeship positions.

⁴ <http://www.anelo.lu/>

⁵ <http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc/stat/0910/placements.pdf>

⁶ <http://www.anefore.lu/sites/default/files/documents/Rapport-annuel-2009.pdf>

3.3 Profile/Patterns of traineeships

According to the Youth on the Move report young people in Luxembourg are more likely to study or complete a traineeship abroad than their European counterparts (41 per cent of them did as, compared with an EU-27 average of 15.4 per cent). Crucially, compared to the rest of young Europeans, young Luxembourgiens most avidly wish to complete a transnational traineeship abroad (71 per cent).

Thirty-six per cent of respondents went abroad to complete a traineeship as part of their higher education study curricula, and 24 per cent as part of their VET. These work placements take place mainly outside the Erasmus programme which, in 2009-2010, only included 23 outgoing work placements and 256 incoming ones⁷.

As is the case elsewhere, certain professions include an element of mandatory professional training in the form of a compulsory traineeship before one is allowed to practice. This is the case for physicians (3-year traineeship to become a general practitioner); lawyers (2-year traineeship), teachers (2-year traineeship), architects (1-year traineeship). These traineeships are remunerated (above the national minimum wage) and are evaluated by the educational establishment/training provider.

3.4 Recruitment process of and equity of access to traineeships

Recruitment for education-related traineeships is left to the students' initiative, i.e. he/she has to secure such a traineeship. In case where the student can provide evidence that he/she did not manage to find a traineeship, the relevant educational establishment/training provider can help in that regard. Not surprisingly, employers are responsible for selecting trainees. The same goes for CIE-EP, where employers post traineeship vacancy notices on the ANELO's website. On the other hand, ADEM, Luxembourg's public employment service is responsible for the selection process for CAE. Crucially, at the traineeship recruitment phase, considerable attention is paid so as to ensure that trainees do not replace regular recruits.

3.5 Evolution of traineeships over time and impact of recent economic crisis on traineeships

In 2010, there was a sharp increase in the use of traineeships linked to labour market policies. Specifically, in September 2009, 162 CAE were recorded, as compared to 200 in September 2010 as shown in the rapport d'activite du FNE.

The 2010 report from FNE also notes that the financial sector is making an extensive use of traineeships. These traineeships are mostly unpaid, or paid below the national minimum wage. These traineeships are in the open market, or targeted at students, which makes it difficult to evaluate the extent of this trend.

Thill 2010 also notes that there has been a dramatic increase in apprenticeships since the beginning of the crisis, i.e. an annual increase of about 16 per cent. Since apprenticeships are restricted to few industries and positions, the increase in traineeships could be even sharper.

3.6 Financing of traineeships

Traineeships are not necessarily remunerated, especially traineeships in the open market. This, in turn, leads to trainees (and/or their families) indirectly paying for their own

⁷ <http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc/stat/0910/placements.pdf>

traineeship, eg by having to cover their living expenses on their own. Public funding is nevertheless available for ALMP-related traineeships. The *Fonds national pour l'emploi* (National funds for employment, FNE) reimburses between 30 and 40 per cent of the enterprises' traineeship-related expenses. In 2010, this amounted to €0.54 million for CIE-EP, and €3.9 million for CAE. Employer exemption from social security contributions (in the case where the trainee is offered an open-ended contract at the end of the placement) is also covered by the FNE and amounted to €1 million. The *Complement d'indemnité pour les stagiaires*, a financial aid for trainees amounted to €0.05 million (all data are from the rapport d'activité du FNE).

It is worth noting that, should an employer decide to hire someone else (i.e. not the trainee) by the end of a funded traineeship, they have to reimburse all FNE contributions. This provision aims to ensure the effectiveness of the funding in securing job retention. Jobseekers formerly enrolled in a CAE or CIE-EP also benefit by being given priority if the company where their traineeship was completed start recruiting.

3.7 Public perceptions about traineeships

Even though the importance of traineeships in addressing youth and/or unskilled joblessness is recognised, some actors – especially trade unions – have expressed concerns that traineeship arrangements and provisions aimed at labour market flexibility could create a dual labour market where outsiders – including young people – would remain trapped in precarious employment and/or traineeships. This is the reason why social partners have insisted on evaluating schemes to find out whether traineeships lead to stable employment, or if they are merely a way to provide cheap or free labour to employers.

Trade unions – OGBL and LCGB are the two main ones - refuse to support precarious work arrangements such as traineeships targeted at specific groups of young people because, in their view, there is not enough evidence of long-term job retention. Nevertheless, they support the implementation of traineeships as part of ALMPs, but stress that these measures should be seen as fixed-term interventions in order to cope with the current economic crisis.

Trade unions have been very critical about the establishment of flexible work contracts for young people – including the development of traineeships. Their main fear is that traineeships might be used by employers as a mean to use cheap or free labour in place of regular staff. This has been, to some extent, backed by evidence showing that employers were using trainees as workers on short-term contracts. This concern has led the government to adapt traineeship schemes in order to ensure that traineeships are actually preparing young people for sustained and stable employment. Indeed, this was the rationale behind the transformation of SIE (Traineeship Scheme) into CIE (Work Contracts with a Training Part). Moreover, this is also why union representatives are in charge of verifying that trainees do not carry out tasks usually performed by regular staff.

4. Practices and Content of Traineeships

It is difficult to precisely evaluate actual practices and content of traineeships given the lack of available information. Nevertheless, many arrangements have been instigated to safeguard the training content of work placements. These arrangements have been introduced in response to pressures from trade unions, which feared that traineeships could be used as a source for cheap or free labour.

The reform of professional training has given rise to numerous training schemes, mainly in VET. This reform aims at developing stronger links between education and the labour market, notably by promoting traineeships in secondary education and competence based degrees. These degrees are the *certificat de capacité professionnelle*, CCP (certificate of

professional competence), the *diplôme d'aptitude professionnelle*, DAP (professional qualification diploma) and the *diplôme de technicien*, DT (technician diploma). One of the main drivers for this reform has been the fact that employers could not find staff with the right skills to meet their needs. As such, it was designed and implemented with the help of Chambers of Commerce for Crafts.

5. Trainee's Rights and Terms and Conditions

Trainees are not legally regarded as employees, which implies they are not legally entitled to any kind of compensation for the work they carry out. Trainees have to obey the rules, including health and safety and working hours, of the company they are placed with.

Trainees' specific status still includes rights, specifically with respect to working hours and holiday entitlements. All social security provisions, like sick leave or sickness benefits are defined by their status, eg students' social security, or these provisions are defined at the enterprise level. Collective bargaining does not apply to trainees unless specific provisions are explicitly stated.

Traineeship as part of a formal education programme must include the completion of a report and a formal evaluation in order to ensure the existence of a training purpose.

6. Quality Assurance of Traineeships

In Luxembourg, there has been a concerted effort to ensure the quality of traineeships, with the direct involvement from social partners. The law reforming professional training makes the production of a report compulsory for all education-related traineeships. Trainee tutors are expected to ensure that the traineeship matches the educational content set out in the traineeship agreement. Trainees are encouraged to report any traineeship that does not include an educational dimension, either to the union representative at the workplace, or to their training provider. In the case of CIE-EP or CAE, union representatives are in charge of verifying that traineeships do not replace regular work contracts.

7. Overall Assessment as regards Traineeships

7.1 Benefits and drawbacks of traineeships

In Luxembourg it is thought that young people can benefit from completing traineeships in a variety of ways. Traineeships help young people have a smoother transition from education to employment, by allowing them to acquire soft skills and work experience. This is particularly true for unskilled young people, or early school leavers. On the other hand, according to trade unions in particular, the risk persists that traineeships substitute regular employment, and as such are associated with less or no social security protection, no or very little pay and no or few career prospects. To this end, the balance between skills acquisition, and exploitation must be found, all the more so because early professional experience has lasting effects on the rest of one's career.

Traineeships are also seen as an excellent way for companies: (i) to train workers at a relatively low (or no) cost' (ii) to screen potential new employees; and (iii) to benefit for accessing (ideally for a short-time) labour at a lower cost.

7.2 Effectiveness of traineeships

In Luxembourg, questions have been raised about whether traineeship schemes really do improve young people's employability. Indeed, such concerns have led in 2007 the government to turn SIE into CIE-EP, i.e. to turn a traineeship contract into regular work placements. The fear that these highly subsidised traineeships targeted at young graduates might be abused have also led trade unions to insist that, upon successful completion of a traineeship, companies be given very strong incentives to hire CIE-EP trainees on open-ended contracts with no probation period.

There is a lack of documentation/information about the effectiveness of traineeships that take place in formal education, or in the open market. However, the effectiveness of traineeships organised by ADEM is well documented. Specifically, CAE are deemed inefficient if they last less than nine months according to a study carried out by CEPS-INSTEAD. After 9 months in CAE it appears 55 per cent of former trainees are employed. This percentage would have been 35 per cent without CAE. That said, this figure is deemed disappointing considering how expensive these schemes are.

CIEs appear to be a lot more effective as they lead to a job in 86 per cent of cases (compared to 57 per cent without a CIE). The different target groups aimed at by different types of traineeships can explain this variation in effectiveness. For CIE-EP and CAE, the employment effect lasts for a few months. After six months, the employment effect of the traineeship fades away. This effect is often observed in similar policies, but may be mitigated here by the hiring priority of former trainees (i.e. these are given priority if the host organisation starts recruiting). Still, alternatively, these schemes can be assimilated to a highly subsidised probation period for young people.

The funding provisions of ADEM traineeships seeks to limit the potential for employer abuse in employing young people as a source of cheap/free labour, since any employer subsidy received as part of the traineeship has to be reimbursed if the traineeship does not lead to an open ended contract. This is a very strong incentive for employers to ensure job retention and quality training. This particular provision is not applicable to other types of traineeships.

7.3 Good practice examples and recommendations

Given the importance of the financial sector and the mismatch between existing skills and available jobs in Luxembourg, efforts should be concentrated on education policies to address the youth unemployment issues.

The success of traineeship arrangements is enhanced by the extensive consultation and involvement of actors at various levels, including government agencies, sectoral organisations and social partners. Such consultation and involvement has taken place at all stages, from policy design through implementation to ex-post evaluation. This multi-level involvement was and remains a key element in ensuring that flexible traineeship arrangements do not create a parallel/dual labour market in which young workers could be trapped in precarious employment for years.

The fact that employee/union representatives can control/monitor the content and number of traineeship contracts signed in a particular company is an example of a good practice, which also ensures that the training dimension of traineeships is respected. The exceptional level of industry involvement is another remarkable feature of traineeship arrangements in Luxembourg. The pilot projects Fit4job, a coordinated approach between the financial sector

employers and ADEM has proved extremely effective, so much so that it will be developed further in 2012. Specifically, 72 per cent of participants have found a new position in the case of the financial sector pilot project.

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National Report on Traineeships Latvia

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1. Traineeships as part of Member State's Youth Policy Measures

1.1 Overview of current situation of young people and traineeships as part of youth policy measures

The Council of Europe international review team suggests that enhancement of human capital is an important theme that influences Latvia's ability to compete in an internationalised economic context and to be able to provide its young citizens with a better quality of life.¹

Latvia has taken several measures to invest in the development of human capital. As a result of the high youth unemployment rate, the government has decided to provide opportunities for young people to gain practical experience, to link education standards with the demands of the labour market and to promote vocational education and training in life sciences and engineering-related subjects.²

Modernisation of vocational education and training (VET) has been set as one of the priorities in Education Development Guidelines for 2007–2013. The majority of students select general upper-secondary education (63.9 per cent in 2008/2009). In comparison, the proportion of vocational secondary education students was 36.1 per cent in 2008/2009, which has led to attempts to promote the attractiveness of vocational education.³ VET has remained relatively unpopular, which has become one of the most prominent educational policy issues to be dealt with.

Then again, higher education (HE) is going through changes as well. Statistical projections indicate that the population will decrease by about 8 per cent between 2005 and 2020 in Latvia. The youth population between the ages of 15 and 29 years is estimated to decrease by 34 per cent in the same time period.⁴ Low fertility rates and emigration, as well as failure to enroll significant numbers of foreign students, may result in problems with maintaining higher education establishments.⁵

The rate of early school leavers was nearly 15 per cent in 2009 which presents itself as another issue affecting the Latvian employment and educational policies.⁶ The early school leavers share of the population aged 18–24 years in 2010 was 13.3 per cent, but in rural areas it remained as high as 18.1 per cent. All in all, males are more likely to leave school.⁷

The youth unemployment rate, which had been on a downward trend up until 2007, has risen sharply during the economic crisis years of 2008 and 2009.⁸ The Latvian overall unemployment rate was 18.7 per cent in 2010. In comparison, the Latvian youth unemployment rate remained high at 34.5 per cent in 2010.⁹

¹ Reiter H. (eds.), Astala S., Jovanovic A., Brandtner G-M., Kuhar M., Zubok J., Williamson, H. Youth policy in Latvia. Conclusions of the Council of Europe International Review. 2008.

² European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion: European Employment Observatory Review. Youth employment measures 2010. 2011.

³ Kinta G., Ramaņa B.: A bridge to the future. European policy for vocational education and training 2002-10.

⁴ Reiter H. (eds.), Astala S., Jovanovic A., Brandtner G-M., Kuhar M., Zubok J., Williamson, H. Youth policy in Latvia. Conclusions of the Council of Europe International Review. 2008

⁵ Cunska Z.: Where is demography leading Latvian higher education? 2010: 8

⁶ European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion: European Employment Observatory Review. Youth employment measures 2010. 2011.

⁷ Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia: Early Leavers from Education and Training aged 18-24 in Urban and Rural Areas by Sex (%).

⁸ GHK and Research voor Beleid: Country Report on the Action Plan on Adult Learning: Latvia. 2011.

⁹ Eurostat: Unemployment statistics. 2011.

In the beginning of the economic downturn, the increase in unemployment was most significant for the younger, less qualified groups of young people aged 15–19 and 20–24. Also university graduates have had difficulties in finding employment.¹⁰ Research findings published by the University of Latvia in 2009 show that more than one third of higher education graduates and almost half of vocational education students were not able or did not wish to find employment in a field equivalent to their educational background. A desire to avoid low paid jobs contributed to the decision to change career field.¹¹

In 2011, the minimum wage for a month of labour is €282 (LVL 200)¹² if the employee works 40 hours per week. The minimum rate per hour is €1.676 (LVL 1.189).¹³ Employees under 18 are entitled to the minimum wage on the condition that they work 7 hours on a daily basis and 35 hours on a weekly basis.¹⁴ According to the initial Eurostudent IV survey results, 42 per cent of the budget of the Latvian students who are not living with parents is composed of self-earned income. The average amount of monthly income of students not living with parents adds up to €395. The median student income in the Eurostudent countries amounts to €850.¹⁵

The Eurostudent IV comparative research on higher education shows as well that Latvian students are among the happiest ones with their time management. For example, undergraduate students divide their time between studies, personal study time and paid jobs in such a manner that 8 hours is spent on paid jobs out of a 41 hour weekly time budget. Then again, graduate students work quite a bit more with 27 hours spent on paid jobs out of a 49 hour weekly time budget.¹⁶

Table 1.1: Summary of main traineeship programmes & initiatives, including, ALMPs, educational VET & university traineeships as well as mandatory professional training

Main traineeship programmes & initiatives	Brief description	Web link (if available)
Traineeships as a part of vocational education and training (VET)	There are no uniform legal regulations on VET traineeships in Latvia. The Vocational Education Law, the Ministry of Education and Science is in charge of developing in-service training organisation regulations.	Latvian Vocational Education Law, http://izm.izm.gov.lv/laws-regulations/2290.html Cabinet Regulation No. 276: Organisational Procedures for In-service Training. http://www.vvc.gov.lv/advantagecms/LV/tulkojumi/dokumenti.html?folder= per cent 2Fdocs per cent 2FLRTA per cent 2FLikumi per cent 2F

¹⁰ European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion: European Employment Observatory Review. Youth employment measures 2010. 2011.

¹¹ European Commission Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA): New Skills for New Jobs Policy initiatives in the field of education: Short overview of the current situation in Europe. 2010.

¹² Amounts converted from lats to euros are estimations based on the current available exchange rates throughout this document

¹³ Eurostat: Minimum wage statistics. 2011; www.reitingi.lv: Minimum wage to be increased to LVL 200 from next year. 2010.

¹⁴ Ministry of Welfare: Darba samaksa. 2011.

¹⁵ Eurostudent IV 2011

¹⁶ Eurostudent IV 2011

Main traineeship programmes & initiatives

Brief description

Web link (if available)

Traineeships as part of tertiary education

There are no uniform legal regulations on traineeships related to tertiary education in Latvia.

Cabinet regulations regarding the State Standard for First Level Professional Higher Education and the Second Level Higher Professional Education outline minimum duration of traineeships and the existence of traineeship contracts in professional higher education

The Cabinet Regulation regarding the State Standard for First Level Professional Higher Education stipulates that at least 30 per cent of the study period should be implemented practically and that compulsory traineeships should comprise a minimum of 16 national credit points (24 ECTS).

Cabinet Regulation No. 141: State Standard for First Level Professional Higher Education.

[http://www.vvc.gov.lv/advantagecms/LV/tulkojumi/dokumenti.html?folder=per cent 2Fdocs per cent 2FLRTA per cent 2FLikumi per cent 2F](http://www.vvc.gov.lv/advantagecms/LV/tulkojumi/dokumenti.html?folder=per%20cent2Fdocs%20per%20cent2FLRTA%20per%20cent2FLikumi%20per%20cent2F)

Cabinet Regulation No. 481. Regulations regarding the State Standard for the Second Level Higher Professional Education.

[http://www.vvc.gov.lv/advantagecms/LV/tulkojumi/dokumenti.html?folder= per cent 2Fdocs per cent 2FLRTA per cent 2FLikumi per cent 2F](http://www.vvc.gov.lv/advantagecms/LV/tulkojumi/dokumenti.html?folder=per%20cent2Fdocs%20per%20cent2FLRTA%20per%20cent2FLikumi%20per%20cent2F)

2. Legislative Framework for Traineeships

2.1 Legal framework for and governance of traineeships

There are no uniform legal regulations on traineeships in Latvia. Regulations on traineeships can be found in the legislation on vocational education and training (VET), professional higher education and active labour market policy measures.^{17 18}

In many countries in which there is no legally binding framework regarding traineeships in terms of their duration and content, issues related to an employment period of a trainee may be standardised by the use ad-hoc definitions and organisational practices with the possible support of complementary laws and regulations. Drafting of the training agreement becomes a great concern in terms of ensuring the quality of the traineeship. On a general note, it is possible to speculate whether possible lack of legislation brings complications to visa issuing procedure for trainees outside EU and affects the quality of a placement if the status of the trainee remains unclear.¹⁹

¹⁷ System experts' network questionnaire summary: Internships: Factual background information on the legislation and practice of internships in the 27 EU Member States. 2008.

¹⁸ Korpelainen S., Nikolova N.: Order 117 – Study on a possible framework to facilitate transnational mobility for placements at enterprises. 2011.

¹⁹ Korpelainen S., Nikolova N.: Order 117 – Study on a possible framework to facilitate transnational mobility for placements at enterprises. 2011.

All in all, it appears that Latvian legislation specifically defines the responsible parties for the organisation of traineeships. For example, the Cabinet Regulation regarding the State Standard for First Level Professional Higher Education even outlines the minimum duration of a traineeship in terms of prescribing a minimum amount of national study credits for an obligatory traineeship. All of the substantial content of the traineeship agreement is not regulated by law or other regulations—it is up to the parties in the agreement to decide over e.g. remuneration practices. Therefore, it may very well be that organisational practices, such as the existence of quality surveillance or quality frameworks, have a large role in shaping the actual content of traineeships. It is possible as well that the procedures required by law have not become rooted in the everyday reality of traineeship organising practices, which is why that there are contrasting views on the comprehensiveness of the legal framework.

At least the Vocational Education Law, the Law on Craftsmanship and the Law on the Regulated professions and certain cabinet regulations set frameworks for the governance of traineeships in the following manner:

According to the Vocational Education Law, the Ministry of Education and Science is in charge of developing draft in-service training organisation regulations, and other ministries are responsible for arranging vocational in-service training for adults, as well as the retraining and training of the unemployed. The local governments participate in resolving issues, which are connected to the provision of the traineeship placements for students. The trade unions, employers and other public organisations have the right to participate in the planning of standards that ensure necessary work conditions for students at traineeship placements. The duration and the content of vocational in-service training²⁰ are determined by the education programme. Apart from the Law on Vocational Education, the Law on Trade Activities and other regulatory enactments determine procedures by which students acquire vocational education.²¹ Recent legislative reforms include amendments to the Vocational Education Law in 2010. The amendments ensure the validation and official recognition of competencies and skills acquired through non-formal education.²²

A law on Craftsmanship regulates the crafts in which professional activities are considered as craftsmanship and vocational crafts education which does not mainly take place in schools. The content of craft education is laid out by professional associations and the Latvian Chamber of Crafts. The Council of Crafts approves programmes and supervises craft training.²³ The law on the Regulated Professions and the Recognition of Professional Qualifications outlines traineeship conditions for certain regulated professions.²⁴

Cabinet regulation for Organisational Procedures for In-service Training provides procedural instructions for the organisation of in-service training for students in vocational education in a company, organisation, vocational education institution or with a master craftsman.²⁵ Cabinet regulations regarding the State Standard for First Level Professional Higher Education and the Second Level Higher Professional Education outline minimum duration of traineeships and the existence of traineeship contracts in professional higher education.

²⁰ In this case, vocational in-service training is parallel to a traineeship.

²¹ Latvian Vocational Education Law. 1999.

²² European Commission Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA): New Skills for New Jobs Policy initiatives in the field of education: Short overview of the current situation in Europe. 2010.

²³ Eurybase: Structures of Education and Training Systems In Europe 2009/2010

²⁴ Latvian Law on the Regulated Professions and the Recognition of Professional Qualifications. 14 January 2010.

²⁵ Cabinet Regulation No. 276: Organisational Procedures for In-service Training. Adopted 15 August 2000. Modified 18 May 2004 (No. 490).

2.2 Definition of traineeships and trainees

The legislation of Latvia does not contain generally recognised or specified definitions of a trainee or an apprentice.^{26 27} The definitions are varying. For example, the Vocational Education Law defines the trainee as a 'student, who in accordance with the acquisition of the practical part of the relevant programme of vocational education is placed for work experience at an institution, undertaking (company) or organisation'.²⁸

In the Latvian context it is possible to draw comparisons between traineeships, voluntary work and normal employment contracts. Latvia has had a long tradition of hobby and interest education that has provided students with voluntary work opportunities and various out of school activities.

The difference between volunteer work and traineeship is determined by the place of employment and work contract. Associations and foundations, public institutions, municipalities, political parties and religious organisations are entitled to employ young people aged between 13 and 25 years in volunteer work activities. People over the age limit have a right to do unpaid voluntary work for the benefit of associations and foundations.²⁹ Enterprises cannot employ volunteers, but it is possible for a company to set up charitable foundations for volunteering and corporate social responsibility purposes.^{30 31} However, volunteer activist association brivpratigais.lv has raised concerns over companies recruiting volunteers for purely commercial purposes, which blurs the line between volunteer work and traineeships.³²

Voluntary work has become part of the government's support measures. Atbalsts jauniešu brīvprātīgajam darbam (Encouraging young people to volunteer work)- programme engages unemployed people aged 18–24 years in voluntary work that makes a contribution towards gaining work life relevant skills. The participants are granted a monthly scholarship of €56 (LVL 40).³³ The State Employment Agency (SEA) organises the programme and it has been running since 2011.³⁴

However, it is important to note that the utilisation of voluntary force is regulated and restricted by law in order to avoid misuses for commercial purposes. Nevertheless, the major role of voluntary work is exemplified, for example, by the organisation of NATO Summit in 2006 that involved 600 young volunteer workers.³⁵ A GHK Country report on Latvian volunteering also indicates that most volunteers at sports and cultural events are students and most volunteers are 15–25 years of age. Voluntary activities are strongly tied to non-profit organisations due to legislation.³⁶

2.3 Legal provisions about aspects of traineeships

According to the Vocational Education Law, for students in vocational education, the mandatory social insurance payments during traineeship are covered from the funds of the

²⁶ Korpelainen S., Nikolova N.: Order 117 – Study on a possible framework to facilitate transnational mobility for placements at enterprises. 2011; System experts' network questionnaire summary: Internships: Factual background information on the legislation and practice of internships in the 27 EU Member States. 2008.

²⁷ Korpelainen S., Nikolova N.: Order 117 – Study on a possible framework to facilitate transnational mobility for placements at enterprises. 2011.

²⁸ Latvian Vocational Education Law. 1999.

²⁹ Luse, L. Algots Darbs, Prakse un Brīvprātīgā Darbs: Līdzības un Atšķirības. 11 March 2011.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Mauliņa D., Grīntāle I.: Brīvprātīgā darba infrastruktūra Eiropā Latvija. 2010.

http://www.brivpratigais.lv/attachments/article/145/Brivpratiga_darba_infrastruktura_Eiropa_LATVIJA.pdf

³² Ibid.

³³ Ministry of Welfare: Kompleksie atbalsta pasākumi. 2011.

³⁴ The State Employment Agency (NVA): Nodarbinātības pakalpojumi.

³⁵ Mauliņa D., Grīntāle I.: Brīvprātīgā darba infrastruktūra Eiropā Latvija. 2010.

³⁶ GHK: Study on Volunteering in the European Union Country Report Latvia. 2011

education institution where the student acquires the relevant vocational education programme.³⁷ A Cedefop Country Report says that apprentices are contractually linked to the employer and may receive payment for the work. The employer is responsible for following the educational programme set by the Chamber of Crafts and the Ministry of Education and Science.³⁸

Cabinet regulation for Organisational Procedures for In-service Training requires that an organisation arranging in-service training for vocational students has to retain a traineeship programme, traineeship logbook or report and characterisation of a trainee. Before the start of a traineeship, the vocational school, the trainee and the organisation offering the traineeship enter into a trilateral agreement which specifies the duration, duties and termination conditions of the agreement if the traineeship takes place out of the educational institution. The participants can also enter into additional bilateral agreements 'regarding the procedures for settling mutual accounts'.³⁹ According to the regulation, the education institution, the traineeship placement provider and the trainee are all responsible for the organisation of the training.

The vocational education institution ensures the student a traineeship placement; acquaints the trainee with their rights and responsibilities; provides the trainee with in-service documents; appoints a traineeship supervisor for the trainee; provides information on available placements; provides support for the trainee and evaluates the training. The trainee has a responsibility to fulfil the tasks specified in the training agreement and comply with the instructions of his supervisors. During the traineeship, the trainee completes an in-service logbook and complies with the rules of the traineeship provider. The organisation providing the traineeship is responsible for following the in-service programme and work safety regulations. The placement organisation assigns a supervisor for the trainee and communicates with VET institution about the progress of the training. The traineeship placement provider is also part of the evaluation, providing a characterisation of the trainee and approving an in-service training report.⁴⁰

The Cabinet Regulation regarding the State Standard for First Level Professional Higher Education⁴¹ stipulates that at least 30 per cent of the study period should be implemented practically and that compulsory traineeships should comprise a minimum of 16 national credit points (24 ECTS).

The regulation stipulates that the higher education institution or college enters into an agreement with the employer to ensure the training location. The agreement has to include specifications on training objectives and tasks; planning of the procedures of the training and procedures for evaluating the training. The content of the training objectives has to include familiarisation of the student 'with the management structure and principles of operation' of the training organisation. Other obligations and responsibilities of the parties are also to be included in the agreement. Apart from the educational institution and its representatives, the organisation offering the traineeship placement participates in deciding objectives for and evaluation of the training according the regulation.⁴²

The State Standard for the Second Level Higher Professional Education determines that education leading to a professional bachelor's degree must at least comprise a traineeship with a scope of 26 national credits (39 ECTS), whereas a programme leading to master's degree must at least comprise a traineeship worth 6 national credits (9 ECTS). Otherwise

³⁷ Latvian Vocational Education Law, 1999.

³⁸ Cedefop Refernet Latvija: Latvia. VET in Europe – Country Report. 2010.

³⁹ Cabinet Regulation No. 276: Organisational Procedures for In-service Training. Adopted 15 August 2000. Modified 18 May 2004 (No. 490).

⁴⁰ Cabinet Regulation No. 276: Organisational Procedures for In-service Training. Adopted 15 August 2000. Modified 18 May 2004 (No. 490).

⁴¹ First level higher education refers to professional higher education or college education (2-3 years) leading to professional qualification which is at ISCED level 4.

⁴² Cabinet Regulation No. 141. Cabinet Regulations regarding the State Standard for First Level Professional Higher Education. Adopted 20 March 2001. Modified 29 May 2007 (No. 347).

the conditions for the training agreement are similar to the ones in the State Standard for First Level Professional Higher Education.⁴³

3. Availability of and Access to Traineeships

3.1 Statistics/Quantitative Information about traineeships

There is no available data on the number of traineeship placements offered by the enterprises. However, statistics on educational institutions shed some light into the potential number of students participating in traineeships. In the year 2010/2011, there are in total 153,647 students enrolled in vocational⁴⁴ and post-secondary vocational education and professional higher education programmes in which traineeships are compulsory.⁴⁵

Also the state employment agency gathers information on the number of participants in active labour market policy measures. In 2009, 31 618 thousand unemployed participated in training measures, which includes general training, vocational training and training at the employer. Generally, the active labour market policies are targeted more towards unemployed adults rather than the youth.⁴⁶ In contrast, there are quite a few surveys conducted on matters related to student's outlooks on employment, internationalisation and studies.

Nordea student survey results in 2009 indicated that most Latvian students in HE went on a traineeship which was included in their studies, but finding a suitable placement was difficult. For 92 per cent of respondents, traineeships were a compulsory part of their study programme –more than half were looking for a placement, and almost 90 per cent preferred to obtain practical work experience even without it being a compulsory part of studies.⁴⁷

Deloitte's First Steps into the Labour Market survey conducted in February 2011 received 235 Latvian responses out of the total of 3,618 surveyed students from Central and East European (CEE) countries of Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Lithuania and Latvia.⁴⁸ In view of the small survey sample, Latvian students appear to be the most internationally mobile out of the surveyed group when it comes to participation in the Erasmus programme and study related work experience abroad. The First steps survey showed that 57 per cent of Latvian respondents felt that university studies prepared them for future jobs, but only 28 per cent were of the opinion that university studies prepared them for the process of looking for a job. Almost one third of Latvians had participated in the Erasmus mobility programme, and almost 12 per cent had been on a study field related traineeship abroad. Over 58 per cent had been on a domestic traineeship which was part of their studies and 23 per cent had undergone a traineeship unrelated to their field of study in Latvia.⁴⁹ According to the Eurostudent III study that took place in 2005–2008, 6.2 per cent of Latvian students in HE had been to abroad as part of a study related experience. Almost 65 per cent of those who had been abroad had been on a traineeship.⁵⁰

In the Flash Eurobarometer Youth on the Move survey conducted in 2011, 15 per cent of Latvian youth responded that they had stayed abroad for educational or training purposes.

⁴³ Cabinet Regulation No. 481. Regulations regarding the State Standard for the Second Level Higher Professional Education. Adopted 20 November 2001. Modified 29 May 2007 (No. 348).

⁴⁴ NB: Practical training can take place at school in vocational education. In addition, only a part of enrolled students look for a traineeship at any given time.

⁴⁵ Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia 2011

⁴⁶ Cedefop Refernet Latvija: Latvia. VET in Europe – Country Report. 2010.

⁴⁷ Nordea Latvia: Nordea Bank Announces Competition for Student Summer Practice Jobs. 7 May 2009.

⁴⁸ Deloitte Czech Republic: Survey: Just more than half of students are satisfied with the way universities prepare them for future jobs. 18 May 2011.

⁴⁹ Deloitte Lithuania: First steps into the labour market International survey of students and graduates. 2011.

⁵⁰ Eurostudent III: International student mobility. Latvia. 2008.

For 26 per cent of those who had stayed abroad, the purpose of the visit was a traineeship in a company or similar organisation as part of higher education. For 22 per cent of those who had stayed abroad, the purpose of the visit was a traineeship in a company or similar organisation as part of vocational education. In all of the countries, respondents across all socio-demographic groups were more likely to have studied abroad rather than gone on a traineeship in a foreign country. For example, 44 per cent of the Latvians who had studied abroad had been studying as part of HE curriculum, but only 27 per cent had studied abroad as part of vocational education and training. The stays abroad were financed from private savings in 54 per cent of the cases.⁵¹ Also international exchange programmes have gathered participant statistics on Latvian students:

Erasmus placements⁵² enable students at higher education institutions to spend a traineeship period between 3 and 12 months in an enterprise or an organisation in another participating country.⁵³ Outgoing and incoming Erasmus student mobility statistics for placements in 2009/2010 show that 467 Latvian students took part in the Erasmus placements programme. In comparison, 108 Erasmus trainees arrived in Latvia.⁵⁴

The Leonardo da Vinci exchange programme benefits a wide range of people from trainees in VET to those who have already graduated and are working in the vocational sector.⁵⁵ Statistics show that 136 students from another country arrived in Latvia in 2009, and 487 Latvians went on a traineeship abroad in 2009 as part of the Leonardo da Vinci programme.⁵⁶

3.2 Sectors where traineeships are prevalent

In 2008, SYSDem Network experts in Latvia provided the information that neither the public nor the private sector is actively recruiting trainees.⁵⁷ More recent information from a study, which was conducted in 2011 on a possible framework to facilitate transnational mobility for placements at enterprises, indicates that the main types of sectors which offer traineeship placements are tourism, hotel, catering and other related services; social work, social care; crafts (e.g. gardening, carpentry, construction); and food, gastronomy, culinary.⁵⁸

3.3 Profile/Patterns of traineeships

Traineeships are most common among students in the fields of education in which they are compulsory. Naturally, traineeships have the most prominent role in upper vocational education and higher professional education programmes.

Study on a possible framework to facilitate transnational mobility for placements at enterprises concluded that the main types of organisations offering placements to trainees are vocational schools, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), HEIs and NGOs, research centres and associations.⁵⁹

⁵¹ Flash Eurobarometer: Youth on the move summary. 2011.

⁵² Erasmus placements refers to traineeships.

⁵³ European Commission, Education&Culture: ERASMUS Student Mobility for Placements 2011

⁵⁴ European Commission, Education&Culture: Outgoing and Incoming Erasmus student mobility for placements in 2009/2011.

⁵⁵ European Commission, Education&Culture: Leonardo da Vinci programme.

⁵⁶ Korpelainen S., Nikolova N.: Order 117 – Study on a possible framework to facilitate transnational mobility for placements at enterprises. 2011.

⁵⁷ Sysdem experts' network questionnaire summary: Internships: Factual background information on the legislation and practice of internships in the 27 EU Member States. 2008.

⁵⁸ Korpelainen S., Nikolova N.: Order 117 – Study on a possible framework to facilitate transnational mobility for placements at enterprises. 2011.

⁵⁹ Korpelainen S., Nikolova N.: Order 117 – Study on a possible framework to facilitate transnational mobility for placements at enterprises. 2011

3.4 Recruitment process of and equity of access to traineeships

Based on the information provided by the Deloitte First Steps into the Labour Market survey, it can be assumed that HE students actively seek traineeships. Over 58 per cent of the respondents had been on a domestic traineeship which was part of their studies and 23 per cent had undergone a traineeship unrelated to their field of study in Latvia.⁶⁰ For vocational students, the requirements for entering practical oriented crafts training at an enterprise or in similar organisation are relatively low, as neither prior work experience nor qualifications, apart from basic education, are needed.⁶¹ From the point of view of vulnerable or socially disadvantaged groups, the government has increased the availability of traineeships by introducing traineeships by the means of utilising active labour market policies (ALMPs).⁶²

3.5 Evolution of traineeships over time and impact of recent economic crisis on traineeships

The economic crisis since 2008 has meant that the education sector has become more deeply involved in labour market skills identification, and it is now widely recognised that education and training should do more to meet labour market challenges.⁶³ For example, improving the attractiveness and quality of vocational education by having VET teachers undergo work-based training in enterprises as part of ESF funded sub-project Raising Competence of Teachers Involved in Vocational Education (Profesionālajā izglītībā iesaistīto pedagogu kompetences paaugstināšana). The project was initiated in 2010.⁶⁴

Evidently, ALMPs have shifted their focus with the changes in economy. Given the sharp increase in unemployment in 2008–2009, Latvia actively combined measures to protect the vulnerable parts of the population with active labour market policies. Emergency Social Safety Net Strategy introduced an increase of unemployment benefits to 9 months and concessions to eligibility criteria. The 24,000 registered unemployed not receiving unemployment benefits received full-time work earning 55 per cent of the official minimum wage, while also being granted free access to health care. The re-entry into the labour market was eased with European Social funds that boosted training for job seekers and assisted business start-ups.⁶⁵

In line with the continuing economic crisis, the Ministry of Welfare launched a programme in 2010 for full-time employees who are at risk of losing their jobs. The programme aims to support the competitiveness and professional development of the employees by having them attend courses in project management, foreign languages, entrepreneurship, digital literacy, social skills and mathematics. The project is funded by the European Social Fund and participation in the courses is financed through a voucher system.⁶⁶

Traineeships are utilised in ALMPs as well. The State Employment Agency currently runs a European Social Fund financed activity Complex support activities for integration of inhabitants into the labour market (Kompleksi Atbalsta pasākumi iedzīvotāju integrēšanai darba tirgū) 2009–2013. The Youth Work Practice (Jauniešu darba prakse) sub-project is targeted towards unemployed young people aged from 18 to 24 who have obtained

⁶⁰ Deloitte Lithuania: First steps into the labour market International survey of students and graduates. 2011.

⁶¹ Eyrudice: Structures of Education and Training Systems In Europe 2009/2010

⁶² State Employment Agency (SEA): PROJEKTS „KOMPLEKSI ATBALSTA PASĀKUMI” (Nr.1DP/1.4.1.1.1./09/IPIA/NVA/001). 26.09.2011.

⁶³ European Commission Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA): New Skills for New Jobs Policy initiatives in the field of education: Short overview of the current situation in Europe. 2010.

⁶⁴ Cedefop Refernet Latvija: Latvia. VET in Europe – Country Report. 2010.

⁶⁵ Purfield, C. and Rosenberg C.B.: Adjustment under a Currency Peg: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania during the Global Financial Crisis 2008-09. IMF Working Paper. 2010.

⁶⁶ European Commission Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA): New Skills for New Jobs Policy initiatives in the field of education: Short overview of the current situation in Europe. 2010.

primary, secondary or higher education certificates and are registered as unemployed. The trainees receive a grant of €170 (LVL 120). The length of the training varies from 6 to 12 months.⁶⁷ The State Employment Agency (SEA) justifies the demand for the activity and alterations to its target groups (adding of the youth category) with the growing number of unemployed.⁶⁸

In 2010, the State Employment Agency (SEA) launched a two-year project (Training and working practice for assistants of SEA inspectors) to offer 144 unemployed young people who obtain a degree in social sciences 11-month traineeships at the agency. The job description for the trainees includes providing job matching services for the unemployed customers of the agency. The participants receive a monthly remuneration of €213 (LVL 150).⁶⁹ In addition, in 2010, the state has offered training grant vouchers of maximum €1,400 (LVL 1,000) and a monthly allowance of €100 (70LVL) for unemployed people with unfinished tertiary education. According to plans, 350 people should take part in the training.⁷⁰

3.6 Financing of traineeships

There is little available information on the financing of vocational and academic traineeships that are part of studies.

It appears that HEIs have difficulties in building networks with employers and professional associations. Legislation in the recent years has not encouraged employers to participate in the funding of education in terms of investing in the training of their future employees. As a result, OECD suggested in 2007 that all training or research related business transacted with institutions of higher education should qualify for tax advantages in Latvia.⁷¹

ALMPs are, mainly, funded by the state and the EU Funds. Activity Complex support activities for integration of inhabitants into the labour market (Kompleksi Atbalsta pasākumi iedzīvotāju integrēšanai darba tirgū) is an example of joint cooperation between the state and European Commission. The assigned ESF funding of the project is €15,827,920 the national funding share being €1,710,076. The measures are estimated to improve the labour market situation of 71,250 unemployed and disabled.⁷² In the state and employment agency programmes, the trainees usually receive a grant or a minimum wage.

Related to transnational mobility traineeships 467 Latvian university and professional higher education students participated in the Erasmus mobility programme in 2009/10. The average monthly grant for the students was €398. The total Latvian Erasmus budget for mobility actions was €3,758,000 in 2009/10 covering both study and traineeship programs.⁷³ VET students participate in transnational traineeships through the Leonardo da Vinci mobility programme. The total annual grants of the programme in 2010 was €1,398,783 in Latvia, which covers transnational initial vocational training, traineeships and VET professionals programmes.⁷⁴

⁶⁷ The State Employment Agency (SEA): Nodarbinātības pakalpojumi.

⁶⁸ State Employment Agency (SEA): PROJEKTS „KOMPLEKSI ATBALSTA PASĀKUMI” (Nr.1DP/1.4.1.1.1./09/IPIA/NVA/001). 26.09.2011.

⁶⁹ Ministry of Welfare of the Republic of Latvia: Latvian Labour Market 2010-2011. 2011.

⁷⁰ Ministry of Welfare of the Republic of Latvia: Latvian Labour Market 2010-2011. 2011.

⁷¹ Strehl F., Reisinger S. and Kalatschan M.: Funding Systems and their Effects on Higher Education Systems. 2007. OECD Education Working Papers, No. 6, OECD Publishing. p. 95-98.

⁷² State Employment Agency (NVA): PROJEKTS „KOMPLEKSI ATBALSTA PASĀKUMI” (Nr.1DP/1.4.1.1.1./09/IPIA/NVA/001). 26.09.2011.

⁷³ Education and Training, Erasmus Programme, Statistics.

⁷⁴ European Commission, Education and Training, Leonardo da Vinci Statistics.

3.7 Public perceptions about traineeships

According to DnB NOR Latvijas Barometrs monthly opinion survey in March 2010, the Latvian general public feels that an increase in qualifications and skills levels does not significantly contribute to economic growth or improve personal finances.⁷⁵ Also employers have often claimed that both VET and HE fail to take into account labour market needs.⁷⁶

On the other hand, from a professional point of view, ongoing and lifelong learning themes are considered important in the reformation of the education system. In HE, the need for traineeship arrangements is being acknowledged and discussed. For example, Juris Dzelme, Chairman of the Board at the Council for Higher Education (HEQEC), argues in his column that universities should support the realisation of traineeships in order for less experienced professionals to enter the job markets. Dzelme considers the traineeship stage as a vital part of a professional career.⁷⁷

There are also implications that employers view traineeships as an opportunity to recruit future talents. In 2009, the Head of the Human Resources Department of Nordea Latvia Viktorija Veisa considered the recruitment of trainees to be a serious and responsible decision, which is because each trainee is a potential employee. The article was part of Nordea Latvia's traineeship programme promotion. Veisa concluded that it is 'of particular importance to provide initial training, experienced practice superior and clearly defined assignments by also granting effective feedback'. In the same article, the then Vice President of the Latvian Student Association Dace Grante expressed concern over the possibilities of obtaining traineeship placements in a worsening economic climate and invited 'entrepreneurs to be cooperative and supportive despite the current economic conditions, therewith not only contributing to the development of young, future specialists, but also promoting development of companies, by encouraging new visions'.⁷⁸

4. Practices and Content of Traineeships

4.1 Traineeships as part of education and/or labour market entry and integration for young people

In Latvia, basic education is compulsory (ISCED levels 1 and 2) after which students move to general upper secondary education (ISCED 3) or upper vocational education (ISCED 3) which have been voluntary since the 1991 Education Law. General and vocational upper secondary education is free of charge in state and municipal schools. After general secondary or vocational secondary, it is possible to enroll in a one to two year long vocational further education programme (ISCED 4), or vocational in-service training programme which should contain at least 160 hours of classroom education. Vocational further education programmes are internationally counted as post-secondary non-tertiary education, but nationally they are considered as part of upper-secondary education.

Higher education programmes (ISCED 5) are divided into higher academic education programmes, higher professional education programmes and doctoral programmes. Incidentally, it is possible for universities to run both higher education professional and academic programmes, which means that as well universities may provide e.g. professional nursing education. HEIs independently develop study programmes after which the programmes are licensed by the Ministry of Education and Science. Academic education

⁷⁵ Cunska Z.: Where is demography leading Latvian higher education? 2010: 13

⁷⁶ European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion: European Employment Observatory Review. Youth employment measures 2010. 2011.

⁷⁷ Dzelme J.: Augstākā izglītība krustcelēs. 27.01.2011. Kreisie.lv.

⁷⁸ Nordea Latvia: Nordea Bank Announces Competition for Student Summer Practice Jobs. 7 May 2009.

results in either academic bachelor's, master's or doctoral degree. Academic professional education leads to a professional bachelor's or master's degree.⁷⁹

First-level professional higher education (college) programmes which consist of 80–120 national credit points (120–180 ECTS) include compulsory practical training which is worth at least 16 national credit points (24 ECTS). At the end of first-level professional academic programme students carry out an independent project work assignment and the graduates are awarded with a professional qualification. Professional higher education second-level bachelor programmes of 160 national credit points (240 ECTS) contain compulsory traineeships which should take up at least 26 national credit points (39 ECTS). Also professional master's degrees programmes, comprising at least 40 credits (60 ECTS), contain a requirement of finding a practical training placement corresponding to at least 6 national credit points (9 ECTS).⁸⁰

In addition to minimum requirements, there are specific additional conditions for the practical training included in the curriculum of the programmes leading to certain regulated professions. For example, according to the general requirements for the education of medical doctors, 'Higher medical education shall ensure adequate knowledge for the profession of doctor in the key sectors, clinical disciplines and practice of medicine, as well as adequate clinical experience', which demonstrates that attaining clinical experience is compulsory. However, the requirements and duration of the clinical experience remain unspecified. An education programme for nurses must also include 'adequate clinical experience', but it is stipulated as well that students in nursing schools must undergo practical training which is at least 50 per cent of the total duration of the training programme.⁸¹

It has to be noted that as the role of traineeships is still developing and they are not a compulsory part of the study programme for many university students, it is impossible to lay down specific details about general practices regarding traineeships in the university curriculum. It is worth noting that most graduates have not gone through any study related traineeship programme.⁸² The structure of academic higher education study programmes does not include practical training or traineeships.⁸³ Despite lack of obligation, simultaneous work and study practices are common among university students.⁸⁴

The Action Plan for Necessary Reforms in Higher Education 2010–2012 outlines legislative reforms required in foregrounding the role of employers in the development of educational programmes and encouraging modern businesses to offer traineeship placements. The reforms are scheduled to take place in 2011.⁸⁵ Also the Human Resources and Employment operational programme by the Ministry of Finance recognises that the co-operation between HEIs and employers is insufficient in terms of agreeing on the education programmes and practical training needs.⁸⁶ A new Eurydice report states that Latvian HEIs have already managed to develop new courses and trainee programmes in co-operation with local companies and other stakeholders.⁸⁷ Many HEIs have established career centres that co-

⁷⁹ Eurydice: Structures of Education and Training Systems In Europe 2009/2010

⁸⁰ Eurydice: Structures of Education and Training Systems In Europe 2009/2010; State Education Development Agency (SEDA) and Academic Information Centre (AIC): Higher education in Latvia

⁸¹ Latvian Law on the Regulated Professions and the Recognition of Professional Qualifications.

⁸² University of Latvia: Study of Labour market, Compliance of Professional and Higher Education Programmes with the Requirements of Labour Market. 2007.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Auers D., Rostoks T., Smith K.: Flipping burgers or flipping pages? Student employment and academic attainment in post-Soviet Latvia. 2007.

⁸⁵ European Commission, Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA): New Skills for New Jobs Policy initiatives in the field of education: Short overview of the current situation in Europe. 2010. p.16

⁸⁶ 2011

⁸⁷ European Commission, Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA): Modernisation of Higher Education in Europe: Funding and the Social Dimension. 2011.

operate with prospective employers and offer traineeship placements and job advertisements on their websites e.g. Riga Technical University.⁸⁸

International opportunities are available for HE students through Erasmus Placements which offer traineeships in companies and other organisations for a duration of 3–12 months.

Traineeships are a mandatory part of a dual vocational training system in Latvia.⁸⁹ Modernisation of vocational education has been set as one of the priorities in the Education Development Guidelines for 2007–2013. The Modernisation and Raising Prestige of Vocational Education System (2007–2013) response initiative's measurable targets include a requirement that all vocational students go through a traineeship at a workplace.⁹⁰ Practical training is already a compulsory part of professional training, but educational establishments have problems identifying and finding traineeship placements which are of good quality.⁹¹ Previously there have been individual training partnerships with schools and businesses, but they have not become nationwide because the small enterprises have not been capable of investing in training.⁹² It should also be noted that it is not compulsory for educational institutions to arrange traineeships in enterprises – practical training can take place at school.⁹³

One specific area of VET is crafts training which can be either carried out in vocational schools or in enterprises. The list of craftsmanship professions include vocations in the fields of construction, metalwork, woodwork, the textile industry, food processing, health care and other areas. Regulations on crafts are defined in the Law on Craftsmanship and supervision of craft training is the responsibility of the Latvian Chamber of Crafts. Neither prior work experience nor qualifications, apart from basic education, are required from the trainees who should be at least 15 years of age.⁹⁴

International traineeships for vocational students are available through the Leonardo da Vinci Programme that aims at increasing the volume of mobility of European citizens in VET. The duration of the placement in a company varies between 2–39 weeks for the Leonardo IVT (Initial Vocational Training). Leonardo PLM (People in the Labour Market) sends workers and job seekers on training placements in companies for a duration of 2–26 weeks.⁹⁵

Apart from being part of a course or a study programme, traineeships are also utilised as ALMPs for the young. For example, in 2010, over 1,000 people participated on the practical training programme targeted at young unemployed people who have finished primary, secondary or higher education, but have been unable to find a job.⁹⁶

4.2 Issues about employer practices as regards traineeships

There have been doubts that employers misuse voluntary work for commercial purposes. In the case of vocational education, the quality of traineeships and remuneration issues are known to have been problematic, because many VET students come from poor families and

⁸⁸ Riga Technical University: Karjeras centrs. 2010.

⁸⁹ System experts' network questionnaire summary: Internships: Factual background information on the legislation and practice of internships in the 27 EU Member States. 2008.

⁹⁰ Kinta G., Ramiņa B.: A bridge to the future. European policy for vocational education and training 2002-10.

⁹¹ University of Latvia 2007:5 Compliance of Professional and Higher Education Programmes...

⁹² Reiter H. (eds.), Astala S., Jovanovic A., Brandtner G-M., Kuhar M., Zubok J., Williamson H.: Youth policy in Latvia. Conclusions of the Council of Europe International Review. 2008. p.36

⁹³ Ministry for Education and Science: Concept. Promotion of Interest in Vocational Education and Participation of Social Partners in Assuring the Quality of Vocational Education. Informative Part. 2009.

⁹⁴ Eyraud: Structures of Education and Training Systems In Europe 2009/2010

⁹⁵ Korpelainen S., Nikolova N.: Order 117 – Study on a possible framework to facilitate transnational mobility for placements at enterprises. 2011. DG Education and Culture. p. 7

⁹⁶ European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion: European Employment Observatory Review. Youth employment measures 2010. 2011. p. 19

are unable to support their families during traineeships.⁹⁷ Other than the above mentioned cases, questionable employer practices are not topical in Latvia. For instance, a Sysdem report maintains that there appears not to be any specific type of employer that would suffer from a bad reputation for questionable traineeship practices in Latvia.⁹⁸

5. Trainee's Rights and Terms and Conditions

In the field of vocational education and professional higher education, traineeship contracts are compulsory. In VET, the contracts are tri-party agreements, whereas in professional higher education it is required that the educational institution and the organisation enter into an agreement. The agreements must contain a description of the trainee's rights and responsibilities, which emphasises the importance of drawing up a contract, as the substantial, actual content of the contractual stipulations is not regulated. There is little information available on the requirements for wages or social security issues.

According to a study conducted by the University of Latvia and the Ministry of Welfare in 2007, the problem of unpaid traineeships is acknowledged. The study suggests that youth in vocational education should receive financial remuneration for work done during a traineeship in order to improve the financial conditions of the VET students and their families.⁹⁹

In the case of regulated crafts and crafts training, training under the guidance of a master may be either free of charge, or even paid by the student. In some cases, the work done by students in an enterprise is counted as a form of payment. Trainees are not entitled to salaries, but it is recommended that the master takes care of the life and health insurance of the student. A training contract is signed either with the school or the master who is providing the training.¹⁰⁰

In some situations trainees may be protected by the Labour Dispute Law, which ensures a fair and rapid settlement of labour disputes, determines labour dispute settlement bodies and the procedures for settlement of labour disputes. The law applies to trainees unless otherwise prescribed by another law.¹⁰¹

6. Quality Assurance of Traineeships

Vocational traineeships seem to be in need of stricter quality monitoring. After the transition from the Soviet system to market economy, VET practical training system deteriorated and the networks between schools and enterprises had to be re-established. There are shortcomings in the way traineeship procedures are regulated. Typically the trainers are full-time employees who supervise the apprentices or trainees as a part-time position. Training of the trainers is the responsibility of the company, but the content and competency requirements also depend on how close a co-operational relationship the VET school has with the company. On the basis of the Eurotrainer survey, it is impossible to

⁹⁷ University of Latvia and Baltkonsults Ltd.: Professional Activities of Graduates of Higher and Vocational Education Institutions after Graduation. 2007.

⁹⁸ Sysdem experts' network questionnaire summary: Internships: Factual background information on the legislation and practice of internships in the 27 EU Member States. 2008.

⁹⁹ University of Latvia and Baltkonsults Ltd.: Professional Activities of Graduates of Higher and Vocational Education Institutions after Graduation. 2007.

¹⁰⁰ Eyraudice: Structures of Education and Training Systems In Europe 2009/2010

¹⁰¹ Latvian Labour Dispute Law. 2002.

answer whether in-company training or traineeships are unregulated or not.¹⁰² However, craftsmen training can only take place in an enterprise that has been certified by the Latvian Chamber of Crafts. Teachers should be qualified with a master qualification or with equivalent issued by the Latvian Chamber of Crafts. Trainers are either employed by the educational institution or hold a master position in an enterprise. There are no other quality regulations regarding crafts training apprenticeships or upgrading of the qualifications.¹⁰³

In order to improve the quality of traineeships, the State Education Content Centre has initiated the ESF project The Improvement of Theoretical Knowledge and Practical Competences for Vocational Subject Teachers and for Supervisors of Practical Training (Profesionālo mācību priekšmetu pedagogu un prakses vadītāju teorētisko zināšanu un praktisko kompetenču paaugstināšana, 2010-2012) with total funding of €3,811,916. The project informs teachers and traineeship supervisors about updated vocational education content, innovations and ways of establishing co-operation with social partners and other vocational schools.¹⁰⁴

In the HE field, the Higher Education Quality Evaluation Centre (HEQEC) is responsible for co-ordinating and organising quality assessment of HEIs and the HE study programmes with the authorisation of the Ministry for Education and Science. The quality assurance process comprises accreditation, expert evaluations and HEI self-evaluation. Quality assurance based on continuous self-evaluation is the goal of the Latvian accreditation system. HEIs prepare self-assessment reports for HEQEC.¹⁰⁵ The quality of traineeships is monitored, for instance, through HEI appointed evaluation commissions which among other things assess study programmes in relation to the organisation of traineeships.¹⁰⁶ Also the self-assessment reports contain descriptions of traineeship practices. Related to transnational mobility programs there are specific quality control procedures.¹⁰⁷

For instance, Riga Technical University evaluates traineeships in on a 10-scale system. The traineeship is assessed by the traineeship supervisor and the Internship Defence Commission which is established by the head of department responsible for traineeships. Feedback from the student and the employer are taken into account in the evaluation process.¹⁰⁸

Finally, ALMP traineeships are the remaining category, but ALMP training measures have not traditionally been thoroughly evaluated in Latvia. In the existing evaluation process, the state employment agency utilises surveys of participants and the percentage of programme participants that have landed a job as a result of the traineeship.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰² Bykova O. & Loogma K.: Country Report Latvia. In Eurotrainer. Making lifelong learning possible. A study of the situation and qualification of trainers in Europe. Final Report January 2008. p. 197.

¹⁰³ Eyrudice: Structures of Education and Training Systems In Europe 2009/2010

¹⁰⁴ Cedefop Refernet Latvija: Latvia. VET in Europe – Country Report. 2010.

¹⁰⁵ Higher Education Quality Evaluation Centre (HEQEC): What is HEQEC?

¹⁰⁶ Higher Education Quality Evaluation Centre (HEQEC): Questionnaire for Evaluation Commission Experts for the evaluation of higher education institution.

¹⁰⁷ http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/doc/quality_en.pdf

¹⁰⁸ Riga Technical University: Professional Master's Programme "Total Quality Management." Self-Assessment Report. 2011.

¹⁰⁹ De Jong P., Vanags A.: Assessment of training measures by the Latvian State Employment Agency. 2009:6.

7. Overall Assessment as regards Traineeships

7.1 Benefits and drawbacks of traineeships

With academic and HE traineeships it has been reported that enterprises are at times unwilling to pay trainees, because of the effort and working time consumed by mentoring duties. Another problem arises if the trainee is perceived to be a competitor and is excluded from the core activities of the enterprise. There is also a danger of academically and professionally irrelevant traineeships being included in the studies, which brings the risk of non-study related work being counted as traineeships.¹¹⁰

As a matter of fact, Latvian youth do enter the job markets during their studies, which has been also criticised. After regaining independence, the budgetary crisis in combination with liberalization of the economy led to a decrease in student stipends, meanwhile the number of students has kept growing. As a result of the tightened economic situation, students are forced to combine employment with full-time study. In 2007, in a survey sample of nearly 1,000 social science and law students almost 44 per cent of the respondents were working either part-time or full-time. Twenty three per cent of the surveyed students were in full-time employment. Women were less likely to work than men in general, and over 10 per cent of women were less likely to be working full-time. It also appears that Russian students are less likely to work than ethnic Latvians. In addition, the employment rate in schools located in economically depressed areas was likely to be lower. All in all, the survey sample results pointed towards working having a strong and significant negative impact on the grades and academic performance in the Latvian context. Working during tertiary studies lowered average grades and reduced class attendance and independent study time.¹¹¹ It is unknown whether traineeships have a similar effect to normal student jobs in the Latvian context.

In order to streamline the varying traineeship practices, it has been suggested that the state could take a more active intermediary role in regulating the traineeships.¹¹² It is likely that in order for traineeships to be more beneficial for the participants, they have to be more study-related rather than student jobs in their nature.

In the case of vocational education, the quality of traineeships and remuneration issues have been known to be problematic. In any case, there are good arguments for a more prominent role being taken by traineeships. Despite difficulties in their arrangement and organisational practices, traineeships are increasing their role in gaining valuable work experience, and many experts are of the opinion that working during studies prepares students for the labour market.

7.2 Effectiveness of traineeships

Traineeships have met resistance in terms of their educational effectiveness. According to a study conducted by the University of Latvia in 2007, the proportion of practical training is on a sufficient level in professional higher education programmes. Educational establishments often argue that the time spent on traineeships is time away from essential

¹¹⁰ University of Latvia: Compliance of Professional and Higher Education Programmes...2007:102-103

¹¹¹ Auers, D., Rostoks T., Smith K. 2007: Flipping burgers or flipping pages? Student employment and academic attainment in post-Soviet Latvia. 2007.

¹¹² University of Latvia: Compliance of Professional and Higher Education Programmes. 2007:102-103

study subjects. The study concludes that the emphasis should be placed on the qualitative aspects of traineeships rather than the quantitative.¹¹³

Then again, there is increasing pressure to combine practice with theory to improve the employability of VET and HE graduates. The expert opinion is that permanent work during studies aligns students faster to the labour market and increases earnings after graduation in comparison to those who have not worked, which is why theoretical education should be more actively combined with practical training.¹¹⁴

It is possible to evaluate the success rate of the state ALMPs. In 2009, the State Employment Agency (SEA) organised learning measures for in total 31,618 people of which 11,294 individuals participated in vocational education measures, re-qualification or professional promotion programmes. In 2009, 8.4 per cent of the vocational related measures participants became employed during the following 6 months. Most of the successful employments (62.6 per cent) in question came through as a result of practical training placements in enterprises.¹¹⁵ But in order to gain more information on the topic of the effectiveness of traineeship practices in relation to employability and the comparability of traineeships to student jobs, traineeships and student jobs should be more thoroughly researched in Latvia.

7.3 Good practice examples and recommendations

Latvia has renewed and developed its educational system since it gained its independence, but there is still work to be done in establishing and incorporating good traineeship practices.

At the moment, traineeships are compulsory in professional higher education, and practical training either at school or in an enterprise is compulsory for VET students. In addition, traineeships are utilised in the implementation of ALMP projects, but it remains open whether Latvia is able or willing to fund ALMP traineeships itself if possibilities for ESF funding run out.

It is unknown as well whether students at academic university programmes have proper access to traineeships and whether further development of traineeship practices is recommendable in the academic studies context. In contrast, in professional HE programmes it is time to concentrate on quality improvements and creation of frameworks.

Based on Eurostudent surveys, First Steps into the Labour Market and other survey results on student employment and traineeships, there is a need for further research into the relation between time spent on studies, student jobs and traineeships in the Latvian context. Further development of traineeship programmes could possibly be a way to improve the Latvian HE and vocational student's experience of the labour market and give the students a chance to obtain more study related work experience. Further quality surveillance based on the experiences of students, employers and educational institutions could be of assistance e.g. in the creation of national quality framework for traineeships.

The role of voluntary work should be looked into, as the work done by the youth in NGOs and public organisations resembles traineeships to some extent. For example, the State Employment Agency runs a voluntary work programme with the purpose of enhancing the employability of young people. With both traineeships and voluntary work activities, there is a need for a clarification of the roles and the responsibilities of the employers/voluntary work providers, the educational institutions and the trainees.

¹¹³ University of Latvia: Study of Labour market, Compliance of Professional and Higher Education Programmes with the Requirements of Labour Market. 2007:103.

¹¹⁴ University of Latvia and Baltkonsults: Professional Activities of Graduates of Higher and Vocational Education Institutions after Graduation. Study co-financed by the European Union. 2007. Riga.

¹¹⁵ Cedefop (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training) Refernet Latvija: Latvia. VET in Europe – Country Report. 2010.

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Annex

Table A 1: Leonardo da Vinci subprogramme Country: Latvia ¹¹⁶, Mobility projects

Call	Target group	2007*	2008*	2009*	2010	2011*
Participants	Initial vocational training	298	259	202	338	286
(*planned)	People on the labour market	81	81	88	114	92
Participants	Initial vocational training	339	309	209	n/a	n/a
Realised till 01.01.2011	People on the labour market	74	90	77	n/a	n/a

¹¹⁶ European Commission, Education, Leonardo daVinci

National Report on Traineeships Malta

Sandra Naaf, IRS

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1. Traineeships as part of Member State's Youth Policy Measures

1.1 Overview of current situation of young people and traineeships as part of youth policy measures

As for other European countries, Malta has been affected by the recent economic crisis, but in Malta young people were less affected than in other countries. The employment rate of young people aged 15 to 29 is better (44.8 per cent in 2010) than the EU average (34.1 per cent), although it is 1.1 per cent below the 2008 level.¹ Youth unemployment (15 to 24 years old) is also lower, 13 per cent in 2010, than the EU average (20.8 per cent).²

Young people often work in part-time and temporary employment, with a slight increase (5 per cent) in temporary contracts since 2009 (for the age group 15 to 25). The high drop-out rate from schools, especially of young men; and the low education level is another relevant problem. Eurostat data for people neither in employment or training (NEET) reveals a rate of 11.8 per cent in 2009 (EU 27: 17.4 per cent).³ Young people are also entitled to lower minimum wages (€152 from 18 years on), with a reduced amount for those 16 years old (€142), and for those 17 to 18 years (€145), in 2011.⁴

Over the past five years Malta has undertaken various national measures aimed at targeting the problem of early-school leaving and youth unemployment, by improving vocational training, staff training, and increased infrastructure investments. Malta's public employment service, the Employment and Training Cooperation (ETC) introduced a number of programmes addressing the youth, many of them co-financed by the ESF, to support the transition from education to work.

The **Job Employment Scheme** (JES) (2004/06 and 2008/09) (ESF co-financed), targeted new labour market entrants aged 16 to 24 who have finished school and are registered as unemployed.⁵ The **Active Youth Scheme** has also proven to be very popular. It is designed to help young people (aged 16 to 24) who have been unemployed for more than six months, to discover and develop their hidden talents while contributing to the community by working with non-governmental, religious, and cultural organisations.

The **Employment Aid Programme (EAP)** (started in 2008) provides subsidies for companies who employ young people below 29 years old, for at least 12 months. The **Work Trial Scheme (WTS)** (2009) gives young people aged 16 to 24 the opportunity to work in a local company for 12 weeks to gain work experience.⁶ The **Youth Inc.** starting in 2011 (targeting 16 to 21 year olds) is a joint initiative of the ETC, the **Education Ministry and the Malta Qualifications Council** (MQC) offering short-term work experience and informal education leading to the MQF level II.⁷

¹ Eurostat data – LFS [lfsa_ergaed]

² Eurostat data (LFS)

³ However, in the last years improvements have been done to improve participation in further education. See for instance the National Commission for Higher Education (NCHE) (2008), Annual report. https://www.nche.gov.mt/mediacenter/PDFs/2_20080724NCHEAnnualReport.pdf

⁴ <https://www.eures.com.mt/Main/Page.aspx?pageid=WorkingConditions>

⁵ Employment and Training Corporation, Structural Fund Programme for Malta 2004-2006 Job Experience Scheme - ESF 72, 75% EU Funds 25% Government Funds. <http://www.lca.org.mt/userfiles/ESF%2072%20-%20Job%20Experience%20Scheme%20literature.pdf>

⁶ Companies evaluating potential employees before recruitment <http://www.maltachamber.org.mt/common/fileprovider.ashx?id=634157375866427500>

⁷ Bonello, Chiara (2011), Malta does not have highest 'Neet' rate in Europe – Eurostat, The independent. <http://www.independent.com.mt/news.asp?newsitemid=118128> and for further information <http://www.fes.org.mt/Documents/Youth/Youth%20Programme%20Information%20Sheet.pdf>

A *Basic Skills Programme* for young low-skilled job seekers who lack a valid School Leaving Certificate was promoted in 2010, including traineeship and on-the-job-placement. It also addresses students from the **Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology** (MCAST), who dropped out of their courses.⁸

The *Youth Employment Programme* (2009/11), which was ESF funded, aimed to improve employability of disadvantaged young job seekers who were without post-secondary education and were working in precarious work situations.⁹ The *Traineeship Scheme* (ESF co-financing) offers a combination of on-the-job training with an employer for 80 per cent of the traineeship duration, and 20 per cent off-the-job training.

University graduates are the target group of the **Student Job Placement Programme** (since 2006) launched by the Ministry for Infrastructure, Transport and Communications supporting traineeships in the ICT sector. Since 2009, the **Malta Information Technology Agency** (MITA) has been running the project as part of its remit under its strategic plan for 2009-2012 by providing temporary ICT-related work experiences during the summer months.¹⁰

Malta is participating in the *European Union Lifelong Learning Programme* (EU-LLP), promoting mobility of young people (Leonardo da Vinci, Erasmus and Erasmus Mundus¹¹)¹², and in the *European Network and Information Security Agency* (ENISA) traineeship scheme for graduates (only five students in 2006).

Traineeship abroad is supported by the *Training Subsidy Scheme* (TSS) and the *Training Aid Framework* (TAF). Also, some international private associations offer support for university graduates, such as the European Law Students' Association (ELSA) through the *Student Trainee Exchange Programme* for law students and young lawyers for a period of two weeks up to two years.¹³ Also the *International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience* (IAESTE) offers traineeship for Maltese students of engineering, architecture, science, IT or pharmacy abroad¹⁴ and for non-nationals in Malta.

The traineeship schemes of ETC are similar to the apprenticeship scheme, but are more flexible. Apprenticeship, as part of vocational education and training, are based on the dual system, including a training programme at a vocational educational institution, and on-the-job training at a place of work; and receives a stipend paid by the employer. The employment conditions are included in an employment contract, based on an agreement between the ETC, the apprentice, and the employer, which might be a public or (mainly) private organisation. It leads to a number of nationally recognised qualifications. There are two schemes available: the *Extended Skills Training Scheme* (ESTS) and the *Technician Apprenticeship Scheme* (TAS). They are also managed by the ETC. This entity manages apprenticeship schemes in 35 occupational areas, in co-operation with educational institutions. These vocational training measures are of a much longer duration, combining on and off-the-job training.

⁸ Employment and Training Corporation (ETC) (2009), Annual Report 2009, Malta. <http://www.etc.gov.mt/docs/CEO-32-100712-artwork.pdf>

⁹ Employment and Training Corporation (ETC) (2009), Annual Report 2009, Malta. <http://www.etc.gov.mt/docs/CEO-32-100712-artwork.pdf>

¹⁰ Malta Information Technology Agency (MITA), Students. <https://www.mita.gov.mt/page.aspx?pageid=119>

¹¹ This programme has been carried out from 2004-2008 and 2009-2013.

¹² In 2010 Malta has, due to miss-management, been suspended from this programme, which affected more than 237 (550 according to the EEO report) students and organisations and lead to a loss of €3.3 million. This suspension has been lifted in March 2011. Vella, Francesca, 24. March 2011. <http://www.independent.com.mt/news.asp?newsitemid=121825>

¹³ It can be taken in law firms, courts, public institutions, universities, banks, in-house legal departments, consulting firms and international organisations. http://www.elsa.org/fileadmin/user_upload/elsa_international/PDF/STEP_forms/STEP_Brochure1011.pdf

¹⁴ IASTE has agreements with 83 countries (2008). See: IASTE Malta, <http://www.iaeste.org.mt/companies/why-employ-an-iaeste-trainee>

Table 1.1: Summary of main Traineeship Programmes in Malta

Traineeship Programme	Brief description
<i>Job Employment Scheme (JES)</i>	Targets new labour market entrants aged 16-24 who have finished school and are registered as unemployed. Young people get 13 weeks of job experiences while being paid.
<i>Active Youth Scheme</i>	Targeting young people (aged 16-24) who have been unemployed for more than six months, to discover and develop their hidden talents while contributing to the community by working with non-governmental, religious and cultural organisations.
<i>Employment Aid Programme (EAP)</i>	The programme provides subsidies for companies employing young people younger than 29, for at least 12 months. (Since 2008)
<i>The Work Trial Scheme (WTS)</i>	This scheme is for young people (aged 16 to 24), giving them the opportunity to work in a local company for 12 weeks to gain work experience. (2009)
<i>The Work Start Scheme</i>	This Scheme, is for adults aged 25 and over, who have been out of the workforce for a period of five years or more; and for people possessing academic or vocational qualifications but who do not have work experience in the area in which they are qualified. Launched in 2004-2005.
<i>Youth Inc.</i>	This joint initiative of the ETC, the Education Ministry and the Malta Qualifications Council (MQC) offers short-term work experience and informal education leading to the MQF level II for the 16 to 21 year olds. ¹⁵ Commenced 2011.
<i>Basic Skills Programme</i>	This programme addresses young low-skilled job seekers who lack a valid School Leaving Certificate, was promoted 2010, including traineeship and on-the-job-placement. It also addresses students from the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) , who dropped out of their courses.
<i>The Youth Employment Programme</i>	The Youth Employment Programme aimed to improve employability of disadvantaged young job seekers without post-secondary education working in precarious work situations. It is financially supported by the ESF. (2009/11)
<i>Traineeship Scheme</i>	The Scheme offers a combination of on-the-job training with an employer for 80 per cent of the traineeship duration and 20 per cent off-the-job training. It is financially supported by the ESF.
<i>Student Job Placement Programme</i>	University graduates are the target group of this programme It was launched by the Ministry for Infrastructure, Transport and Communications and is supporting traineeships in the ICT sector. (Since 2006).

¹⁵ Bonello, Chiara (2011), Malta does not have highest 'Neet' rate in Europe – Eurostat, The independent. <http://www.independent.com.mt/news.asp?newsitemid=118128> and for further information <http://www.fes.org.mt/Documents/Youth/Youth%20Programme%20Information%20Sheet.pdf>

Traineeship Programme	Brief description
<i>Student Trainee Exchange Programme</i>	The European Law Students' Association (ELSA) offers support for university graduates, for law students and young lawyers for a period of two weeks to two years.
<i>Traineeship programme by the IAESTE</i>	The International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience (IAESTE) offers for Maltese students of Engineering, Architecture, Science, IT or Pharmacy abroad ¹⁶ ; and for non-nationals in Malta.

2. Legislative Framework for Traineeships

2.1 Legal framework and governance of traineeships

The main public authority for vocational training and traineeships is the *Ministry of Education, Employment and the Family*. The Ministry's main responsibility is related to regulations and legislation, including the rights of trainees, learning/training element of placements. It is also responsible for the VET provided by the three main national training providers: the *Employment and Training Corporation* (ETC), the *Institute of Tourism Studies* (ITS) and the *Institute of Conservation and Management of Cultural Heritage* (ICMCH). These are regulated by the **Education Act of 2010**, which establishes the areas of training, and the roles of the agencies involved.¹⁷

The *Employment and Training Corporation* (ETC), which is the Malta's public employment service, develops vocational training schemes in co-operation with the employers, their associations, or other professional bodies. These programmes have off-the-job training component and on-the-job training. In Malta, trainees have a specific recognised legal status, which is based on the *Employment and Training Service Act (Chapter 343)*.¹⁸ Also, additional conditions for work placements agreed between the sending/host organisation and the trainee have been established. The national legislation provides some common definition of 'Traineeship' and about regulating working hours, holidays and sick leave. According to this:

*'Traineeship is a dual system of occupational training targeted at new labour market entrants, unemployed or employees involved in restructuring exercises. ETC offers this flexible training to supplement skills shortages. The content and occupational standards of this training programme are drawn up after consultation with employer. On finishing the programme trainees sit for a competency test and receive certification. The minimum duration of the traineeships is 13 consecutive weeks and the maximum is 52 weeks, based on a 40-hour week. The duration varies according to the programme. The entry requirements vary according to the traineeships, however, such requirements are kept to a minimum to avoid unnecessary hurdles. A traineeship cannot be embarked upon unless an employer is available prior to the start of the traineeship.'*¹⁹

¹⁶ IAESTE has agreements with 83 countries (2008). See: IAESTE Malta, <http://www.iaeste.org/mt/companies/why-employ-an-iaeste-trainee>

¹⁷ Cedefop 2010

¹⁸ Government of Malta, Employment and training service act, Chapter 343. <http://www.mjha.gov.mt/DownloadDocument.aspx?app=lom&itemid=8814>

¹⁹ Employment and Training Corporation, Traineeship <http://www.etc.gov.mt/site/page.aspx?pageid=2071>

The provision of Vocational Education and Training in Malta is considered a top priority policy in the *National Action Plan for Employment 2004*.²⁰ The policy is formulated along the guidelines provided by the Ministry of Education Youth and Employment.²¹ Malta's policy with respect to education, and particularly with respect to vocational education, can be identified within the *Strategic Plan 2007/09* of the Malta College for Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST), the National Reform Programme Update of 2009, as well as in the pre-budget document.²²

Some important changes have been introduced in recent years to improve the VET. Through the 2006 Educational Act (No. XIII) a *National Commission for Higher Education* (NCHE) has been created to consult and advise the government on higher education. Malta has also established the *Malta Vocational and Professional Qualifications Awards Council* (MPVQAC) and its *Standards Development Boards* with a view to creating a coherent national framework.²³ In 2011, the Ministry of Education also introduced vocational subjects in mainstream education. Passes in these subjects will carry the same parity of esteem as academic/traditional subjects. This initiative coincides with the Malta Qualifications Council ESF project VQPACK that aims at making vocational education and training visible in compulsory/secondary education.²⁴

2.2 Definition of traineeships and trainees

The Employment and Training Corporation (ETC) defines traineeship part of the dual system of occupational training. According to this *'it is an occupational skill development programme, targeted at new labour market entrants, unemployed or employees involved in restructuring exercises'*.²⁵ The aim is to offer flexible training to supplement skills shortages. Table 1.1 above summarises the available traineeship programmes.

2.3 Legal provisions about aspects of traineeships

The **duration** of the traineeship varies according to the programme. The minimum duration is ten weeks to a maximum of 39 weeks, based on a 40-hour week. Remuneration is based on the national statutory minimum wage during the whole traineeship, and work conditions are safeguarded by the respective laws.

On finishing the programme, trainees are assessed by a Trade Testing Board to test the standards of occupational competence reached. Those who show proficiency in a range of skills making up an occupation are awarded a Certificate of Achievement.

The University of Malta is participating in the **Erasmus programme**, however, according to the Erasmus Focus Group, not much effort has been put into promoting the Erasmus Programme by the University of Malta and students were not sufficiently encouraged to participate. The Erasmus Focus Group also commented that during the academic year 2008-2009 in some faculties there was a significant amount of students who had undergone a Direct Exchange Programme to non-EU countries. Another issue was that some faculties, institutes and centres are not as encouraging when students opt to go on Erasmus. Moreover, it is hard to find a university where the credits match those at the University of Malta.

²⁰ Government of Malta, National Action Plan on Employment 2004. <http://www.djei.ie/publications/labour/2003/nationalemploymentactionplan.pdf>

²¹ Malta Qualifications Council (2007), Guidelines for a Vocational Education and Training system for Malta's National Qualifications Framework, Valuing all learning Volume 2, Malta. <http://www.mqc.gov.mt/documents-publications?!=1>

²² Cedefop (2010), VET in Europe – Country report Malta. ReferNet. http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/eu/pub/cedefop/vetreport/2010_CR_MT.pdf

²³ http://ilomirror.library.cornell.edu/public/english/region/ampro/cinterfor/temas/complab/doc/ass_com.htm

²⁴ Cedefop (2010)

²⁵ Employment and Training Corporation, Traineeships, <http://etc.gov.mt/site/page.aspx?pageid=2071>

European citizens do not need a visa for a traineeship²⁶; while non-EU nationals need an entry permit (Student Visa) if carrying out a traineeship or internship. Also, health and accident insurance is mandatory and is to be purchased in the mother country from where the applicant is applying.

Many organisations are providing support to international students, which are often privately managed. One example is the Maltese French Chamber of Commerce, which offers a service to students seeking a traineeship in Malta. Foreign students have access to health and safety insurance (such as Health and Liability Insurance, Safety insurance against accidents); the sending organisation is responsible for organising it. There are practical challenges e.g. language barriers, finding accommodation, dealing with new learning and working environments etc. Finding suitable partners and placements, including motivating enterprises, is also challenging.²⁷

3. Availability and Access to Traineeships

3.1 Statistics/quantitative information about traineeships

Little data is available on the participation of youngsters in traineeship. Some data is presented by the Employment and Training Corporation (ETC), published in their annual reports of 2006/2007 and 2009. According to this, more young people participated in the different training schemes, which have to some extent also included traineeships, in 2009 (651 participants aged 16 to 24) than in 2006/07 (500). There is however a difference in the participation rate for the different schemes.

The **Active Youth Scheme** targeting young people aged between 16 and 24 who have been unemployed for more than six months, reached over 220 participants between 2006 and 2008²⁸. There were 110 young job seekers (of whom 12 were Gozitan) placed on this scheme in 2007. From October 2006 to September 2007 110 young people aged 16 to 24 benefited from work exposure under this scheme, of which 34 youngsters were long-term unemployed (ETC Annual Report 2006/07).

The **Job experience scheme** providing young people with 13 weeks of job experiences while being paid, reached a total of 830 participants from 2003/08. In 2006/07 there were 306 youngsters aged 16 to 24, with a slightly higher female participation (54 per cent) than male (46 per cent).²⁹ In 2009, 279 young people were reached, this time more males (55 per cent) than females (45 per cent). The project was extended to mid-2009, and achieved a total of 847 placements, when the original target had been only 200 youth placements. There were 660 young people (78 per cent) who completed their work experience placement, which is not obligatory within this scheme. These positive results were achieved through more active promotion of the scheme to employers.

Twenty young job seekers (12 male and 8 female) were placed on the **Youth Employment Scheme**. This Scheme involved the employment of young jobseekers and the provision of on-the-job training for them. ETC paid a wage subsidy to the employer that provided

²⁶ Foreign students must also have financial guarantees if they are staying for more than three months. They are not eligible for some financial aid programmes of Malta, which often is only reserved to nationals. Another administrative barrier is the need for a language certificate.

²⁷ GHK (2011), Study on a possible framework to facilitate transnational mobility for placements at enterprises. Final Report. Brussels.

²⁸ Debono, Manwel (2010), Malta - Youth Employment Measures. European Employment Observatory Review.

²⁹ Employment and Training Corporation (ETC) (2007), Annual report 2006-2007. <http://www.etc.gov.mt/docs/Annual%20report-2006-2007.pdf>

employment and training for these young people. Most of these young clients stayed in employment after finishing traineeships.³⁰

In the eight training schemes, a total of 651 youngsters (16 to 24) and 122 people aged 25 to 39 were trained during 2009 (see Table A 1 in the Annex).³¹

The most popular was the **Employment Aid Programme** (January to December 2009) with 179 young participants (aged 16 to 24) and 70 in the age group 25 to 39.

The **Private Sector Placement scheme** reached 38 young people (287 male and 11 female) in 2009, of which there were 13 long-term unemployed, four disabled, and five social cases.

The **Work Start Scheme** (launched in 2004/05) for adults aged 25 and over, who have been out of the workforce for a period of five years or more, and for people possessing academic or vocational qualifications but who do not have work experience in the area in which they are qualified, also showed a good performance. When compared to previous years, participation in this scheme has more than doubled and in 2006/07 136 people were placed. More than half of the participants were kept in employment.³²

The **Work Trial Scheme**, piloted in July 2009, reached its target of 101 placements within one month, of which 85 were aged 16 to 25 and 13 in the 25 to 39 age group.³³

In 2002 also a **Traineeships in computer programming** was carried out by ETC. Data for 2002 shows that 54 trainees (52 are in the 16 to 24 age bracket, nine are women) participated in the traineeship, another 40 joined at diploma and advanced diploma level in January 2002. From October 2000 to September 2001, 120 people participated in the programme, of which only eight failed and were re-entered into the unemployment register.³⁴

Data shows that in the Academic year 2006/07, for the **Erasmus programme** for placements there were more incoming students than outgoing. For both (incoming and outgoing) there was a large increase from the academic year 2007/08 to 2009/10 (Table A 2 in Annex). While in 2007/08 ten students were going abroad and 101 were incoming, the number increased to 67 outgoing and 431 incoming in 2009/10. There is also a large increase from students of Eastern European countries (PO, LV, RO) and from Turkey. The main sending countries are France, Germany, Spain and the United Kingdom.

The number of young people benefiting from the **Leonardo Da Vinci** (LDV) programme was 1,523 in 2000/06 (LDV II); and 450 in 2007/09 (Life-Long-Learning Programme, LLP).³⁵ However, according to the Flashbarometer³⁶ of approximately 800 people interviewed, about 14 per cent stayed abroad for learning or training purposes.

³⁰ Gozo News, 27.Feb. 2008 – The ETC spend €740,930 on employment schemes last year. <http://gozonews.com/2247/the-etc-spent-e740930-on-employment-schemes-last-year/>

³¹ Employment and Training Corporation (ETC) (2009), Annual Report 2009, Malta. <http://www.etc.gov.mt/docs/CEO-32-100712-artwork.pdf>

³² Gozo News, 27.Feb. 2008 – The ETC spend €740,930 on employment schemes last year <http://gozonews.com/2247/the-etc-spent-e740930-on-employment-schemes-last-year/>

³³ Employment and Training Corporation (ETC) (2009), Annual Report 2009, Malta. <http://www.etc.gov.mt/docs/CEO-32-100712-artwork.pdf>

³⁴ Sultana, Ronald/ Spiteri, Anna/ Norman, David/Schöner, Ulrike (2002), Vocational education and training and employment services in Malta. Monographs candidate countries. http://www.see-educoop.net/education_in/pdf/etf-mono-cand-countries-malta-oth-enl-t02.pdf

³⁵ European Commission (2010), Training for Mobility, Mobility for training. 15th anniversary of the Leonardo da Vinci programme 1995-2010. http://ec.europa.eu/education/pub/pdf/vocational/leonardo15_en.pdf

³⁶ http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_319b_en.pdf

3.2 Sectors where traineeships are prevalent

One major challenge is to better match the needs of the national enterprises with finding young (qualified) people. Still, there is a mismatch of available skills and the industrial requirements.³⁷ Some efforts have been made by the ETC in recent years, with financial support from the ESF, to improve this situation, by providing training of the employment service personnel. Also, a collaboration agreement between the MCAST and the Malta Federation of Industry (FOI) has been implemented, to provide industry-demanded courses and projects.³⁸ Sectors offering placement for trainees are also: tourism, hotel, catering and other related services; health and healthcare (including nursing), medicine; social work, social care; agriculture, forestry; ICT; education, schools; public service sector; airport and aviation; and sports.³⁹ The traineeship scheme offered by the ETC, combining on and off-the-job training, is provided in the following areas: woodwork skills, sales, freight/shipping, care for elderly. Traineeship in these areas is not obligatory.⁴⁰

Data presented in the ETC Annual Report 2006/07⁴¹ shows that ICT schemes are the most attended with 33 people (only one woman) of age group 16 to 24. For people aged 25 to 39, there were eight people attending one of the available training schemes, of which six were for elderly care and two as Fire & Safety instructors.⁴²

The Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST), provides training in subjects relating to art and design, business, construction, electronics, ICT and others. This institution collaborates with governmental, non-governmental and private bodies. Employers are involved in devising the training schemes.⁴³

According to the National Statistics Office (2001) *Continuing Vocational Training Survey*, expenditure on CVET was mainly in the following sectors: manufacturing (27.2 per cent); transport, storage and communication (23 per cent); and on real estate, renting and business activities (17.7 per cent); followed by hotels and restaurants (6 per cent); electricity, gas and water supply, and wholesale, retail, repair of vehicles, personal and household goods (each 6.6 per cent); and financial intermediation (9.8 per cent).⁴⁴

The *Institute of Tourism Studies* (ITS) is in charge of vocational courses related to hospitality and catering, the Institute of Conservation and Management of Cultural Heritage (ICMCH) on management, conservation-restoration, interpretation and marketing on the national cultural heritage.⁴⁵

The Cedefop Report⁴⁶ provides information on the fields of education study in VET, where vocational education and training is provided (Annex Table A 3). Since 2004, some traineeships have also been introduced in the ICT and pharmaceutical sectors.⁴⁷ According

³⁷ Cedefop (2010), VET in Europe – Country report Malta. ReferNet. http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/eu/pub/cedefop/vetreport/2010_CR_MT.pdf

³⁸ Formosa, Marvin/Rizzo, Saviour (2009), Malta: Collective bargaining and continuous vocational training. Euro foundation <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/studies/tn0804048s/mt0804049q.htm>

³⁹ GHK (2011), Study on a possible framework to facilitate transnational mobility for placements at enterprises. Final Report. Brussels.

⁴⁰ Employment and Training Corporation – Traineeships - <http://www.etc.gov.mt/site/page.aspx?pageid=2071>

⁴¹ On a very limited number of participants and training schemes

⁴² Employment and Training Corporation (ETC) (2008), Annual Report 2006-2007, Malta. <http://www.etc.gov.mt/docs/Annual%20report-2006-2007.pdf>

⁴³ Formosa, Marvin/Rizzo, Saviour (2009), Malta: Collective bargaining and continuous vocational training. Euro foundation. <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/studies/tn0804048s/mt0804049q.htm>

⁴⁴ Sultana, Ronald/ Spiteri, Anna/ Norman, David/Schöner, Ulrike (2002), Vocational education and training and employment services in Malta. Monographs candidate countries. http://www.see-educoop.net/education_in/pdf/etf-mono-cand-countries-malta-oth-enl-t02.pdf

⁴⁵ Heritage Malta - http://ecpl-project.heritagemalta.org/ecpl_about_hm.htm

⁴⁶ Cedefop (2010), VET in Europe – Country report Malta. ReferNet. http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/eu/pub/cedefop/vetreport/2010_CR_MT.pdf

⁴⁷ Maltese Government, National Action Plan on Employment 2004, <http://ec.europa.eu/social/ajax/BlobServlet?docId=6063&langId=en>

to the *National Action Plan on Employment 2004*, traineeships are also provided by MCAST in the engineering industry (total cost of €291,940); electronics industry (estimated cost of €194,380); and in the building and construction industry (€193,480). Training for adults with no formal education was financed with €192,915.⁴⁸

3.3 Recruitment process and equity of access to traineeships

Different public institutions at the local and regional level offer support to trainees and companies to find an adequate working place. Also educational institutions, such as Universities and the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) play an important role, supported by government programmes, to supply work placement through traineeships. Since 2008, the Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Communications has implemented a traineeship programme for technology and engineering students from MCAST, the University and other private ICT training centres. The temporary jobs were made available by a number of organisations both from the public and private sectors. It is co-ordinated and supported by the Malta Information Technology Agency (MITA) who provides support and brings together organisations, enterprises and trainees.⁴⁹ The minimum length of traineeships is two months, and trainees are financially supported by the companies with €5.20 per hour. In order to promote this programme, the Ministry organised a breakfast meeting for employers seeking ICT human resources, to give them the opportunity to recruit ICT students under the ICT programme. The aim of the programme is to strengthen the potential of the young Maltese workers.

In 2002, there were 33 registered private employment agencies, of which three are considered important. The main tasks however are not related to employment services. The Department of Employment and Industrial Relations has been systematically recording the number of job advertisements issued by the private agencies that have been published in all the local newspapers since 1 January 1995.

According to information related to 2002, the private sector is not obliged by law to inform the ETC of job vacancies and neither are the private agencies obliged to inform ETC if an applicant approaches them for a job. Also, there is no exchange of information on job seekers between the agencies and the ETC, or co-operation between the public and private employment services.⁵⁰ In addition, applicants for a traineeship provided by the ETC in computer programming⁵¹ needed to identify an employer to provide the required on-the-job training.⁵²

3.4 Evolution of traineeships over time and impact of recent economic crisis on traineeships

Youth unemployment has been less affected by the recent economic crisis than in other European Countries, which might be related to the quick response of the Maltese government setting up a 'Rapid Reaction Unit' to develop a social policy and promoting employment measures. A *Tripartite Forum* comprising trade unions, employers' organisations and the government has been set up, which especially targeted young workers.⁵³

⁴⁸ Maltese Government, National Action Plan on Employment 2004

⁴⁹ <https://www.mita.gov.mt/page.aspx?pageid=119>

⁵⁰ Sultana, Ronald/ Spiteri, Anna/ Norman, David/Schöner, Ulrike (2002), Vocational education and training and employment services in Malta. Monographs candidate countries. http://www.see-educoop.net/education_in/pdf/etf-mono-cand-countries-malta-oth-enl-t02.pdf

⁵¹ A ten-month programme is organised in training components on the job (three days per week) and off the job (two days per week).

⁵² Sultana, Ronald/ Spiteri, Anna/ Norman, David/Schöner, Ulrike (2002)

⁵³ Gatt, Rebecca (2011), Malta: EIRO CAR on 'Helping young workers during the crisis: contributions by social partners and public authorities', http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/studies/tn1101019s/tn1101019s_1.htm

In 2008, the ETC launched the 'Youth Strategy 2008/09', aimed at identifying key labour market trends and adopting their initiatives for training and employment of young workers.⁵⁴ In April 2010, the Ministry of Education, Employment and the Family revised the National Youth Policy for 2010/13.⁵⁵

However, increasing unemployment has had negative effects also on the youth, making it harder for them to obtain a decent job. They are more often represented in unpaid (often traineeship) employment or atypical jobs, which is also due to missing experience in the formal labour market, especially when leaving school or higher education. Often young workers are not getting paid for the work, as the work is often considered to be 'training' given by the employer.

3.5 Financing of traineeships

There exist different financial support schemes for trainees financed by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport. In 2007, vocational education initiatives were financed with €9.84 million for MCAST, €1.27 million for ITS (plus €768,700 in stipends), €2.9 million for the ETC and €2 million for their training programmes, while €465,874 expenditure for (each) of the Technician Apprentice Scheme (TAS) and Extended Skills Training Scheme (ESTS). Also, the government has invested more than €2.3 million in partnership projects and centres of private learning in IT. Moreover, the Malta Enterprise Act provides financial assistance subsidising the training provided by employers to their employees. Financial support for training of adults has been also available from the ESF, reaching 7,000 people.⁵⁶

The *Employment and Training Corporation* (ETC) is responsible for the administration of the following funding scheme and is also the agency where young individuals can apply for financial support.⁵⁷ The ETC plays an important role in financing traineeships offered in different schemes for job placement, many of which are co-financed by the European Social Fund. It provides financial support directly to the training service provider, and to the trainee.

Trainees are entitled to the minimum wage and the employment is regularised by the conditions set up in the Employment (Regulation) Act. The ETC is paying to the employer a training allowance of 40 per cent of the National Minimum wage (50 per cent in case of disadvantaged groups); and a training subsidy to each trainee, which is 80 per cent of the weekly minimum wage, during the whole training period.⁵⁸ However, only employers of trainees, who are registered unemployed upon embarking on a traineeship, are eligible for this subsidy.⁵⁹

Financing of traineeships was provided through the *Job Experience Scheme* (JES) of the ETC during 2004/06, with the financial support of the ESF. Young people participating in this programme received €46.59 per week for the duration of the scheme for a maximum duration of 13 consecutive weeks, based on a 20-hour week (four hours a day).⁶⁰ In 2008, this project was estimated to cost €168,000 (Lm 72,122).⁶¹

⁵⁴ Gatt, Rebecca (2011).

⁵⁵ Council of Europe (2010), Country Sheet on youth policy Malta. http://youth-partnership.eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/documents/Questionnaires/Country/2010/Country_sheet_Malta_2010.pdf

⁵⁶ Formosa, Marvin/ Rizzo, Saviour (2009), Malta: Collective bargaining and continuous vocational training. Euro foundation <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/studies/tn0804048s/mt0804049g.htm>

⁵⁷ National Commission for Higher Education (NCHE) (2011), Guide to financial support schemes for Maltese Students in Further and Higher education. Malta. https://www.nche.gov.mt/MediaCenter/PDFs/1_NCHE%20scholarship%20booklet_web.pdf

⁵⁸ Employment and Training Corporation, Traineeship. <http://etc.gov.mt/site/page.aspx?pageid=2071>

⁵⁹ Cedefop (2010), VET in Europe – Country report Malta. ReferNet. http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/eu/pub/cedefop/vetreport/2010_CR_MT.pdf

⁶⁰ Structural Fund Programme for Malta 2004-2006 Job Experience Scheme - ESF 72 75% EU Funds 25% Government Funds, <http://www.lca.org.mt/userfiles/ESF%2072%20-%20Job%20Experience%20Scheme%20literature.pdf>

⁶¹ Gozo News, 27.Feb. 2008 – The ETC spend €740,930 on employment schemes last year.

From the offer side, incentives are also given to local companies. The *Training Aid Framework* (TAF), co-financed by ESF, provides subsidies according to the type of training and size of enterprise, ranking from €4,000 up to €10,000 per trainee year.⁶² The highest amount is given for qualifications rated at MQF Level 5 or higher. The traineeship can be in-house or out-sourced, and given in Malta or abroad.⁶³ Each company may be allowed up to €250,000 a year. Eligible costs include trainers' fees, trainers' and employee's travel expenses, training consultancy and personnel costs during training. Individuals can apply through their employers, and if self-employed directly to the Employment and Training Corporation (ETC).

According to the National Action Plan on Employment 2004, traineeships provided by MCAST were to be financed as follows: in the engineering industry total investments of €291,940; in the electronics industry with an estimated cost of €194,380; and in the building and construction Industry with €193,480. Training for adults with no formal education was financed with €192,915.⁶⁴ The Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology financed traineeships in the Maltese craft sector, with €242,020 (NAP 2004).

Students participating in the *European Network and Information Security Agency* (ENISA) traineeship scheme may receive financial grants for recent graduates who completed the first cycle of university education (preferably computer science, mathematics, physics) and obtained a full degree or its equivalent. (According to the ENISA General report 2006, only five people from Malta participated in this scheme). They will be awarded a monthly grant of €700.⁶⁵

The LDV programme was implemented with six projects in Malta, with a total financial support amounting to €21,010,337 in the period 2000/06.⁶⁶

3.6 Public perceptions about traineeships

According to the Cedefop research study, *'there is no particular debate of great concern, which is currently attracting a lot of attention with respect to the provision of vocational education and training'*.⁶⁷ However, through the creation of the Malta Qualifications Council and the NCHE, more efforts have been made to address youth unemployment and to increase vocational training. Dialogue and discussions with the different stakeholders were also fostered.

Youth unemployment has been addressed by governmental agencies, such as the ETC, which notes an increasing difficulty for young adults entering employment after compulsory education. The youth sections of Trade Unions are also important social players for actively promoting youth workers' rights, by carrying out initiatives directed at helping young people in the labour market. The *General Workers Union* (GWU) *Youths* and the *Maltese Workers Union* (UHM) *Youths*, for instance, are organising activities to increase awareness of the precarious situation of young workers, which increasingly face problems, and are often employed without being paid, by offering them 'traineeships' for acquiring their first work experience. The *UHM Youths* also organised courses for young workers to raise

<http://gozonews.com/2247/the-etc-spent-e740930-on-employment-schemes-last-year/>

⁶² This scheme runs under Malta's operational programme 'Empowering people for more jobs and a better quality of life', for the 2007-2013 programming period. Source: The Training aid framework (TAF) - <http://www.mmeilak.com/the-training-aid-framework-taf/>

⁶³ National Commission for Higher Education (NCHE) (2011), Guide to financial support schemes for Maltese Students in Further and Higher education. Malta.

https://www.nche.gov.mt/mediacenter/PDFs/1_Student%20Guide%20English%20WEB.pdf

⁶⁴ Maltese Government, National Action Plan on Employment 2004. <http://ec.europa.eu/social/ajax/BlobServlet?docId=6063&langId=en>

⁶⁵ http://www.enisa.europa.eu/recruitment/copy2_of_rules-governing-traineeship-periods-at-enisa-1

⁶⁶ European Commission (2010), Training for Mobility, Mobility for training. 15th anniversary of the Leonardo da Vinci programme 1995-2010. http://ec.europa.eu/education/pub/pdf/vocational/leonardo15_en.pdf

⁶⁷ Cedefop (2010), VET in Europe – Country report Malta. ReferNet. http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/eu/pub/cedefop/vetreport/2010_CR_MT.pdf

awareness of their employment rights and working conditions, very often stipulated in collective agreements and job descriptions.⁶⁸

The two Unions GWU Youths and UHM Youths are also actively participating in discussions with the government and social partners, promoting policies or formulating proposals concerning employment related issues which also affect the young population.⁶⁹

4. Practices and Content of Traineeships

4.1 Traineeships as part of education and/or labour market entry and integration for young people

Students following the various programmes of vocational training offered at the *Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology* (MCAST) have to participate for a short period in an unpaid work placement. The programmes include: administrative and secretarial studies, insurance studies, marketing, accounting, banking and financial services, and the business diploma. Students are expected to work for a maximum of twenty-five hours a week for five weeks (overall 125 hours). They are supported by their tutors who assess them at the place of work, together with a mentor who follows them within the organisation.⁷⁰

Students are assigned to live projects, tasks and duties within organisations - in line with the student's programme of studies. The organisation only has to submit a clear brief report regarding the characteristics expected of students on the unpaid work placement, the institute will assign a student which will closely fit the requirement.

Participants on the *Youth Studies Programme* are required to undertake 300 hours of fieldwork placement.

4.2 Issues about employer practices as regards traineeships

As stated by Simms (2011)⁷¹ Malta is:

'... replacing the traditional collective bargaining mechanism, young workers tend to negotiate their own terms without consulting a trade union. Lacking experience, some workers are exploited and bound to sign contracts, which are less favourable than the standard conditions offered for the same placement within the industry. Besides, many employers still consider joining a trade union as a threat and so the fear factor of being discriminated on the basis of trade union membership is still high amongst young workers.'

This weakens the position of young workers, and undermines their working rights. On the other hand, with increasing youth unemployment and parallel improvement of the skill qualification, employers have a better position to require more qualification at a lower price, or even without payment, by offering the possibility of gaining 'employment experience'.

⁶⁸ Simms, Melanie (2011), Helping young workers during the crisis: contributions by social partners and public authorities. University of Warwick. Eiro Car. http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/studies/tn1101019s/tn1101019s_1.htm

⁶⁹ Simms, Melanie (2011), Helping young workers during the crisis: contributions by social partners and public authorities. University of Warwick. Eiro Car. http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/studies/tn1101019s/tn1101019s_1.htm

⁷⁰ The Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry, MCAST launches Unpaid Work Placement Scheme for Summer 2010. <http://www.maltachamber.org.mt/content.aspx?id=206263>

⁷¹ Simms, Melanie (2011), Helping young workers during the crisis: contributions by social partners and public authorities. University of Warwick. Eiro Car. http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/studies/tn1101019s/tn1101019s_1.htm

5. Trainee's Rights and Terms and Conditions

According to the GHK report, most common conditions covered in traineeship agreements relate to working hours, financial support, health insurance and accommodation. However, they are not entitled to social benefits.

6. Quality Assurance of Traineeships

The ETC is responsible for the quality standard of on-the-job training provided at the employers' establishment and at the VET Institutes. In 2009, the ETC Training Division initiated a project of compiling *Occupational Skills Guidelines* (OSG) for all *apprenticeship* callings.⁷²

The *Malta Qualification Council* (MQC), set up in December 2005, (Legal notice 347/2005), is responsible for the National Qualification Framework on LLL, and is overseeing the training and qualifications which are still not included in the NQF. The quality assurance standards, which are based on the *European Quality Assurance Reference Framework* (EQARF), set up standards and quality of vocational training and the comparability of skills acquired through the regulation of qualifications. In nine sectors occupational standards have been identified to better match the qualifications of the VET sector (agribusiness; art & design, building and construction engineering, business & commerce, community services, electrical and mechanical engineering, hospitality, heritage; community care; and information technology).⁷³

On completion of the traineeship provided by the ETC, trainees are assessed by a *Trade Testing Board* to test the standards of occupational competence reached. Those who show proficiency in a range of skills making up an occupation are awarded a Certificate of Achievement.⁷⁴

7. Overall Assessment as regards Traineeships

7.1 Benefits and drawbacks of traineeships

Generally speaking the traineeship schemes are lying in the tension between giving young people the opportunity to get employment experience and gain additional qualifications, and on the other hand be an employment niche, where qualified young people are close to being employed. Still little is known on the number of traineeships granted by companies which are not registered at national level. This would be useful in order to get a better picture of

⁷² The guidelines include an occupational profile, a list of competencies to be taught during on-the-job training, and assessment criteria for the final Trade Testing. These OSC are handed to apprentices at the beginning of the course so that they are aware of the training content and performance expected of them on completion of their apprenticeship programme. A monitoring framework was drawn up by the ETC Training Division to ensure that apprentices received adequate quality training within the agreed parameters. The officials of the Training division also carried out 512 monitoring visits (in 2009), both at the employers' establishments (408) and in the VET institutions (104 visits), either at MazCAST or at ITS. During these visits, ETC officials discussed progress and on-the-job training experiences with apprentices, and, at the same time, reinforced the overall coaching relationship between apprentice and Training Division official.

⁷³ Cedefop (2010), VET in Europe – Country report Malta. ReferNet. http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/eu/pub/cedefop/vetreport/2010_CR_MT.pdf

⁷⁴ Cedefop (2010), VET in Europe – Country report Malta. ReferNet.

the real extent of unpaid traineeships, both for a short duration or a longer duration. Still, there is insufficient protection. It has become common practice to employ young people with the 'traineeship' excuse, instead of providing at least a low payment. Young people are at risk of providing work often in activities which lie below their qualification.

However, it has also to be admitted that it is an entrance to employment, and experience is positive in most of the cases. It has, however, to be distinguished between the different groups taking up traineeship, because qualifications, sectors and activities differ considerably.

Also, if traineeships are carried out correctly, employers invest time and knowledge and provide important support to the young. It is also a good way to find adequate candidates, and if the economic situation allows, to expand employment; a fact that the economic crisis currently undermines. Therefore pressure increases on both sides.

7.2 Effectiveness of traineeships

Traineeships can play an important role in improving the employability of young people. However, there exists vast differences between employers and sectors, and this influences the effectiveness considerably. There is little doubt that traineeships are mostly considered positive, but low or no wage or social security are problematic for the young, which have to rely on other funding sources. There are differences, as financial support might be given; while in others traineeships provide some kind of qualification on the one hand, but (due to the non-existent payment) they do not create new employment.

However, different interests might influence the outcomes, and where the supervision of governmental agencies or institutions exists, and quality control is provided, this might be very positive. For instance, within the *Job Experience Scheme (JES)* around two-thirds of those who undertook work exposure with private companies were actually retained in employment. As a result, the annual targets were exceeded by this scheme.

7.3 Good practice examples and recommendations

a) The *National Commission for Higher Education (NCHE)* has developed a guide, with information on all funding schemes available that support courses leading to qualifications included in the Malta Qualifications Framework (MQF); and information on the regulations of each funding scheme.⁷⁵

b) A special programme for newly graduating doctors (after finishing University) is provided by the *Malta Foundation Programme*. This two-year training programme essentially involves structured teaching, hands-on training and assessments, whilst working in a supervised hospital or primary-care environment. Each trainee is supervised by an *Educational Supervisor (ES)* who has been specifically trained for this job. They are responsible for supporting the trainee; regularly discussing the work experience and difficulties; and discussing the trainee's personal development plans and progress. The supervisor is also responsible for providing reports in the trainee's e-portfolio and is able to recommend successful trainees are issued with the *Achievement of F1 Competence Document* or the *Foundation Achievement of Competence Document (FACD)* after the second year.

c) A *Clinical Supervisor (CS)* will additionally follow the trainee making sure that they have adequate clinical supervision in the workplace and performs some of the work-based

⁷⁵ Employment and Training Corporation (ETC) (2009), Annual Report 2009, Malta. <http://www.etc.gov.mt/docs/CEO-32-100712-artwork.pdf>

assessments. The CS offers the necessary support and issues a clinical supervisor's report at the end of the placement.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ Malta Foundation Programme - <http://www.fpdoctors.info/index.php?page=the-foundation-programme>

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Annex

Table A 1: Training participants in ETC Vocational training

Name of the Scheme	Oct - 2006-Sept 2007			Jan-Dec 2009		
	16-24	25-39	Total (16-39)	16-24	25-39	Total (16-39)
Employment aid programme	:	:		197	70	267
Job experience scheme	306	0	306	279	0	279
Bridging the gap scheme	24	31	55	18	35	53
Active youth scheme	110		110	8	0	8
work start scheme	0	58	58	0	1	1
Work trial scheme	:	:	:	85	13	98
Private sector placement scheme	:	:	:	38	0	38
Traineeship schemes (trainees enrolled)	40	8	48	26	3	29
Youth employment scheme	20	:	20	:	:	:
Total	500	97	597	651	122	773

Source: *Employment and Training Corporation (ETC) (2009), Annual Report 2009, and Annual Report 2006-2007, Malta.*

Table A 2: Outgoing and incoming Erasmus student mobility for placements

Academic year	Outgoing	Incoming
2007/2008	101 (EU27: 97) (including 3 from TK) Main countries: FR (42), DE (13), ES (8))	10 (IT (4), BE (3), UK (2), ES (1))
2008/2009	261 (including 3 from TK) Main countries: FR (86), ES (36) DE (40), UK (17)	10 (BE (6), IT (2), LU (1))
2009/2010	431 (EU27: 417) (including 14 from TK) Main countries: FR (126), ES (58), PL (36), DE (25), UK (23), LV (18), RO (16)	67 UK (18), IT (13), FR (11),

Source: European Commission, Erasmus Programme, studying in Europe and more http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc80_en.htm

Table A 3: Economic sectors covered by ETC traineeships

Upper-secondary and Post-secondary level	Tertiary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agribusiness • Art and Design • Building and Construction Engineering • Electrical and Electronic Engineering • Business and Commerce • Community Services • Mechanical Engineering • Information and Communication Technology • Maritime 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graphic Design & Interactive Media • 3D Design & Interiors • Business Enterprise • Electronics Engineering • Electronics and Control Engineering • Software Development • Computer Networks • Tourism Studies • Conservation Studies

Source: Cedefop (2010), VET in Europe – Country report Malta. ReferNet.

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1. Traineeships as part of Member State's Youth Policy Measures

1.1 Introduction

Traineeships ('stages'; 'stagelopen'; 'praktijkvorming'; 'beroepspraktijkvorming' (BPV); 'bpv-plaatsen') are an essential element of general, vocational and higher education in the Netherlands. In many programmes traineeships are an integral part of the curriculum. This is particular the case for the following sectors of vocational and higher education and training:

- Preparatory senior secondary vocational education (*voorbereidend middelbaar beroepsonderwijs* – VMBO) – a component of fulltime compulsory general education/lower secondary education.
- Senior secondary vocational education (*middelbaar beroepsonderwijs* – MBO) - the main part of vocational education and training in the Netherlands.
- Vocational/professional higher education (*hoger beroepsonderwijs*, HBO), which forms the bridge between vocational education and training and higher education.

The main information presented in this study refers to these three elementary areas of the public system of vocational education, training and higher education in the Netherlands. Learning in practice, in particular in private companies, have been promoted intensively for the last 20 to 25 Years within educational policy. Reforms in the Netherlands have explicitly taken place under the guiding principle of coordination and cooperation between the various school-based and company initial and continuing vocational education and training areas and institutions. The Starting point for this kind of modernisation has been the Rauwenhoff-Commissie (cf. Rauwenhoff-Commissie 1990). 'stages' (traineeships) have grown to be more and more a systematic part of learning and instruction in order to enhance the link between theory and practice. This has been of great importance for the modernisation of education, vocational education and training in the Netherlands, in particular for vocational education and training as this sector was traditionally school-based and far removed from learning in practice.

Alongside these main types of traineeships within the Dutch system of education and vocational education and training there are several other forms of traineeship, for instance as part of the academic education at universities for students training to become a teacher, a lawyer, a doctor etc. The issue of unregulated work placements for academics also plays more and more of a role in the Netherlands (cf. Akkermans 2011).

Many programmes have been launched to enhance international mobility and youth exchange across the EU, in particular for vocational education and higher education (cf. Europees Platform/Cinop/Nuffic 2003; Stronkhorst 2005). Last, but not least, traineeships are an instrument of policy to cope with youth unemployment (cf. Plug 2001).

Table 1.1 below provides an overview of the two major types of traineeships which can be found in Netherlands.

1.2 Traineeships as part of Youth Policy Measures

In the light of the four indicators on youth labour market performance (cf Brunello, 2010),¹ labour market prospects for young Dutch people are relatively favourable compared to other EU member states (cf. European Commission, 2011; Brunello 2010; European Trade Union Confederation, 2010). Data reveals the quarterly unemployment rate by age between 2008 and 2009 to have been the lowest among all surveyed EU countries (cf. European Trade Union Confederation, 2010). The transition from education to work is rather smooth in European terms. On the one hand this can partly be explained through the periodically tight labour market in the Netherlands. But on the other hand this can also be explained by the close link between education, vocational education and the world of work via traineeships.

It must be emphasised too, that in comparison to other groups in the Dutch labour market, young people represent the one with the highest probability of becoming unemployed. The youth unemployment rate experienced an increase from seven per cent to 8.7 per cent between 2007 and 2010 (cf. European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2011). This is due to the general difficulties of school leavers in finding a job, as well as to the fact that young people are commonly employed on fixed-term contracts, which makes experiencing redundancy more likely when it comes to the downsizing of an organisation (cf. Bekker 2010).

A large problem is early school leaving, which results in a higher chance of unemployment and inactivity. Moreover the percentage of unemployment is particularly high in the youngest age group, and has increased from 2008 to 2010 (cf. Bekker 2010).

Regarding young people's perspective on the labour market situation, a survey from 2011 revealed that young Dutch people see the main three reasons for difficulties in finding a job as a lack of jobs in the city (48 per cent), a lack of good job opportunities (43 per cent) and a lack of knowledge and skills (33 per cent) (cf. Flash Eurobarometer 319b, 2011, 53). However, with respect to preparation for the labour market, responses again indicate an only moderately severe state. Of the young people surveyed 3.1 per cent rated the guidance and counselling they received during their schooling on the different further education and training options as very poor, 16.2 per cent rated it as poor and 7.4 per cent said that they had not received any. Guidance was rated as satisfactory by 30.3 per cent, and good by 36.1 per cent, while four per cent felt the guidance and counselling they received was very good (cf. Flash Eurobarometer 319b, 2011, 121). Regarding guidance and counselling during school as to future job opportunities, 3.6 per cent felt these were very poor, 16.7 per cent rated them as poor, and 24.8 per cent rated guidance as satisfactory. Guidance and counselling was rated as good by 32.5 per cent, and as very good by 3.8 per cent. The rate of people indicating that they had not been given any guidance or counselling was 13.9 per cent (cf. Flash Eurobarometer 319b, 2011, 124).

Measures to promote youth employment: In September 2009 the 'Actieplan Jeugwerkloosheid' was implemented by the Dutch government, as a measure to combat youth unemployment with a budget of €250 million (between 2009 and 2011). The action plan consists of five main projects, of which three aim to keep young people in school, whereas the other two are part of Active Labour Market Policies (ALMPs) and aim to move young people into work.

- The first programme of the former group of projects is called the 'School Ex-programma', which aims to keep 10,000 extra pupils at school, and therefore approaches and monitors young people studying at intermediate professional level who do not have solid labour market prospects.

¹ Indicators are 1. percentage trained, 2. percentage neither in employment nor in education and training, 3. probability of transition to a permanent contract and 4. percentage of dropouts.

- Under the second programme school leavers who have been inactive for three months are provided with an apprenticeship. This apprenticeship is offered by social partners at sectoral level, and may eventually result in a job offer.
- A third programme contains a combination of education, care general support and support to assist the transition into the labour market.

These programmes have so far provided 68,000 young people with a job, learning/work placement or a traineeship.

- One of the two work-focused programmes encompasses 30 covenants with regions on youth unemployment, supporting actors to create participation opportunities.
- The second programme matches young job seekers with companies, vacancies, apprenticeships and volunteering options. This programme is carried out by the municipalities and the public employment service (cf. Bekker, 2010).

The largest ALMP measure is the *Wet investeren in jongeren* (Investment in Youth Act, WIJ), introduced 1 October 2009. Since then people aged 18-27 are no longer entitled to social assistance, but are offered work, education or a combination of the two by the municipalities. If they accept a placement they are paid a salary by their employer. If education is chosen the person receives an income equivalent to social assistance. To refuse these work and educational offers would result in a denial of benefits (cf. Bekker, 2010).

Another challenge the Netherlands is facing is the issue of part-time work, temporary contracts and low salaries due to the special youth minimum wage. They form the characteristics of Dutch youth employment and could potentially result in difficulties regarding labour market transition as well as long-term unemployment. Data reveals a significant decrease in young people shifting from temporary to permanent employment between 1990 and 2010. While at the end of the 1990s 50 per cent made the transition to permanent work within a year, the overall transition rate dropped to 24 per cent in the period 2003 to 2007, and decreased further to 18 per cent during the crisis period of 2009 to 2010 (cf. Wilthagen, 2011). The problem of temporary youth work however has been neglected by politics, and in fact been increased with some of the measures described above (cf. Bekker 2010). The absence of social assistance, and a recent change in labour law in 2010, which allowed employers to offer young workers (up to the age of 27) four consecutive fixed-term contracts rather than three (cf. European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2011, 22), has led to insecurity.

Table 1.1: Summary table of main forms of Traineeships in NL

Traineeship	Brief Description
Non-regulated types of traineeships: 'stages'; 'stagelopen'	Traineeships in the open market, e.g. after graduation
'praktijkvorming', 'beroepspraktijkvorming' (BPV), 'bpv-plaatsen')	Practical parts in the context of the 'Adult Education and Vocational Training Act'. The company which offers traineeships for MBO-students has to arrange this on the basis of a contract ('praktijkovereenkomst') between the student, the company ('Leerbedrijf') and the Vocational School (Regionaal Opleidingen Center, ROC). At the vocational schools full-time staff is responsible to keep in contact with companies in order to arrange traineeships for the students. Companies and organisations willing to provide this need to fulfil a number of quality criteria set by the bodies of the national industry organisations, and have to be granted permission. A register is kept for such companies.

Traineeship

Brief Description

Traineeships as part of prevocational secondary education

Traineeships in secondary education, in particular in the VMBO-Education are integrated into three practically oriented schemes and serve the purpose of supporting vocational orientation

2. Legislative Framework for Traineeships

2.1 Legal framework for and governance of internships/ traineeships/stages

There is no overarching traineeship-related legal framework. There is no national legal framework for traineeships within academic education universities and no legal framework for unregulated work placements for academics. But there is a legal framework for traineeships within vocational education and training, the Adult Education and Vocational Training Act (Wet Educatie en Beroepsonderwijs, WEB; cf. MOCW 1996a), which came into force in 1997. This Act was the first one to bring together all types of secondary vocational education and adult education and aimed to strengthen and further integrate the system of initial and post-initial vocational education, apart from general education. Since that time in the Netherlands the expression qualification structure is used.

The Adult Education and Vocational Training Act covers the two areas of general adult education and non-academic vocational education and training. The aim is for this to be used as a basis for the achievement nationally of a high level of standardisation, transparency and comparability between VET pathways and qualifications. This law abolished the division into school-based and work-based vocational education and training. A central feature is that the forms of vocationally related learning offered in vocational schools and in companies (also on the basis of traineeships) are in principle equivalent and are based on joint training regulations.

On the basis of the Vocational Training Act (WEB) the expertise centres for vocational education, training and labour market are responsible for defining competences, and educational institutions for translating this to educational concepts. The vocational education system in the Netherlands is regulated by national and regional institutions - it is a national uniform educational system with decentralised administration.² Overall responsibility is with the Ministry of Education. In 2008 the Ministry made €3.3 billion available for vocational and adult education (for more information about the regulation see Chapter 'Practices and content of traineeships').

In the Netherlands secondary education begins at the age of 12 years old. Secondary education in the Netherlands is regulated by the Secondary Education Act. In principle young people can choose between three different secondary school forms in an all-day school system:

- Preparatory senior secondary vocational education VMBO (Voorbereidend middelbaar beroepsonderwijs): lasts four years and is intended as a foundation course for the general and the pre-vocational component. This form of compulsory and general education is more and more seen as a part of vocational education, in particular the last two years. VMBO provides the basis for further education (both secondary vocational education - MBO - and senior general secondary education - HAVO). The curriculum

² Information on the structure of the VET system is largely derived from the contribution on the Netherlands in the German language publication 'Internationales Handbuch der Berufsbildung'; G. Busse, D. Frommberger: Niederlande, forthcoming.

consists of general subjects and, in the last two school years, vocationally oriented subjects, which can be followed by four learning pathways. Three of these pathways feature more practical learning including traineeships in enterprises. VMBO is a kind of formal education, with a traineeships requirement. VMBO represents an educational activity aimed at helping young people put into practice their theoretical knowledge and acquire work-related competencies, skills and attitudes.

- Higher general secondary education HAVO (Hoger algemeen voortgezet onderwijs): The HAVO programmes last five years. The certificate entitles students to enter higher professional education (Hoger Beroepsonderwijs, HBO). In HAVO traineeships do not play any important role.
- Preparation for academic studies (Voorbereidend wetenschappelijk onderwijs, VWO): The VWO programmes serve for the preparation of scientific-oriented study at university and take six years.

So traineeships in secondary education, in particular in VMBO-Education, fall under the Secondary Education Act.

At the end of secondary education around 50 per cent of young Dutch adults in each year group decide to embark on a course of initial vocational education and training in the area of senior secondary vocational education (*middelbaar beroepsonderwijs* – MBO). The other half of the year group pursue further general education with the aim of achieving entry to higher professional education (Hoger Beroepsonderwijs, HBO) or to universities. Thus senior secondary vocational education (*middelbaar beroepsonderwijs* – MBO) is the pivotal point. MBO (minimum age: 16 years) covers two different learning routes:

- The occupation-training route (BOL) with a practical training element of 20 to 60 per cent of the programme.
- The occupation-accompanying route (BBL): vocational training with a practical training element of at least 60 per cent.

There are four MBO learning pathways.

- Level 1: Assistant level. Duration: six months to one year
- Level 2: Vocational basic training. Duration: two to three years
- Level 3: Vocational education. Duration: two to four years
- Level 4: Training for middle management. Duration: three to four years and further training as a specialist. Duration: one to two years.

The leaving certificate of the MBO level 4 (middle management and specialisation) opens the doors for entering to higher vocational training (Hoger Beroepsonderwijs - HBO) at the colleges of further education (Hogescholen).

About two thirds of all MBO students in the Netherlands complete BOL training. One third choose the BBL-route, which is a more 'part-time' type vocational education and training for adults and working people. For the BOL-type training traineeships are a central and mandatory element for acquiring vocational experiences, skills and competencies in companies. The BOL-type of MBO as upper secondary vocational education and training aims at vocational preparation on the basis of traineeships.

The main part of the 'Adult Education and Vocational Training Act' covers the standardisation of traineeships ('opleiden in de praktijk'; 'praktijkcomponent', beroepspraktijkvorming, BPV) within the BOL-route in MBO. A company which offers traineeships for MBO students has to take care of the students on the basis of contracts ('praktijkovereenkomst') between the students, the companies ('Leerbedrijf') and the Vocational Schools (Regionaal Opleidingen Center, ROC). At the vocational schools full-time staff are responsible for keeping in contact with companies in order to arrange traineeships for students.

The Dutch system of higher professional education (*hoger beroepsonderwijs*, HBO) is a practice-oriented variant of higher education. Its main aim is preparing students for professional practice and entry into the labour market. It is offered at universities of professional education (hogescholen) respectively universities of applied sciences. This type of education, which lies between vocational education and higher education, is regulated by the Higher Education Act in the Netherlands.

In the Netherlands there are two kinds of universities:

- Scientific universities and/or universities in general (WO: wetenschappelijk onderwijs - universiteit).
- The professional training colleges of further education (HBO: hoger beroepsonderwijs - hogeschool).

There are 14 national state universities and 44 colleges of further education as well as numerous private educational facilities and one correspondence university. Because of the Bologna process a three-fold study system was implemented: Bachelor's, Master's and graduation. Universities and colleges of further education offer research and/or professionally-oriented Bachelor's and Master's programmes. In September 2002 tertiary education was formed into Bachelor's and Master's study-courses. In the WO a Bachelor's takes three years, in the HBO four years. After finishing the Bachelor's degree the student can specialise in a two-year Master's course. An exception is medicine, in which the Master's takes three years.

As in the VET system, traineeships are also integrated in the curriculum in higher professional education (HBO). Students usually complete a mandatory traineeship for around nine months in the third year of their study programmes to gain practical experience. Students often complete their thesis or final project on the basis of this traineeship.

2.2 Definition of internships/traineeships/stages and interns/trainees/stagiaires

The general existing definition of traineeships describes them as a period of activities and work set according to a traineeship schedule within the framework of a study or training programme.³ A trainee is defined as anyone who undertakes a traineeship, under the guidance of a traineeship leader, as part of an educational programme.⁴ There does not seem to be a detailed legal definition of traineeship and/or trainee. Depending of the type of traineeship, the following terms are normally used, in particular for the non-regulated types of traineeships: *stages* and *stagelope*. The terms *praktijkvorming*, *beroepspraktijkvorming* (BPV), *bpv-plaatsen* are used in the context of the 'Adult Education and Vocational Training Act', which covers the standardisation of traineeships within the BOL-training route in MBO (see above, in the chapter legislative framework for traineeships). Companies which offer traineeships for MBO students have to take care of students on the basis of contracts (*praktijkovereenkomst*) between the student, the company (*Leerbedrijf*) and the Vocational School (Regionaal Opleidingen Center, ROC).

³ Cf. European Commission 2008; Rijksoverheid http://www.minfin.nl/nl/actueel/kamerstukken_en_besluiten,2006/12/CPPO6-1461.html.

⁴ Cf. European Commission 2008; Rijksoverheid http://www.minfin.nl/nl/actueel/kamerstukken_en_besluiten,2006/12/CPPO6-1461.html.

2.3 Legal provisions about aspects of internships/traineeships/stages

There are no provisions for either the duration nor the remuneration of a traineeship/stage.⁵ This was also confirmed by the expert interviews. Neither in the secondary nor in the tertiary sector does any remuneration exist. The duration of a traineeship is only defined in the curriculum.

Formal obligations include the signing of a traineeship contract. The exact content of the contract depends on the kind of traineeship, education programme, and type of hosting organisation. The curriculum describes the learning contents of the traineeship, but as several of the expert interviews pointed out, the contract defines them, so contents can differ between the various forms of traineeships.

In the case of an employment contract, other provisions, such as health insurance and reimbursement of travelling expenses, can be offered.⁶

3. Availability of and Access to Traineeships

The availability of and access to traineeships concerning the non-regulated types is based on an open market, only supported by Internetplatforms (see for instance www.stagelopen.nl; www.stageplaza.nl; www.stagemarkt.nl). Students try to get traineeships on the basis of a direct contact/application to companies.

For traineeships within the public system of education, vocational education and training, based on a curriculum, schools and teachers support students to find a 'beroepspraktijkvorming'. For instance at the vocational schools in upper secondary vocational education and training (MBO) full-time staff and special departments are responsible for keeping in contact with companies in order to arrange traineeships for students.

Vocational Schools are also in a close contact with the 'Centres of Expertise on vocational education, training and the labour market' (Kenniscentrum Beroepsonderwijs Bedrijfsleven, nowadays they call themselves Knowledge Centres for VET and Industry, KBB). Together with companies and vocational schools these institutions are responsible for senior secondary vocational education and training. The KBBs form the link between vocational education and business sector organisations and are responsible for the quality of traineeships within the regulated and public system of vocational education and training, the schools are responsible for supporting students while following a traineeship (cf. Hövels/Visser 2006).

But in the Netherlands – as in other countries as well - it is always a big challenge involving companies in publicly organised vocational education and training. Some companies are very interested in being part of initial or further education and training, but most companies rely on their own and traditional ways of qualifying staff on the basis of very specialised and not general criteria and standards.

⁵ Cf. European Commission 2008; Rijksoverheid http://www.minfin.nl/nl/actueel/kamerstukken_en_besluiten,2006/12/CPPO6-1461.html.

⁶ Cf. European Commission 2008; Belastingdienst http://www.belastingdienst.nl/zakelijk/loonheffingen/lb22_afdrachtverminderingen/lb22_afdrachtverminderingen-16.html; Belastingdienst: http://www.belastingdienst.nl/zakelijk/loonheffingen/lb22_arbeidsrelaties/lb22_arbeidsrelaties-13.html; Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau: <http://www.scp.nl/publicaties/boeken/9037702082.shtml>, <http://www.lsr.nl/THEMADOSSIER/Onderwijsrecht/Stage/tabid/245/Default.aspx>.

their scholarships when they study abroad, the number of students partly studying outside the Netherlands could be increased. Moreover, a recently introduced law enables students in higher education to obtain a joint degree at Bachelor's, Master's and PhD levels. The government supports traineeships abroad through exchange programmes like 'Regional Attention and Action for Knowledge circulation (RAAK)'.

In terms of those undertaking transnational placements in LLP countries, in the Netherlands participants are mainly students, including apprentices (VET, HE, secondary school) (cf. Korpelainen/Nikolov, 2011, 12). Placements are generally unpaid (cf. Korpelainen/Nikolov, 2011, 13). The most significant types of organisations offering placements to trainees are VET schools, as well as small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) (cf. Korpelainen/Nikolov, 2011, 14). Between the academic year 2008 and 2009 the Netherlands hosted 1,188 Erasmus trainees. At the same time the number of Erasmus trainees/apprentices from the Netherlands going abroad was 2,103. Under the Leonardo da Vinci programme the number of outgoing trainees in 2008 was 4,197. Between the years 2000 and 2009 the number of beneficiaries within the LdV target groups was 33,138 (cf. European Union 2010). The most common countries sending Erasmus trainees to the Netherlands are France, Germany, Spain, Belgium and the UK. These countries are also the most common host countries for trainees from the Netherlands (cf. Korpelainen 2011). The main challenge for the sending organisations is indentifying transnational partners suited to the participants' needs (cf. Korpelainen 2011, 24). Regarding the host organisations, the main challenge appears to be the funding available for participants and the financial capacity of the host organisation (cf. Korpelainen 2011, 25).

Based on respondents who have lived abroad, or are currently abroad for education or training purposes, the main purpose of young people's learning mobility period was surveyed. Thirty one per cent said they went to study abroad as part of higher education. Forty seven per cent answered that they went as part of their school education, including lower and upper secondary school. Studying abroad as part of vocational education and training applied to 40 per cent. Staying abroad for a traineeship in a company or similar organisation as part of higher education was given as the reason by 29 per cent, whereas doing so as part of vocational education and training applied to 26 per cent (cf. Flash Eurobarometer 319b, 2011, 28).

Furthermore in the area of vocational education and training, options were created for students to complete internships abroad (cf. Bekker, 2010, 5). The aspect of internationalisation and mobility of VET became of high importance in the last decades (cf. Herbrink, 2000) and thus an integral part of the Vocational Education and Training Act of 1996:

'In order to prepare future workers for an international society, education has to internationalise. For educational institutions, international co-operation will have to lead to a clear added value for content and quality of education. In this regard, internationalisation deserves a firm position in the general policy aimed at innovation of vocational education...'

(MOCW 1996b; see Nooter/Jacobs 2000, 11).

Internationalisation and mobility of the students serves as a criterion for the quality in VET in vocational schools (ROC, Regionaal Opleidingscentrum):

'An important though often neglected theme is the increasing internationalisation of vocational education and training. When it comes to preparation for practising a profession and functioning in society, the influence is inescapable, especially from Europe ... Particularly ROCs, in which senior secondary vocational education and adult education united under one roof, can be seen as expertise centres in the area of internationalisation. They need to develop this aspect further for today's market. Internationalisation is becoming an increasingly important quality aspect. It is up to the ROCs and the national bodies for vocational education to help shape this ... A

condition for this is that internationalisation should be integrated in the strategic policy of ROCs and the national bodies'

(MOCW 2000b).

Students in VET are allowed to choose special modules concerning international mobility and because of this traineeships abroad and within European Member States are of high status and relevance. Certificates and competences of the student completing the traineeships abroad can be recognised and credited by Vocational schools as part of the national qualifications. Lists of companies abroad at which students in VET are allowed to undertake a traineeship are offered by the national branch organisations (KBBs). The KBBs are responsible for these awards.

With respect to transnational mobility of trainees, there seem to be two main challenges outside the institutional and legislative framework. The first one is the lack of resources to motivate enterprises; the second one is the large number of intermediaries which increases costs and complexity (cf. Korpelainen 2011, 48). Consequently Dutch stakeholders agreed that a common framework at EU level is a possible solution to better facilitate transnational mobility of trainees, and ensured their support towards such a development (cf. Korpelainen, 2011, 56).

In 2003 a monitoring report on international mobility was published by NUFFIC (cf. NUFFIC, 2003) concerning students in general, vocational and higher education in the Netherlands. The data are more than ten years old, but might give useful information about developments in international mobility.

The following table shows the number of students in professional higher education (HBO) serving a part of the study programme/traineeship abroad during their study programme:

Table 3.1: Students in professional higher education (HBO) serving a part of the study programme/traineeship abroad

	Stage	Studie	Combinatie	Anders	Combinatie	Totaal
1996-97	14,5	2,7	2,3	5,1	2,5	27,1
1997-98	14,4	3,1	2,3	4,7	2,4	26,9
1998-99	15,8	3,3	2,4	5,6	2,3	29,4
1999-00	14,7	3,6	2,5	5,3	2,3	28,4
2000-01	13,4	3,3	2,3	4,8	2,1	25,9
<i>Gemiddeld</i>	<i>14,6</i>	<i>3,2</i>	<i>2,4</i>	<i>5,1</i>	<i>2,3</i>	<i>27,5</i>

Source: NUFFIC, 2003, 62

In 2000/2001 approximately 27 per cent of students gained international experience within their study programme, 13.4 per cent on the basis of a traineeship. In comparison to Higher education the international mobility rate in Vocational Education and Training was quite low. Only one to two per cent of students gained experience while learning abroad:

Table 3.2: Students in vocational and educational training serving a part of the study programme/ traineeship abroad

<i>Jaar</i>	<i>1999/2000</i>	<i>2000/2001</i>	<i>2001/2002</i>	<i>2002/2003</i>
Totaal aantal leerlingen bve (1)	410.000**	423.000***	440.700****	435.000 ¹⁸
Deelname leerlingen aan programma's (2)	5.379	5.416	6841*****	1475
% deelname (2/1)	1,3	1,28	1.55	0.33
Totale programma mobiliteit bve	6.448	6.338	7.273	1815

Source: NUFFIC, 2003, 44

Concerning international mobility, this relation between higher and vocational education is very typical, and it is also the case in other countries. For the Netherlands this also shows the big difference between higher professional education (HBO) and vocational education and training (MBO).

3.2 Sectors where traineeships are prevalent

Both public and private sectors offer structured traineeships. A survey reveals in the Netherlands the main sectors offering placements to trainees are agriculture and forestry (cf. European Commission, 2008); however traineeships are particularly common in the sectors of education, healthcare, and governmental bodies as well.⁹

For vocational education and training on the basis of the Vocational Training Act all sectors covered by the 'Centres of Expertise on vocational education, training and the labour market' (Knowledge Centres for VET and Industry, KBB) are of high relevance for traineeships. Organised by sector, their managing boards comprise representatives of employers and employees, and in most cases, educational institutions. Their statutory tasks are: developing qualifications for vocational education, monitoring the examinations administered by education institutes, recruiting new companies to offer training places (for practical training/ traineeships); and monitoring the quality of the companies offering training places. The Netherlands has 17 Centres of Expertise, organised around one sector or branch of industry. The Centres of Expertise are: *aequor*, *calibris*, *ecabo*, *fundeon*, *goc*, *innovam*, *kenniscentrum handel*, *kenteq*, *kenwerk*, *koc*, *pmlf*, *savantis*, *sh&m*, *svgb*, *svo*, *voc*, *vtl*. Besides developing qualification files and the qualification structure, they recruit training firms, also for traineeships, and monitor the quality of these training firms.

3.3 Profile/patterns of traineeships

There is no specific information available on this aspect.

⁹ Cf. Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau: <http://www.scp.nl/publicaties/boeken/9037702082.shtml>.

3.4 Recruitment process of and equity of access to traineeships

There is no specific information available on this aspect.

3.5 Evolution of traineeships over time and impact of recent economic crisis on traineeships

There is no specific information available on this aspect.

But, in an interview in connection with the crisis and traineeships, Marian Schaapman from the Hugo Sinzheimer Institute, University of Amsterdam, says:

'The Labour market situation of young people has figured prominently on the agenda of the largest union in the Netherlands, the Dutch Trade Union Federation (Federatie Nederlands Vakbeweging, FNV). FNV has strongly advocated the creation of the Action Plan Youth Employment. Moreover, within the context of the measures proposed by the FNV to deal with the crisis (FNV 2009a), certain measures are specifically aimed at the young unemployed. The FNV union for young workers, FNV Young (FNV Jong) has developed its own plan to deal with youth unemployment in 2009 (FNV 2009b) and started a campaign in 2010, called "How much longer do I have to serve?" (Hoe lang moet ik nog zitten), meant to make youth unemployment visible and to give voice to young unemployed people. (...) Within the context of the measures proposed by the FNV to deal with the crisis, the following measures specifically deal with youth unemployment:

- *The creation of traineeships in the sectors. Together with the employers, FNV has invested money of the sectoral labour market funds into the creation of these traineeships. Like the employers' organisation, also FNV pleads for a better financial basis for the plans. Like the employers, FNV pleads for the creation of a national budget (...)*
- *Crisis assistance for school-leavers. Measures should be taken to make it possible for young people to extend their school career, like a reduction of the costs for studies or an extension of the right to student grants. Employers should take their responsibility and should offer a traineeship for every 50 employees they have. Finally, schools can contribute to this policy by way of creating trajectories that make it possible to "pile up" (different forms of) education.¹⁰*

3.6 Financing of traineeships

The main public authority responsible for regulating traineeships as part of the public system in the Netherlands is the Ministry of Education. The responsibility of the Ministry is funding, which includes the national co-funding of EU programmes and agencies administering them, as well as the allocation of EU funding. Other public bodies responsible for traineeships are educational, training and research institutions and Europass centres (cf. Korpelainen 2011 ff).

Concerning the financing of international mobility by the European Union for LdV target groups the following data for the Netherlands (2007-2011) is available (cf. http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/statistics_en.htm)

- Grants for mobility projects: €23,862,740.00
- Grants for partnerships: €2,744,000.00
- Grants for beneficiaries within transfer and innovation projects: €13,006,662.00.

¹⁰ <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/studies/tn1101019s/nl1101019g.htm>, cited 24.11.2011.

3.7 Public perceptions about traineeships

There is currently a debate about mandatory social traineeships (social service) as part of (general or vocational) secondary education (cf. European Commission, 2008).¹¹ Views are divided regarding the introduction of these mandatory social traineeships. Students are against such traineeships, whereas the Social and Economic Council of the Netherlands (SER) youth panel approves of this initiative (cf. European Commission, 2008). In addition, there is a conflict among politicians on this issue.¹² Neither the public nor any of the other sectors have a reputation for questionable practices in traineeships (cf. European Commission 2008). Studies or evaluations concerning internships and stages appear in the SCP report 'Duaal als Ideaal?'.¹³

4. Practices and Content of Traineeships

Traineeships are legally mandated in vocational education, and form 20-60 per cent of a study programme, depending on the number of traineeships offered by companies in co-operation with vocational schools. Traineeships that cover more than 60 per cent of a study programme only exist in apprenticeship-type vocational programmes. In secondary vocational education traineeships are mainly completed in the third and fourth year of the course, and serve the purpose of training and orientation for a future career (cf. European Commission 2008).¹⁴

Traineeships are not an obligatory part of the study curricula in higher education, however some are completed as a voluntary part and practice during studies. In higher education (HBO and WO), the study programmes are defined by the educational institutions without legal mandates. Traineeships in HBO (higher vocational education) programmes are usually part of the study programme. In 2004/05, 84 per cent of HBO students completed a traineeship. Traineeships seem to be less popular among WO (university) students. In 2004/05, 59 per cent of those students did a traineeship. These percentages are lower for both HBO and WO students compared to 2002/03 (86 per cent and 62 per cent respectively).¹⁵

Having obtained a degree in vocational education and training and completing a traineeship is quite unusual, with the exception of traineeships for higher vocational education (HBO) graduates (cf. European Commission 2008). To do a traineeship while holding a university degree is not common either, and only applies to medicine, law, notaries and bailiff graduates (cf. European Commission 2008). Consequently when asked whether a traineeship at a company or similar organisation was accomplished as part of one's higher education, 64.9 per cent answered no. However, 6.7 per cent of respondents said they had completed a traineeship lasting for less than three weeks; 5.3 per cent of respondents undertook a traineeship for between three weeks and three months; 14.7 per cent for between three months and a year; and 2.4 per cent for more than one year (Flash Eurobarometer 319b, 2011, 91-93).

Traineeships are an integral part of initial vocational education, in particular for senior secondary vocational education (MBO). The national qualification structure for senior secondary vocational education is divided into four levels and two learning pathways.

¹¹ Cf. <http://zoeken.minocw.nl/Zoekdienst/minocw.nl/ocw?term=maatschappelijke+stage>.

¹² Cf. <http://www.parool.nl/nieuws/2008/FEB/14/bin7.html>; cf. www.volkskrant.nl/binnenland/article528461.ece/LAKS_stop_maatschappelijke_stage?source=rss; cf. <http://www.ser.nl/nl/publicaties/overige/2000-2008/2007/b26289.aspx>

¹³ Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau, 2006, cf. <http://www.scp.nl/dsresource?objectid=20615&type=org>.

¹⁴ Cf. Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau: <http://www.scp.nl/publicaties/boeken/9037702082.shtml>.

¹⁵ Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau: <http://www.scp.nl/publicaties/boeken/9037702082.shtml>; European Commission 2008; SEO: <http://www.seo.nl/nl/publicaties/rapporten/2007/989.html>.

Students in senior secondary vocational education (MBO) can opt between a block or day-release pathway (*beroepsbegeleidende leerweg* – BBL) and the mainly school-based vocational training pathway (*beroepsopleidende leerweg* – BOL). BBL is a more practical (alternating) learning pathway where at least 60 per cent of training takes place in a company, and the rest at school. This is therefore more a type of apprenticeship. Students do have a contract with the company. BOL is a more theoretical pathway where the percentage of practical occupational training (*beroepspraktijkvorming* - BPV) is between 20 and 60 per cent. So within this BOL-route, traineeships are an essential element. Alternating training is supposed to be a different way of learning, although the exit qualifications and requirements for both learning pathways are the same (Cedefop 2005). Traineeships are one option for acquiring the intended learning outcomes in the area of initial vocational education and training. The content and aims of traineeships are standardised to a high level as they are part of the qualification structure and national curriculum:

'The qualification structure is supposed to function as an institutionalised interface at national level between labour market and vocational education. The basic idea behind the national qualification structure is rather simple and implies commitment of all relevant parties in the field. Following the 'Royal way': social partners per sector are responsible for the construction of occupational profiles. Social partners together with the educational field (a common responsibility!) translate these occupational profiles into qualification profiles, that is to say into qualifications and attainment targets. As mentioned above this occurs by the national bodies where both parties – both social partners and educational field – are represented. Educational institutions (ROC's) are responsible for the pedagogical-didactical shaping of the educational process and learning pathways, if possible in close cooperation with relevant other local actors (namely firms and local employment offices).'

(Hövels 2004).

As mentioned above, in the Netherlands VET in secondary vocational education takes place on the basis of nationally standardised occupational profiles. The profiles are broad-based, cross-company and cross-functional. In the Netherlands approximately 450 profiles are available nationally, and these are used as the basis for the preparation for the specialised forms of employment within the various branches and sectors. All courses (or, in official terminology, qualifications) forming part of the qualification structure are listed in the *Central Register of Vocational Courses* (CREBO). The aim of senior secondary vocational education, as defined in the *Adult and Vocational Education Act*, is to provide both theoretical instruction and practical training in preparation for the practice of a wide range of occupations for which a vocational qualification is necessary or useful (cf. MOCW 1996).

In the Dutch VET system, the design of a qualification starts with the *Professional Competence Profile* (set up by social partners), which describes the activities and the professional competences of the skilled professional worker. The Professional Competence Profiles represent the formalised and standardised description of a set of core activities ('kerntaken'), core tasks ('kernopgaven') and occupational competences ('beroepscompetencies') targeted at direct, work-based practice (cf. Colo 2004). In addition to these, each qualification comprises a 'learning and civic thought and action' profile. The learning competences describe the competences required by someone to be able to continue education and training. The Professional Competence Profile corresponds to a *Qualification Profile* and a *Qualification File* (containing the whole qualification profile plus all referential documents). The *Qualification Profile* describes the competences of a beginner professional worker and the activities in the professional context. Finally, the *Competence Matrix* describes the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for each of the competences defined. In the Dutch context, competence is the ability of a person to act properly, purposefully, motivated, process- and result-oriented, in particular situations. This approach is based on knowledge, skills and competences (KSC), expressing learning outcomes as defined in ECVET and EQF. There are currently no units as such in the Dutch system.

However, all competences in the *Qualification Profile* are accompanied by performance indicators which are used as a basis for assessment. The *Qualification Profiles* are the basis on which the Dutch VET providers design their own training programmes as well as assessment procedures, they are also used for the BOL-route and thus for the traineeships.

5. Trainee's Rights and Terms and Conditions

In the Netherlands trainees have a specific recognised legal status; however this does not apply to trainees from other LLP countries (cf. Korpelainen 2011, 40). The conditions provided by the legislation are working hours, holidays and sick leave (cf. Korpelainen 2011, 41). There are no additional conditions for placements agreed between the sending or host organisation and the trainee. Trainees are not entitled to social benefits¹⁶, but are eligible for health insurance, liability insurance, third party liability insurance, and for safety insurance against accidents. The entity responsible for organising these insurances is the sending organisation (cf. Korpelainen 2011, 45). The organisations representing trainees are ISO/LSR¹⁷, JOB¹⁸, LAKS¹⁹, CNV²⁰, and FNV²¹.

6. Quality Assurance of Traineeships

National curricula for Vocational Education and Training are developed by the so-called '*Centres of Expertise on Vocational Education, Training and the Labour Market*' (Kenniscentrum Beroepsonderwijs Bedrijfsleven), nowadays they call themselves *Knowledge Centres for VET and Industry* (KBB). Together with companies and vocational schools (regional training centres, Regional Opleidingen Center, ROC) they are responsible for senior secondary vocational education and training. The KBBs form the link between vocational education and the business sector organisations. Organised by sector, their managing boards comprise representatives of employers and employees, and in most cases, educational institutions. Their statutory tasks are: developing qualifications for vocational education; monitoring the examinations administered by education institutes; recruiting new companies offering training places (for practical training and traineeships); and monitoring the quality of the companies offering training places. The Netherlands have seventeen Centres of Expertise, organised around one sector or branch of industry. The Centres of Expertise are: *aequor, calibris, ecabo, fundeon, goc, innovam, kenniscentrum handel, kenteq, kenwerk, koc, pmlf, savantis, sh&m, svgb, svo, voc, vtl*. Besides developing qualification files and the qualification structure, they recruit training firms, also for traineeships, and monitor the quality of these training firms. Students must be able to develop their professional competence in these firms. The KBB's assure that this is possible in the recruited firms. The recruited firms are registered in a public web register (www.stagemarkt.nl). Stagemarkt.nl is the joint website of all training companies of the 17 Centres of Expertise. It includes only officially recognised training companies.

The 'MBO Raad' is the Netherlands Association of VET Colleges. The association represents all government-funded colleges for secondary vocational education and training and adult education in the Netherlands. On behalf of its members, the MBO Raad promotes the

¹⁶ Korpelainen 2011: 43

¹⁷ Het Landelijk Studenten Rechtsbureau: www.lsr.nl;

¹⁸ Jongeren Organisatie Beroepsonderwijs: www.job-site.nl;

¹⁹ Landelijk Aktie Komitee www.laks.nl;

²⁰ www.cnvjongeren.nl;

²¹ www.fnvjong.nl;

collective interests of the sector; supports common activities of the colleges; and acts as an employers' organisation. The association negotiates labour conditions for the sector with the trade unions and signs collective labour agreements. The MBO Raad plays a major role in the remodelling of vocational education to competence-based vocational education and training.

In the Netherlands each education subsystem has its own quality assurance procedures. In terms of the definition of the results (outcomes) in general education, including prevocational education, exam programmes are developed by a professional body (the *Foundation Curriculum Development* (in Dutch: *SLO Stichting Leerplan Ontwikkeling*). For the prevocational programmes in particular, input is also given by the above mentioned sector based bodies for the development of VET qualifications. Exams are partly executed by the schools themselves ('school exams'); and partly by another professional body ('national exams') the *Central Institute for the Development of Tests and Exams* (in Dutch: *CITO, Centraal Instituut voor toetsontwikkeling*). It is the role of an independent Inspectorate to assess the progress of the pupils and the organisation of learning processes in all schools for secondary general and prevocational education. The qualifications, developed by the sector-based bodies, should respond to four quality labels: transparency, recognisable for the industry, practicable/feasible for education, a proper balance between flexibility and sustainability. These labels are made operational in a reference framework for VET qualification files (*Toetsingskader kwalificatiedossiers MBO*). This framework is legitimised by the Ministry of Education. Procedures for the development of qualifications in VET have also to respond to certain procedures, guaranteeing the input of industry and education in the development and validation of qualifications.

As a result of the increased autonomy, quality assurance has been an increasingly important issue for the ROC's. They are developing instruments and strategies to integrate quality assurance into regular educational management. In 1999 the Education Inspectorate made a start on *Integrated Institutional Supervision (Integraal Instellingstoezicht)*. This is geared towards analysing institutions with regard to a number of quality characteristics, such as the accessibility and efficiency of the primary process. An important item for attention is the quality of the examination process, of which there is a great deal of criticism. The aim is to strengthen external legitimacy. This will be achieved by the establishing of the *Centre for Quality of Examinations (KCE)*. Considerable attention has also been devoted to quality with respect to the *Beroepspraktijkvorming (BPV)*. All the national bodies now have a scheme for the accreditation of firms providing workplace training, in which the quality of the practical training is monitored on the basis of a number of criteria, such as the content of the work and the presence of a trained supervisor.

At the ROC's there are professional *praktijkbegeleider*, that means staff that are in charge of the practical training phases. Their responsibilities are also to organise professional internships (stages) of MBO students and accompany them. Often these *praktijkbegeleider* are members of the so-called *bedrijfsadviescommissie, (Industry Advisory Committee, a committee with representatives of companies, ROC and KBB, which discusses common subjects in order to improve the contacts and understanding between education and industry; and to improve the education in general as far as it is within reach of this committee)*. So it is a committee of companies in the region, which advises the education providers to work with placements in practice.

Companies and organisations willing to provide vocational education and/or internships need to fulfill a number of quality criteria set by the bodies of the national industry organisations, and have to then be granted permission.²² Experts 2 and 3 mentioned that these companies are accredited and therefore are allowed to offer internships. At present there are 18 national industry organisations (see above), of which the COLO is the umbrella

²² Cf. Busse / Frommberger (forthcoming).

organisation. COLO also provides a list of accredited companies. In comparison in the tertiary sector, where there is no such list.

On average the quality of the internships in the secondary sector is high. Expert 3 estimates that there are only 20 per cent poor-quality traineeships. From 2012 an official quality assurance monitoring is planned.²³

Some universities have their own monitoring concerning quality assurance. When students receive a certificate they also rate the companies. Where there are problems the students can contact a co-ordinator from the university who will act for them, as Expert 1 mentioned.

The assessment for the practical part of the training takes place within the workplace via a practical examination. The educational institution is responsible for the examination (in all its forms) following the national standards of the *Quality Centre for Examinations*, and here the practical trainer of the company also plays a role. The method of assessment is regulated in the learning agreement between school, student and company (cf. Cedefop 2005).

Following Hövels (2004), colleges are responsible for examination and certification. The *Adult & Vocational Education Act* (WEB) requires that colleges carefully arrange the organisation and development of examinations, and lay down the relevant procedures in education and examination regulations. The Education Inspectorate assesses the content and level of the examinations in a number of vocational programmes and at a number of schools each year. In its annual examination report, the Inspectorate lists the schools evaluated and their results in full detail.

In order to guarantee the societal value ('civil effect') of the certificates, the WEB requires that colleges subject 51 percent of the part-qualifications, as identified by the Minister, to an independent, external assessment. This means that an independent and approved examining body must state in advance that the content and level of the examinations to be held comply with the relevant attainment targets; and that the examination procedures are correct and in accordance with the statutory requirements.

Recently, this system of external legitimisation was left to a newly established *national Centre for Quality of Examinations* (*Kwaliteitscentrum Examinering*, KCE). This national centre has to set up standards for the quality of examinations. It is up to (so-called) sectoral platforms to elaborate and operationalise these standards. The sectoral platforms have a bipartite composition: 50 per cent representatives from the educational field and 50 per cent representatives from national bodies. The *Centre for Quality of Examinations* (KCE) has to give its approval to the schools' examination products and services.

Every course in secondary vocational education leads to a certain qualification, made up of partial qualifications with the relevant set of exit qualifications. Exit qualifications are standards in terms of knowledge, skills and professional attitudes, in which students are examined. The examination comprises sections corresponding to the partial qualifications. A certificate is proof that the student has obtained a full qualification. Students have passed their examinations if they have passed all the tests for the partial qualifications, and have successfully completed their practical training and all other parts of the course. With the introduction of the competence based qualifications this changed to the assessment of key tasks and the corresponding competences. As long as the competence based qualification structure isn't fully introduced the two systems coexist.

²³ There is a very recent study on quality in internships: Wartenbergh-Cras, F., De Ruijter, E., De Ruijter, J., Jacobs, J., De Laat-van Amelsfoort, D. (2011): BPV-monitor 2011: Landelijke eindrapportage. Tilburg (ResearchNed Nijmegen / Arbeid Opleidingen Consult).
[<http://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten-en-publicaties/rapporten/2012/01/17/eindrapportage-bpv-monitor.html>; 28.02.12]

Sectors can, where necessary, make specific arrangements concerning examinations with the institutions providing education. If these arrangements are made official, KCE takes these measures into account when controlling the quality.

7. Overall Assessment as Regards Traineeships

In contrast to most other countries, traineeships in the Netherlands are an elementary part of public vocational education and training, covered by national standards and curricula. This is particularly the case in senior secondary vocational education (*middelbaar beroepsonderwijs*, MBO). Thus the most data and information are available for this area. For the remaining traineeships, unregulated and offered on the open market, only a few or no data exist.

Traditionally the vocational education and training system in the Netherlands is school-based. The reforms of the last two decades have concerned strengthening the link between learning in schools and the area of work and occupations. Thus traineeships have become more and more important.

The approach for linking learning and the world of work via traineeships is based on a nationwide curriculum. This curriculum, defined for special qualifications in initial and further vocational education and training, is valid for both the area of learning in schools as well as in traineeships. The curriculum is implemented with close co-operation between schools and companies. When insufficient traineeships are available, learning in schools dominates. When many companies are engaged, the amount of time spent in learning and training in companies rises.

Full-time staff in Vocational Schools, so called *praktijkbegeleider*, are in charge of organising and supervising the practical training phases. Companies and organisations willing to provide vocational education and/or internships need to fulfill a number of quality criteria set by the bodies of the national industry organisations, and then have to be granted permission to provide traineeships.

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National Report on Traineeships Poland

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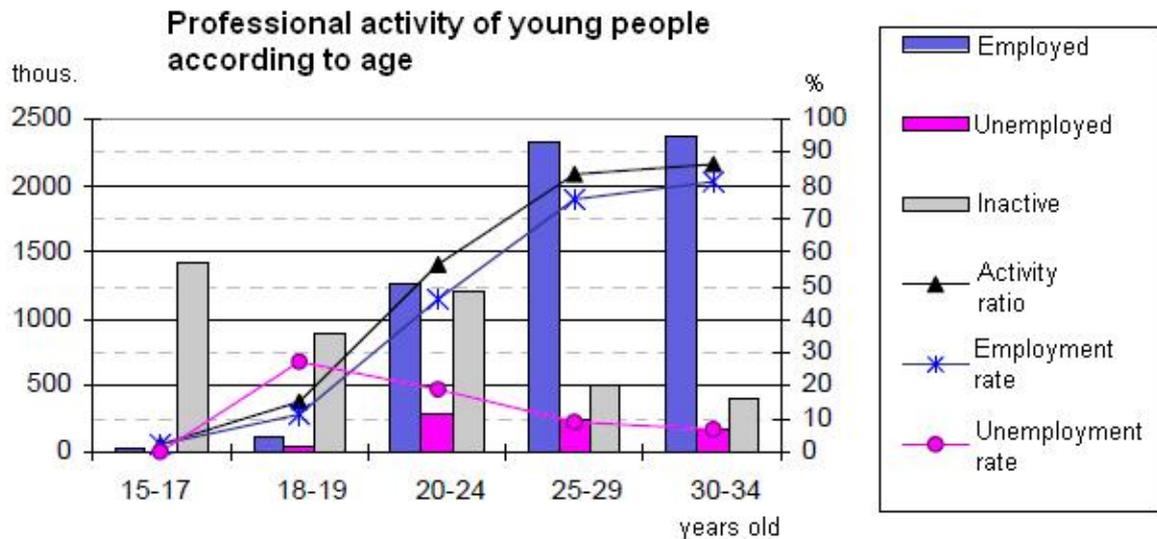
1. Traineeships as part of Member State's Youth Policy Measures

1.1 Overview of current situation of young people and traineeships as part of youth policy measures

As a preliminary remark it should be pointed out that young people in the labour market suffer more than other age groups. In fact all the respondents questioned during this study admitted and seemed to be aware of this adverse situation. Indeed, this is the case all across Europe and it is confirmed by the available statistics. The statistics show high levels of youth unemployment rates reflecting the problems of young people in finding paid work. To compare, youth (aged 15-24) unemployment rate in the EU-27 was around twice as high as the rate for the total population throughout the last decade. The statistics for Poland in 2010 give the following numbers: the youth unemployment rate was 23.7 per cent; the total unemployment rate was 9.7 per cent; and the long-term unemployment rate was 25.5 per cent. In 2000 these indicators amounted respectively to 35.2 per cent, 16.4 per cent and 37.9 per cent, indicating rather an improvement in the situation, not the deterioration promulgated by the researchers and policymakers who numbered every second person, i.e. 6,095,000 people as employed (54.2 per cent employment rate). Moreover, every fifteenth person was, according to the International Labour Office definition, eligible to be considered as unemployed, i.e. 735,000. As many as 4,425,000 people in this group were economically inactive. To summarise, three in five people were active in the labour market either employed or actively seeking employment (professional activity rate of this group amounts to 60.7 per cent) (http://www.oecd.org/document/24/0,3746,en_2649_37457_43219160_1_1_1_37457,00.html).

Interestingly, the Central Statistical Office of Poland (GUS) sees the situation of the young population from a wider perspective: men and women aged 15 to 34 are under scrutiny here. Hence, in the second quarter (Q2) of 2009 this group amounted to as many as 11,253,000 people, which is just above one third of the overall workforce resource (35.8 per cent) of Poland. It must be stressed that the analysed age group is not homogenous. It varies when it comes to age, educational attainment, and an individual's approach to professional development in terms of continuing education. The factors listed above impact on the situation of the cohorts leaving the education system and entering the labour market, both in the case of those who have graduated from university or completing vocational training etc. The figure below shows that engagement in economic activity increases as groups mature. Unemployment is dominant among men and women who are 18 and 19, which is an effect of entering the labour market in groups as they complete education in secondary schools and vocational training schools. The higher the age group, the lower unemployment rate, which can be explained by the fact that people either find employment or engage in another activity like education or family/caring obligations (Wejście..., 2010, p.1-2).

Figure 1.1: The economic activity of the young according to their age



Source: *Wejście młodych ludzi na rynek pracy, 2010, p. 2.*

The young are often discussed either as a group aged between 15 and 24, or as a group aged between 15 and 34. Surely, the first approach does not cover all age groups considered as young, and also does not include all university graduates, who in Poland are usually aged between 24 and 27 (depending on the previously chosen educational paths). The scale of unemployment for both age groups is rather high. Some analyses even show that those between 15 and 35 might account for as much as 50 per cent of the unemployed (Młodzi 2011, 2011).

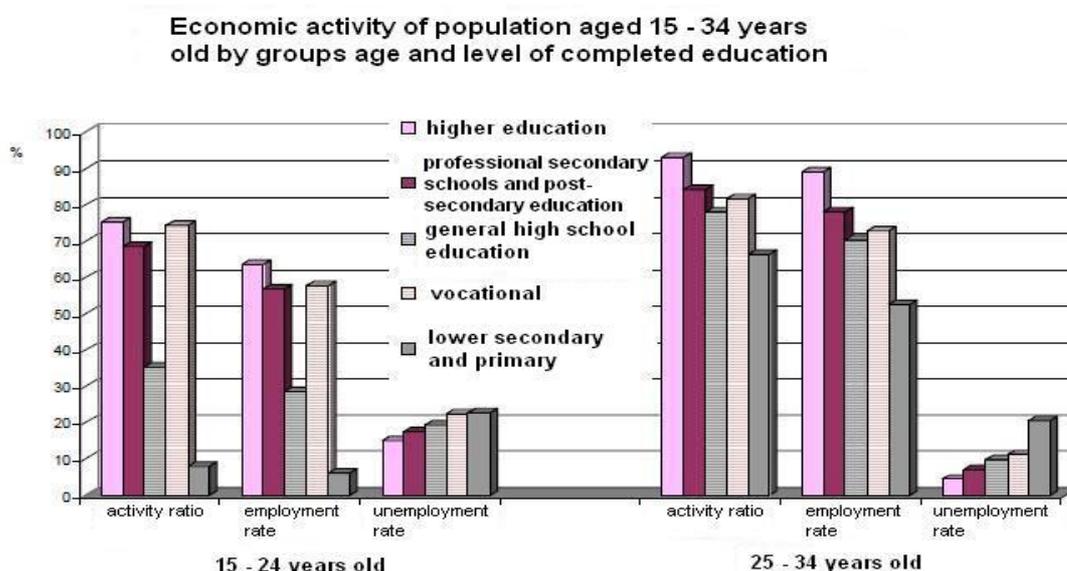
Moreover, some gender patterns which might be a subject of concern can be seen. Women in Poland tend to be much better educated than men, at least in the macro perspective of gaining degrees of higher education. In 2009 out of 1.9 million students females accounted for 1.1 million i.e. 58 per cent (Młodzi 2011, 2011, p. 103). Surely, university graduates (90 per cent of men and 81 per cent of women) tend to be more employable than individuals with lower levels of educational attainment i.e. below secondary school (high school) level (58 per cent of men and 33 per cent of women)? (Młodzi 2011, 2011, p. 111) Also, as of second quarter of 2009, the economic activity rate for individuals aged 15-34 was one of the highest in the labour market: it reached 95.1 per cent (men) and 78.1 per cent (women), whereas the employment rate was slightly lower: 89.2 per cent (men) and 72.7 per cent (women). The above is explained by the temporary but visible exclusion of women from the labour market due to their family obligations. These obligations can be associated with higher risk of unemployment for women than for men. Interestingly, the highest rate was recorded for the age group 18-19 and it was higher for men (29 per cent) than women (23.4 per cent). However it rises with older age, respectively for people aged 20-24, for men (17.8 per cent) and women (19.9 per cent); for those aged 25-29, men (8.6 per cent) and women (ten per cent); and finally for the 30-34 age group men (6.2 per cent) and women (6.9 per cent). Hence in spite of the higher education attainment but due to family obligations women (more frequently than men) are categorised as economically inactive (Wejście..., 2010, p.2). During the last ten years a slight deterioration in their situation has been observed, the unemployment rate for women in 2000 amounted to 48.9 per cent, in 2009 to 52.8 per cent, and in 2010 to 53 per cent.

The analyses of unemployment prove that the situation of various youth groups varies. The data for 2008 show that graduates of secondary vocational schools (średnie zawodowe) make up the largest proportion of the unemployed at 31.9 per cent. They are followed by

graduates of vocational schools (zawodowe) at 25 per cent; graduates of general secondary (high) schools (licea ogólnokształcące) at 24.1 per cent; and finally by university graduates at 17.1 per cent, (www.rynekpracy.pl/monitor_ryнку_pracy_1.php/wpis.10).

What can be seen in the figure below is that in both sub-age groups people with a university degree are more active in the labour market and their employment rate is higher and their unemployment rate is lower. This is even more prevalent in the case of the older sub-group (25-34 years) who will have completed their university education by this age and time. The less educated individuals are the higher the unemployment and the lower the employment rates that are recorded. The only educational attainment group standing apart from this picture is the group with a general secondary education. They possess no specific professional competencies. They are not as active in the labour market as the university graduates, people with secondary vocational and post-secondary school education, or those with vocational education attainment (Wejście..., 2010, p.3).

Figure 1.2: The economic activity of age group 15-34 according to age and educational attainment.



Source: *Wejście...*, 2010, p. 3.

The question of the intensity of youth employment must also be raised. Here the intensity of employment in various sectors as a percentage of all employed people aged 15-64 is shown in detail. The most intensive employment of individuals in this age group is recorded in hotels and restaurants (47.2 per cent) as well as wholesale and retail trade (31.2 per cent), while the least intensive employment is seen in education (6.1 per cent) and public administration (6.5 per cent) (data for 2004, OECD, 2006, p. 59).

Finally, the case of individuals neither in employment, nor in education, nor in training (NEET) should be discussed. These people are potentially threatened by social exclusion, both as individuals and as a group. In 2009 the NEET group amounted to 11 per cent in Poland. For comparison, in the same year, the highest levels were recorded in Bulgaria (29 per cent) and the lowest in the Netherlands (four per cent) (http://www.rynekpracy.pl/artukul.php/typ.1/kategoria_glowna.372/wpis.412).

In the public discourse commentators and journalists often label young people as the 'lost generation'. Indeed even with educational attainments higher than those of their parents, they can only dream of reaching positions their parents gained in their professional lives. This presumption remains in sharp contrast to the expectations of their parents, who,

having entered an adult life and the labour market, had known that their professional positions would be higher than those of their parents (Bauman, 2011). Moreover, some predict the possibility of failure as the young people might never find a satisfactory position in the labour market, and, as a result, their potential and human capital gained in the course of education will be wasted; and thus the development of the country will be hampered.

1.1.1 A minimum wage for young people – legal arrangements

The young are covered by the same regulations as other age groups when they enter the labour market. The only exception to this rule is for young unemployed people, who while they are a trainee (*stagiaire*), can only earn up to half the minimum wage, which was below 638 PLN (2009) and 658.50 PLN (2010) per month. Thus the *stagiaire* would not have to be taken off the unemployment register and, if entitled to benefits, they would continue to receive them (<http://www.rynekpracy.pl/artykul.php/typ.1/kategoria.glowna.358/wpis.147>). As of March 1st 2012 the amount received by the unemployed *stagiaire* amounts to 913.70 PLN which is 120 per cent of the unemployment benefit (<http://www.psz.praca.gov.pl/main.php?do=ShowPage&nPID=867744&pT=details&sp=CONTENT,objectID,867779>).

The latest government report on the situation of the young in Poland 'Młodzi 2011' (p.127) argues that universities have been neglecting the needs of the labour market for years. In fact it should be added that there has been no serious and thorough dialogue between education programmers, labour market institutions and employers. There is awareness of these facts amongst some policy makers. It is even argued (central government policymaker) that such a dialogue is essential for a successful transition of young people from education to the labour market. It seems that employers do not express their needs in terms of the competencies required from potential employees to be gained in the course of education. Rather they opt for training and re-training their potential employees when they commence work.

At a national level, there are calls encouraging high school graduates, including female students, to read for technical degrees (now it is only five per cent), as it is foreseen that there will be a shortage of technical degree graduates in the near future. But there is a question over how effective activities to encourage reading for technical degrees are, and how many people will actually be attracted to the future and potential jobs in this area if no grants were available. There is a fear that the grants might be attracting students who will not work in the field once they finish their education. Finally, there are questions about the success rate of students who are attracted by the grants to read for technical degrees, i.e. how many will actually graduate?

Reforms of the education system and the common perception that a university degree is essential result in fewer and fewer students choosing vocational training. Hence, a gap in the availability of providers of vocational, lower-skilled jobs is observed and it is expected to become even more evident soon. Potential students also presume that a degree will give them more opportunities in the labour market, often without much reflection on the type of degree they should study for. In fact Poland is often depicted as a country of intensive education, where studying for a degree is a must, irrespective of one's capacities and interests. Between 1990 and 2010 the number of students increased by 370 per cent and the net scholarisation indicator amounts to 41.2 per cent (2010), higher than the average in the EU27 and the OECD (Młodzi 2011, p. 99-100). In the context of the rush towards gaining a degree, students realise that the time when a degree guaranteed a well-paid job is over, as a degree has been down-valued and it does not provide its holder a high social status anymore. As a result students chase every opportunity to gain more competencies, including studying for another degree. Another aspect which does not yet accompany these decisions is that students are not supported in their decisions regarding career paths and educational choices. It is not usually until a very late stage in their education, if at all, that

they decide to consult a professional career advisor who would be able to suggest the best career options, taking into account their preferences and competencies.

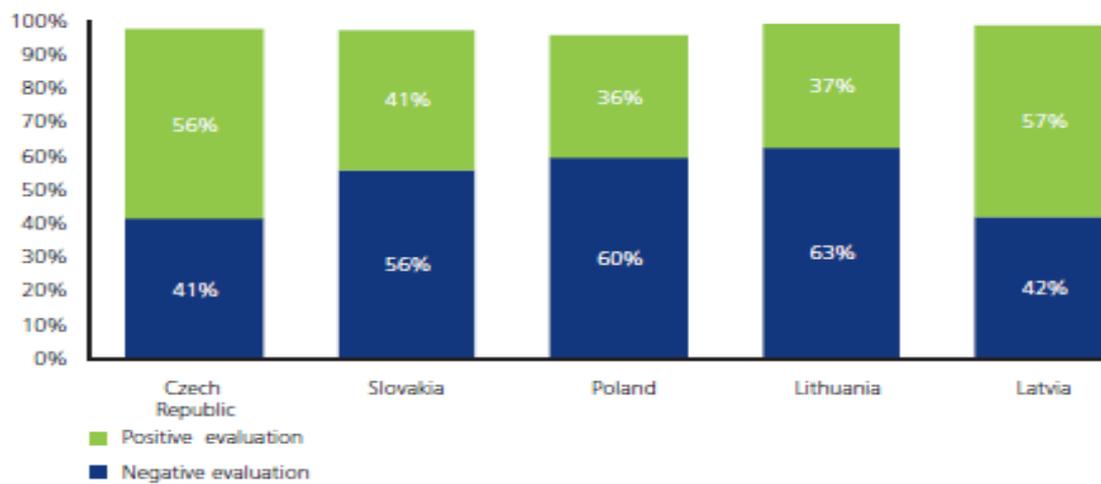
Since the major reform of the higher education system in 2011, universities have been given a more or less free hand (this will be discussed later on) to introduce new subject choices. The accreditation system remains the main evaluation tool, but the evaluation is linked with education effectiveness, not with labour market capacity. Policy makers are starting to notice the problem, arguing that education is not elitist any more, but it is an incentive that prevents one's social degradation and reduces the threat of unemployment. This is demonstrated by unemployment statistics which show that unemployment levels amongst those with low levels of education are in general twice as high as for those who are well-educated (Młodzi 2011, p.89-90). The unemployment rate for people with a university degree is slightly above four per cent (the average is four per cent in OECD countries). For those with secondary education the unemployment rate is nine per cent (compared to an average of seven per cent in OECD countries); and those with low-educational attainment account for 14 per cent (ten per cent in OECD countries). It is argued that young people in Poland are over-educated and the OECD report showed that from 1995 to 2005 the over-education rate in Poland rose, reaching almost 40 per cent in 2005. This was apparent even more for women (48 per cent) than for men (30 per cent) in 2005 (OECD, 2006, p.55). The question of what is being done is not an easy one to answer as the mismatch between the labour market and the education system is a fact. The labour market has been likened to a train and education to a ticket office which sells tickets to students without a destination. However, to use the metaphor of German sociologist Ulrich Beck, at present no one is able to travel without a valid ticket. Only those who acquire education matching the requirements of the labour market will succeed. Not surprisingly the young cohorts live with growing frustrations. If they are employed they are employed below their qualifications and aspirations, a situation which leads to loss of their potential, including intellectual potential.

The concerns of policymakers as regards improving the situation in the labour market have been expressed and various proposals have been formulated. One of the splendid ideas is to merge ministries in charge of education (education and higher education) and of the labour market. This would encourage serious dialogue between education institutions and the labour market. However, the problem of financing these ideas emerges. Furthermore it is known that there is some work being done in the Ministry of Education regarding professional qualifications and foreseen demand, but there is no connection with the labour market and its institutions for the time being.

One addition which has been suggested is to introduce students to a variety of different professions during tutorials, starting from their early education. Also it is felt some more emphasis should be placed upon teaching entrepreneurship, which is not really a part of the educational curricula in schools, and if it takes place it is taught in a very superficial and boring manner (central government policymaker).

Students are aware of this unfavourable situation in the labour market. The study by Deloitte and Touche (2011) showed that as many as 60 per cent of graduates felt they were not sufficiently prepared for their future professional responsibilities. The study conducted in Poland, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Lithuania and Latvia showed that in general at least 40 per cent of students from each of the analysed countries had a negative opinion of how their universities prepared them for the professional world and associated responsibilities.

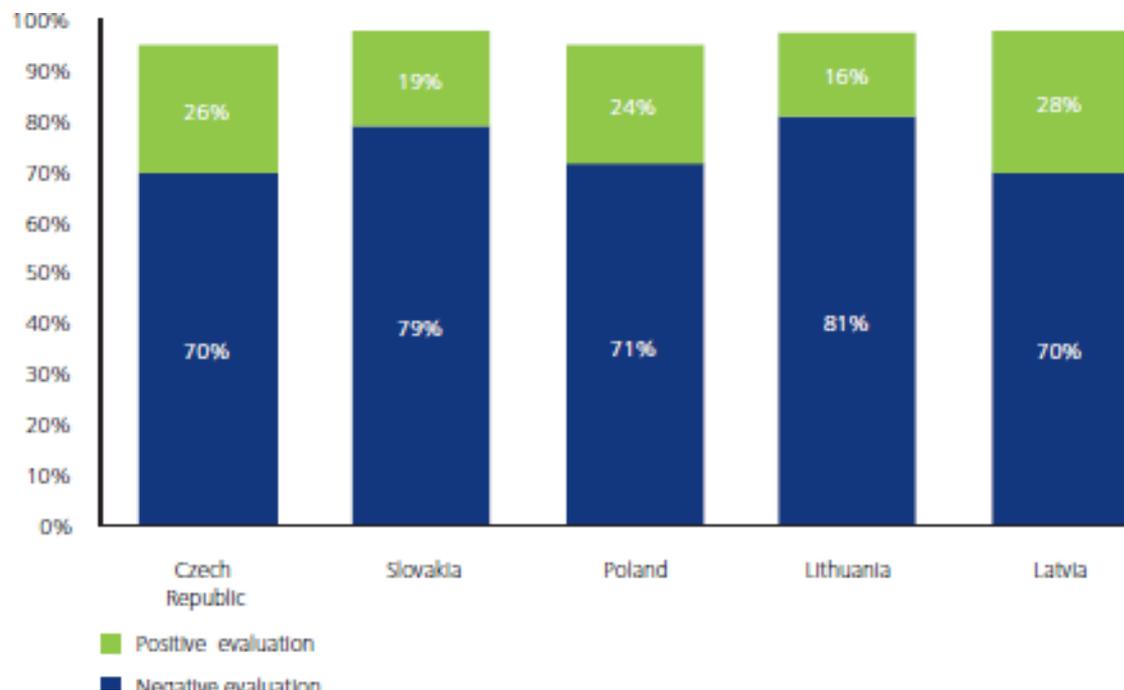
Figure 1.3: How universities prepare students for future jobs? Evaluation



Source: Deloitte and Touche, 2011, p. 5.

The students' evaluation of the way that universities are preparing them for job searching was even more critical. The data on this issue showed that on average more than 70 per cent of students expressed their discontent, it was 71 per cent for Poland and as much as 81 per cent in Lithuania. Indeed the perception of students would confirm the opinions expressed by policy-makers. However it seems that this does not raise sufficient concern and induce crucial changes.

Figure 1.4: How well universities prepare students for a job search process?



Source: Deloitte and Touche, 2011, p.

It seems that young people view their troublesome situation as an opportunity for individual entrepreneurship. They are responding by trying to fill in gaps in their education, which reflects the mismatch between the education system and the labour market discussed

above. Traineeships appear to serve as an auxiliary tool in gaining practical competencies and skills required by the labour market, but also seem to be facilitating future transitions from education to the labour market. On one hand the policymakers supply various instruments under the heading of traineeships, on the other hand the young people try to make as much use of them as possible (Młodzi 2011, p.139).

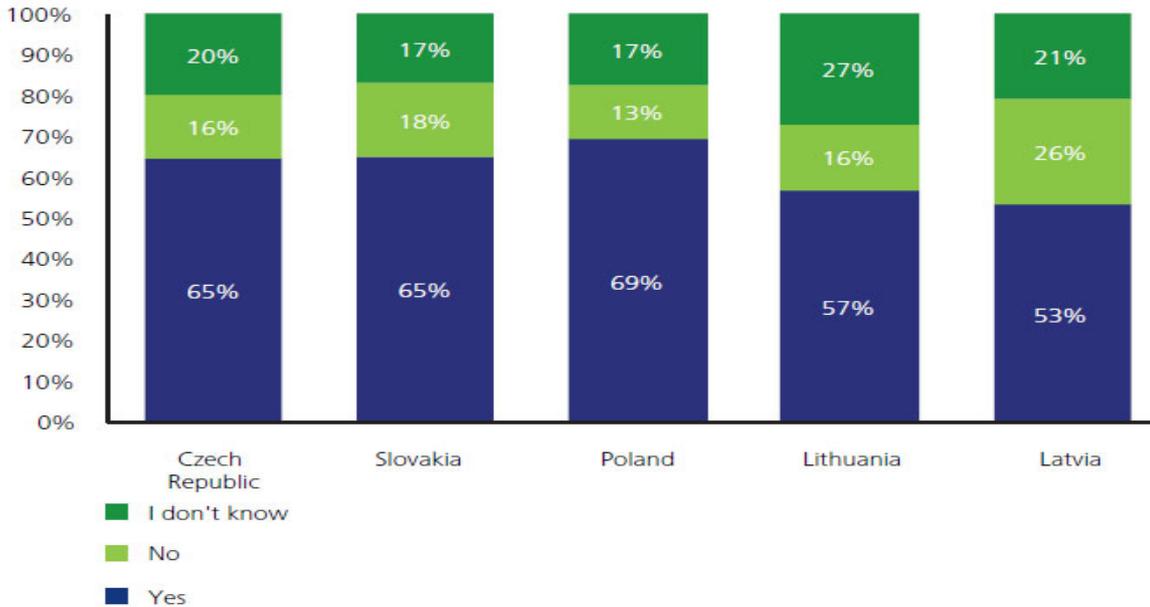
There are some more critical opinions in the academic world, e.g. Ken Robert (2009) argues that traineeships to some degree serve as a 'labour market warehouse' where graduates can enjoy the benefits of training and traineeship with the hope of finding stable employment. When it does not happen they will return to unemployment. This path is well known to labour market institutions and is recorded in statistics.

1.1.2 Policy interventions to promote the geographical learning and job mobility of young people as part of traineeships-related programmes

A number of studies conducted show that young people do consider mobility. In some cases they might be willing to do so, in other cases they feel forced to move. There is of course the question of what type of mobility is being discussed here. In general, the Polish of all ages are not willing to move, yet international mobility appears to be more prevalent than internal mobility within the country. Young people tend to try to take up the available opportunities for 'work and travel'. University lecturers each year record a number of students gathering international experience via studies abroad, voluntary work and traineeships. There are a number of possibilities which all who are interested can benefit from. The world is within their reach (former governmental official and policymaker). One of the examples supporting this observation is the current Erasmus programme where students can work, or carry out a traineeship or a placement (stage) abroad.

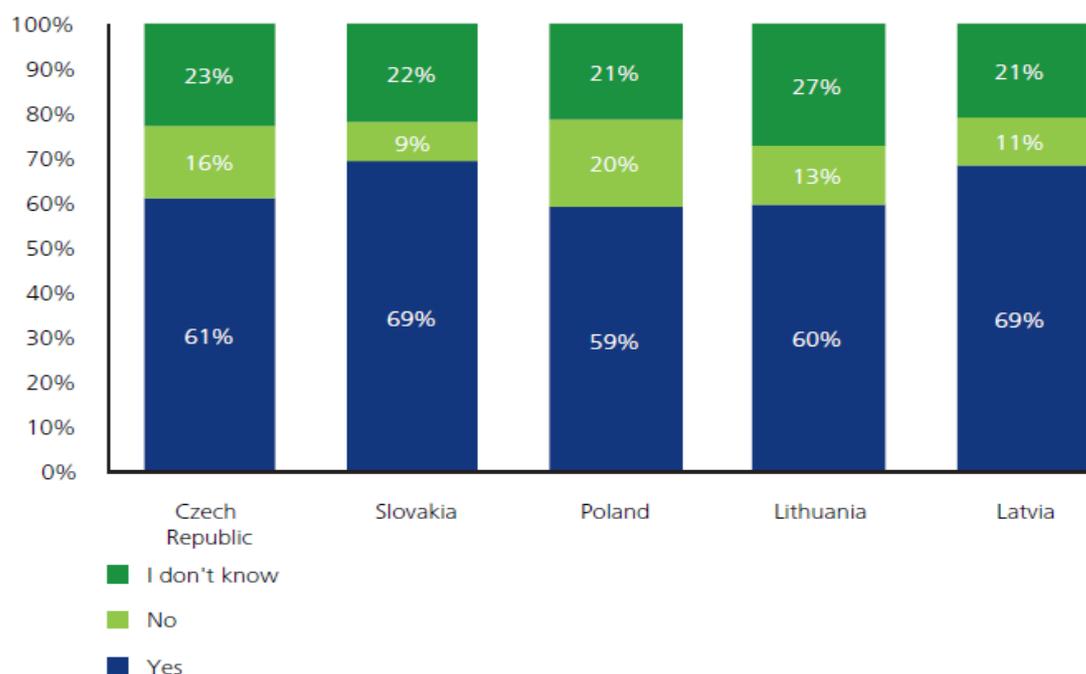
A study by Deloitte and Touch (2011) found that a substantial proportion of young people were willing to move to another city (69 per cent) and to another country (59 per cent) for a job. This is presented in the charts below.

Figure 1.5: Readiness to move to a different city if there is an interesting job offer



Source: Deloitte and Touche, 2011, p. 10

Figure 1.6: Readiness to move to a different country if there is an interesting job offer



Source: Deloitte and Touche, 2011, p. 10

However, it is difficult to say whether mobility is an area of state intervention. Rather, it is fair to say that mobility is influenced by the EU-accession possibilities together with students' entrepreneurial spirits. Some students studying within the Erasmus framework in Poland also return as Erasmus trainees (at the time of writing the report's author was supervising one of her ex-Erasmus students from Italy). However, the number of young Polish people travelling abroad to undertake traineeship and placements is much higher than the number of young people from other countries coming to Poland.

There are descendants of Polish origin from the Former Soviet Republics, who, repatriated to Poland, study and gather experience just like other Polish students. Still it should be noted that the number of these is rather low.

1.1.3 Comparison of the traineeships with other mechanisms for the labour market integration of young people (e.g. apprenticeships) in this Member State?¹

The state has provided labour market integration mechanisms based on a rationale that paid work is an incentive legitimising one's position in society (see works of Professor Amartya Sen). Thus, taking into account high unemployment levels, as well as a mismatch

¹ In many European countries, Vocational Education is a quantitatively significant part of upper secondary schooling. Often these upper secondary school programmes involve work experience.

Apprenticeship

We would refer as apprenticeships to those arrangements that are based on an employment contract with an enterprise. Typical countries with significant shares of apprenticeships are Germany or Austria. Sometimes - as an auxiliary measure because of a lack of apprenticeships - contracts would be concluded with the training centre. A typical case would be Denmark.

Traineeships

In those systems, where there is no quantitatively significant tradition of apprenticeship in the upper secondary system, but a considerable amount of vocational education enrolment, all kind of work placements can be found. We would consider this in many cases as traineeship. It often goes beyond a mere short-term exposure to work setting or vocational orientation in length and scope. Cases for this kind of arrangements can be found in a variety of systems from Spain to Finland and France to Lithuania.

between the education system and labour market expectations, the state offers a chance to undertake a traineeship in a form of an internship, or a placement for graduates (not only university graduates (*stagiaire*)); as well as the opportunity to perform voluntary work². Of the above, according to the regulations, it is only the work placement (stage) that is paid for. The data provided by the labour offices (*urzędy pracy*) show the stages are highly effective, with 80-90 per cent of *stagiaires* being employed afterwards (local labour market institution official). However Krakow, as a second largest city in Poland with a very advanced academic environment and outsourcing opportunities, is unlike other places in the region or in the country, thus possibilities for employment are rather high. The above opinion has been questioned by regional labour market institution representatives, mainly by pointing out that the placements are pushing out other forms of interventions. All the employers from private, public and non-governmental sectors are using it to access free labour. Some incorporate it into recruitment procedures and monitor the professional development of the *stagiaire*. Some consider it as a trial period, when a potential employee can be verified (regional labour market official). Others from a more central level of policymaking point out the beneficial nature of traineeships, which are seen as a link between education and the labour market, allowing for a smooth transition between the two (central government policymaker).

It must be stated that there seems to be a lot of confusion when it comes to various arrangements, in particular between internship and placements as there is no strict legal or regulatory framework (academic centre of careers). Various stakeholders, in particular employers, mix up the terms and conditions. It is fair to say that there is a lot of structural inconsistency in relation to both.

Finally, additional integration mechanisms available to all interested unemployed people should be mentioned. These are targeting only not young people, but are accessible to all. They comprise trainings (*szkolenia*) and the so called *work clubs* (*kluby pracy*). These schemes are offered within the active labour market policies and provided by the labour market institutions (labour offices).

Table 1.1: Main traineeship programmes & initiatives

Main traineeship programmes & initiatives	Brief description
Public placements for the unemployed (stages)	Upon completion of the university or other education, labour offices (public labour market institutions) offer traineeships (stages) inter alia to young unemployed people (up to 25 years old) and to unemployed graduates (up to 27 years old within a year of the graduation as stated in the graduation diploma). During such a traineeship, which can last up to 12 months, a young person should acquire practical work-related skills at a workplace, without, however, entering into an employment relationship with the employer. The trainee does not receive a salary, but is entitled to compensation, amounting to 120 per cent of the unemployment benefit. These traineeships are provided in the context of the Traineeship Programme, based on the programme called the 'First Job', which used to be the official public sector programme implemented by the state institutions. For the purpose of this study, the term 'First Job' is adopted, as it is commonly used, even though, technically it is not the Programme itself anymore. Finally, it must be pointed out that it

² Please note that the term voluntary work is being used rather than volunteering in order to stress its work-related character.

Main traineeship programmes & initiatives

Brief description

is still financed from public sources, as its predecessor used to be.

A definition of the placements (stage) is found in the *Law on Promotion of Employment and the Labour Market Institutions* of April 20th, 2004 (Dz.U. of 2004, no. 99, pos. 1001). The following elements of the stage have been highlighted:

- it pertains to the unemployed;
- it is related to a process of learning;
- the process of learning takes place in a working environment;
- learning occurs within a framework, which is not a settled employment relationship.

Private placements e.g. 'grasz o staż' – 'compete for a stage' etc.

It is a private programme organised in co-operation between Price Waterhouse Coopers and the 'Gazeta Wyborcza' daily newspaper. Already having completed its 17th cycle, the programme allows students and graduates, as well as potential employers, to meet. The programme is open to all those who are interested. They select between one and three cases that they have to solve. By selecting the case the players chose the profile of a potential placement of interest. Those who will succeed are guaranteed a monthly placement, which is paid, even for non-governmental organisation (www.grasz.pl).

Various programmes offered by the private sectors, often by multinational corporations

Some of these companies themselves organise traineeships (placements), which are commonly known as internship. It is important to note that they are often paid for as the companies recruit the best students. The recruitment introduces competition amongst students, usually only a few out of several hundred applicants are selected. After receiving an offer they sign a regular employment contract. Hence the students, 'interns', are covered by the labour code regulations and regarded as regular employees; although younger ones. Upon successful completion the 'interns' receive an evaluation of their work which can be the basis for future employment in the company if it is positive.

University obligatory internships (undergraduate level)

A student or pupil internship as a part of the curriculum is a form of traineeship whereby a pupil or a student would be enrolled to gain some skills and competencies on the job. In the case of the undergraduates it is usually unpaid and the undergraduate is expected to complete at least a month's training. However, there are cases (like the point above) where student-interns would be actually hired and receive payment. Student trainees, as they stay usually for a short period of time, are most often regarded as externals and are given some simple and boring tasks. The employers do not see much use in their placement, and find it impossible to involve them in even moderately responsible tasks.

Main traineeship programmes & initiatives

Brief description

Voluntary work

With the changes of 1989 a rebirth of the voluntary sector and related activity has been witnessed. However, it was the *Law on Public Benefit Activity and Volunteering* of April 24th 2003 (Dz. U. z 2003 nr 96 poz.873 z późn. zm.) that laid down frameworks for volunteering. As stated in the law, a volunteer can engage in voluntary work, which is on a free of charge basis. However the volunteer can expect some form of gratification or reimbursement. It is worth noting that it is not only the Third Sector that can benefit from voluntary work, but also public sector and public benefit institutions listed in the law. Students and graduates often decide to engage in voluntary work and perform activities on a quasi-employee basis. It is interesting that even though volunteers perform the same tasks as employees, and in fact fill in the existing employment gaps, they are never regarded as employees. There are no limits on the maximum duration of voluntary work.

Transnational mobility

The transnational EU mobility of students and graduates is analysed and it has to be set against the EU regulatory context. The contract is signed by the three parties, i.e. the student, the receiving institution and the home university that is sending the student. These students act as employees but receive a stipend for their activities paid from the Erasmus funds allocated to the country where they study.

The regulations of the transnational placements within the Erasmus programme do not vary from the national internships. They regulate all relevant phases of the placements. Each academic institution participating in the Erasmus programme should elaborate its own rules of conduct which are approved by its management and accessible to all interested parties, e.g. on the website. Prior to departure for the placement the student should have the approval of the receiving institution and the training agreement signed. The training agreement covering duties of all parties is signed. The stay of the student is usually monitored, as the student is expected to stay in touch and report problems and challenges occurring. The student returning to the home university should bring a confirmation of the duration of the placement issued by the receiving institution, along with transcript of work with its mark (Program Erasmus. Poradnik, 2010, p. 23-32).

2. Legislative Framework for Traineeships

2.1 Legal framework for and governance of traineeships

The regulatory framework is scattered to a rather high degree. That means that there is no single regulatory framework governing major aspects of the traineeship arrangements.

Professional traineeship as a part of formal education is being realised in secondary schools (Dz.U. z 2004 r., nr 256, poz. 2572 z późn. zm.). Out of a number of school types only a few professional ones would engage in traineeship. In fact professional internship can be characterised as a practical on-the-job training. Upon graduation a successful student who passes an exam receives a diploma confirming their qualifications in a given area. The structure of such examinations is developed in co-operation with ministers in charge of particular vocations, research units, universities, trade unions and associations of employers. On-the-job training can be realised here as part of general education at school or as a part of training, where an employment contract is signed. Finally, there are also schemes for graduates, which are regulated by the law on graduate placements (*praktyki absolwenckie*) of July 17th, 2009 (Dz.U. z 2009 nr 127 poz. 1052). Article 1 point 2 of the law states that: “*the stage aims at allowing graduates to gain experience and skills (competencies) which are essential to perform a job*”. However there are certain criteria to be met:

1. a graduate is less than 30 years of age when the training starts;
2. or a person must finish at least a gymnasium (lower secondary education).

Such a trainee either decides not to continue his or her education at a higher level (secondary school); or engages in a traineeship upon graduation from gymnasium but prior to enrolment to a secondary school; or undertakes it while studying or graduating post-secondary school. The fact that one engages in this traineeship does not prevent him or her from registering as unemployed in the job centre.

There is a definition of the placements (*stage*) in the *Law on Promotion of Employment and the Labour Market Institutions* of April 20th, 2004 (Dz.U. of 2004, no. 99, pos. 1001). The following elements are highlighted:

- the placement (*stage*) pertains to an unemployed person – it is a specific instrument targeting those entering the labour market or those wishing to return to the labour market;
- the placement (*stage*) is related to a process of learning – it is not about conducting activities as an employee, learning refers to gaining practical abilities and skills essential to perform tasks related to a particular position;
- the process of learning takes place in a working environment – it is important for the unemployed as it prepares the them to undertake tasks related to the particular position in the future;
- learning occurs within a framework, which is not setting an employment relationship i.e. between an employer and an employee (*stagiaire*).

In particular the last element is meant as a protection of *stagiaires* from abuse from the side of the employers. The labour market institutions are in charge of the placement (*stage*). Unfortunately it creates no relationship between the *stagiaire* and the employer, which could emerge if the employment relationship emerged (regional policymaker). In fact such a relationship emerges between a *stagiaire* and the labour office (job centre), which acts here as an employer and protects the interests of the trainee.

It is worth noting that the maximum duration of the placement is 12 months, the period which can be seen by many as the most effective. The job centre has up to six months to find a placement for a registered unemployed person. If it is not found, any other forms of labour market activation should be offered.

Yet, due to financial limitations visible particularly during the economic crisis, as well as the growing unemployment rate, the stage duration has been reduced in some cases, e.g. in Krakow even to four to six months. This enables all interested parties to participate in the placement. The representatives of the labour market institutions argue that this is sufficient time to see if a *stagiaire* would be an effective employee (local labour market official). On the contrary those in charge of programming the European Social Fund (ESF) find this period too short (regional policymaker).

The placement (stage) scheme always aims at raising the employability of a person undertaking the placement. There is a mentor in charge of a *stagiaire*. Both a programme and the evaluation must be prepared, submitted and accepted. The final evaluation should show the scope of skills and abilities learnt that are needed to perform specific tasks related to a particular position. There is a clear resemblance of the placement to the apprenticeship in the aspect of learning on the job. It seems that this intention of a legislator proved to be successful.

Volunteering *per se* throughout the communist rule was subject to suppression and only a few organisations like the Red Cross or Caritas were allowed to exist. With the changes of 1989 we have witnessed a rebirth of the voluntary sector and a slow but steady rise of interest in volunteering among the Polish. Yet it was the *Law on Public Benefit Activity and Volunteering* of April 24th 2003 (Dz. U. z 2003 nr 96 poz.873 z późn. zm.) that laid down frameworks for volunteering. As stated in the law, a volunteer could engage in voluntary work, which is free of charge on a voluntary basis. However the volunteer could expect some form of gratification or reimbursement like travel costs, phone bills, health insurance and safety insurance against accidents etc. It is worth noting that it is not only the Third Sector that can benefit from voluntary work, but also public sector and public benefit institutions listed in the law. Additional clauses and regulations regarding voluntary work can be found in other regulations like the regulation of the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs on care and education Institutions of October 19th 2007 (Dz. U. z 2007 nr 201 poz.1455).

Finally, when transnational EU mobility of students and graduates is analysed it has to be set against the EU regulatory context. The most relevant legislations are: the *Regulation of the Council* (EEC) No. 1612/68 of October 15th 1968 on freedom of movement of workers within the Community; the Recommendation of the European Parliament and the Council of July 10th 2001 on mobility within the Community for students, people undergoing training, volunteers, teachers and trainers, suggesting the member states undertake the necessary action to support mobility of the groups listed. Finally, the most important is the Recommendation (EC) of the European Parliament and of the Council No. 2006/961 of December 18th 2006 on transnational mobility within the Community for education and training purposes: *European Quality Charter for Mobility* which set up the regulatory framework for institutions in charge of mobility for groups listed in the Recommendation of July 10th 2001 (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:394:0005:0009:EN:PDF>).

2.1.1 The main target groups covered by legislation

As stated in the paragraph above, traineeships address those who are in the system of formal education. Placements (stages) (officially covered by public sources) target those who are unemployed and who have to register at the job centres. To register they have to meet the criteria listed and presented above. However, at present, the Law on promotion of employment and the labour market institutions in the context of placements (stage) targets people e.g. below 25, above 50, unemployed and ineligible for unemployment benefit, those

in long-term unemployment, with no right for social employment (kontraktu socjalnego), women who have lost and not found employment after giving birth to a child etc.

Here one has to add that some companies are actively seeking future members of staff and offer their own private placements, sometimes called internships which are based on a few months employment contract. This is activity outside the regulatory framework offered by the state. The best and the most competitive students are sought by companies and many students try to become such interns.

When it comes to voluntary work there is no clear target group which is covered by the legislation. The idea is to foster voluntary work among the Polish to undertake some activities in line with the subsidiary principle.

Finally, the Erasmus placements are targeting students and graduates of a particular higher education institution according to the regulations presented by the National Agency. The students' placements will be approved by a local university. Those meeting the criteria of the programme are selected, e.g. advanced in terms of language skills, entrepreneurial, well-educated etc.

2.1.2 Laws and regulations for traineeships in specific areas/professions? (e.g. trainee lawyers, trainee doctors, etc.)

For the purpose of this study I have decided to select two professional groups to show how blurred the boundaries of traineeships are. The first is related to traineeships in the building industry and the second is the legal profession (traineeship of lawyers).

Professional traineeships (placements) in the building industry are an element of both secondary (vocational 'zawodowe' and professional secondary schools 'technikum zawodowe') and tertiary education. The education in secondary schools, so called profiled schools, is governed by the *Regulation of the Minister of National Education* of June 15th 2011 (Dz.U. z 2011 r. nr 141 poz. 826 with a programme basis for various (11) construction professions such as roofer, water buildings fitter, pipes systems' fitter, bricklayer, building technician, water building technician, land-surveyor technician, geophysicist technician, sanitation facilities' technician, technologist of completion works in the building industry, and driller of exploratory and geophysical bore-holes). For example, to train as a certified builder (technician builder 'technik budownictwa') the programme lists the following elements as obligatory:

1. Job description (including a list of required skills).
2. Programme slots – showing areas of study linked with a job description.
3. Allocation of teaching/training hours to programme slots – 80 per cent to 20 per cent – it is up to the school headmaster to e.g. match education/training to the requirements of the labour market;
4. Suggested conditions of training (description of equipment required for training).

As this part of traineeship refers to students of secondary schools (pupils), they and all other youths have to adhere to the school's and placement's regulations and procedures such as the school rules of procedure (see art. 60 point 1 of the law on the education system of September 7th 1991 (Dz.U. z 1991 r. nr 95 poz. 425)).

The basic rights of a pupil (student) are the right to study (guaranteed in the Constitution), the right to an objective assessment, the right to rest during breaks, to have the support of a teacher when needed, to name the most important. Moreover human rights like freedom of religion and opinions, freedom of speech, health protection, protection of one's privacy etc. have to be mentioned. Also, as stated in the rules of procedure, a student has to make sure that he or she would participate in activities, including traineeship, as well as learn and behave in an appropriate way in school and outside of it.

When sending a pupil for a traineeship the school signs contracts with organisations that receive pupils to learn a trade. The specifics of various professions might create additional duties that pupils have to meet, for example health and safety regulations. Additionally, when the young person is on placement the regulations attached to a place of employment are valid and the young student is covered by the labour code regulations just as any other regular employee.

Professional placements in the building industry are also available for students in higher education (please see the law on building regulations of July 7th 1994 (Dz.U. z 1994 r. nr 89 poz. 414 z późn. zm.)). In article 12 the law defines a catalogue of independent technical functions in the building industry that require appropriate preparation in terms of education and professional training. If one wishes to perform these functions independently, one has to possess a building licence (available in various areas of specialisation). Moreover, apart from a successful education in a given discipline (degree specialisation) one has to undertake training (a placement). Depending upon the specialisation, there is a placement related either to development of projects or a placement on a building-site. The duration of the placement differs, it can last from one to three years. For a building assessor it may even last up to ten years, not to mention 'serious practical output in the area related to one's expertise'. The law in article 14 point 4 states that only direct involvement in areas above, like project development or work on a building site under supervision of a licensed person, is a *sine qua non* condition for the placement approval.

Furthermore, the *Regulation of the Minister of Transport* on independent technical functions in the building industry of April 18th 2006 (Dz.U. z 2006 r. nr 83 poz. 578 z późn. zm.) defines the types and scope of professional training required to perform these functions, evaluation of the professional training, limits scope of the building expertise, provides a list of degrees of specialisation appropriate to particular licences, a list of sub-specialisations, as well as examination scope and procedures. Paragraph 3 of the Regulation states that the professional training (placement) required to receive a licence in specialisations listed in article 14 is undertaken after one's successful graduation from university. Nonetheless, one can include here hours of placement completed after the 3rd year of study (last year of the undergraduate degree). Please note that a period of mandatory traineeship during the university course is not taken into account here. A trainee has to keep a log book of the professional training (placement), which has to be stamped by a chamber appropriate to the specific professional governing body (see § 4 of the Regulation). The log book is a condition to sit the examinations. The stager has to also submit a copy of the degree diploma and prove that the examination fee has been paid. The examination is taken before a committee comprised of the chamber members. Upon achieving a successful result in the examination the chamber informs the Principal Inspector (Superintendent) of Building Inspection (Główny Inspektor Nadzoru Budowlanego) in order to add the successful candidate to a central register.

The second case of specific traineeship arrangements refers to the legal profession. The curriculum of a law degree is governed by a number of documents, including laws (acts), regulations and formalised opinions of the legal profession. The main document is the *Law on Higher Education* of July 27th 2005 (Dz.U. z 2005 r. nr 164 poz. 1365 z późn. zm.). According to article 6 of the law, every university has the right to plan the programme of study and curricula. This right is, however, limited by the existence of educational standards, which have to be met by every single university. The educational standards are governed by the Minister of Higher Education. The *Regulation of the Minister of Higher Education* on educational standards for individual disciplines of study (degrees) and levels of study of July 12th 2007 also defines conditions and procedures that have to be met by the university to run interdisciplinary degrees as well as macro degrees. Amongst 118 degrees there are standards for studying for a law degree. These standards of education aim at assuring the appropriate level of education at all the universities where a student can read for a particular degree. Furthermore, the regulation takes into account the EU regulations in this area i.e. the Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the recognition of professional qualifications no 2005/36/EC of September 7th 2005 (Dz. Urz. UE

L.05.255.22 z późn. zm.). The Regulation leaves it up to the university to decide on rules and forms of traineeship, bearing in mind separate regulations for individual professions that require licences (see § 13 of the Regulation). Annex no. 85 of the regulation states that the minimum period for a traineeship is three weeks. The formalised opinions expressed in legal circles have led to the introduction of legal traineeships in the following sub-areas: internship in the court of justice, in the public prosecutor office, and in public administration. To illustrate the procedures: a student of law at the Jagiellonian University is obliged to carry out one obligatory internship (the first one), while the other two can be exchanged and carried out as a traineeship in the court of justice, a law firm, an organ of a public administration or in an association. There are also a number of courses which require students' involvement in work of a particular institution and thus can be counted towards a traineeship e.g. the law clinics, advice centres etc.

As a rule traineeships for this degree are formalised. A student is required to file a request and to run a traineeship log book where he or she records all the activities carried out. The book has to be submitted with documents to pass a particular year of study (in general students of the final years, four and five, are allowed to take part in traineeships). Another acceptable form of traineeship accepted at the university is employment or voluntary work.

Rights of students are regulated by the *Constitution of the Republic of Poland* which gives all common and equal access to education (see art. 70 of the Constitution). Rights and duties of a student, irrespective of the discipline of study (degree), are also regulated by the rules of conduct (statute) enacted by a university senate. It specifies the duration of the academic year, a grading system, social and educational stipends etc. Thus there is some autonomy, yet it has to be in line with general conditions set by the Minister for Higher Education. A major reform of higher education took place in 2011 (it came into force on October 1st 2011) reorganising *inter alia* the rights and duties of students.

Graduates of law will be able to continue their professional education when they graduate during the so called post-graduate legal training (application '*aplikacja*'). These traineeships prepare them to work in selected professions such as judge, barrister (advocate), solicitor, public prosecutor, notary and bailiff. (As an exception graduates of administration can also undertake this training). The post-graduate legal training is a kind of professional traineeship which prepares its graduates to act and perform the above listed professions independently.

It is worth noting that a major change in regulations occurred between 2006 and 2009 when the new form of entry examination was introduced. Organisation and co-ordination of examinations was taken away from the bar associations (legal corporations) and became the responsibility of the Ministry of Justice. Post-graduate legal training is governed by the laws and regulations of the Minister of Justice and regulations of professional corporations such as:

- The Law on the Bar (advocacy) of May 28th 1982 (Dz.U. z 1982 r. nr 16 poz. 124 z późn. zm.)
- The Law on solicitors of July 6th 1982 (Dz.U. z 2002 r. nr 123 poz. 1059 z późn. zm.)
- The Law on the institution of the notary public of February 14th 1991 (Dz.U. z 2008 nr 189 poz. 1158)
- The Law on the National School of Judicature and Public Prosecutor Office of January 23rd 2009 (Dz.U. z 2009 r. nr 26 poz. 157 z późn. zm)
- The Regulation of the Minister of Justice regarding an organisation of notary post-graduate training (application) of December 22nd 2005 (Dz.U. z 2005 r. nr 258 poz. 2169)
- The Regulation of the Minister of Justice regarding an organisation and process of bailiffs' post-graduate training (application) of December 21st 2007 (Dz.U. z 2007 nr 244 poz. 1804)

To enter the post-graduate training programme a graduate is obliged to pass an entrance examination. It is managed by a commission, which has been set up by the *Minister of Justice* and by the *National School of Judicature and Public Prosecutor Office*. In the case of other post-graduate training co-ordinated by the professional corporations, apart from a successful entry result, a graduate has to be included in a list of applicants. The major change was an additional general training (lasting up to 12 months), which entitles its graduates to try to join training to become a judge or a public prosecutor. Should they fail to join these applications they can apply to be employed as a judicial referendary, an assistant to a judge or an assistant to a public prosecutor. Upon meeting a criterion of employment in one of these positions for a certain period of time they can sit a judicial examination (without completing the post-graduate training).

The professions of the public (common) trust, which include the legal professions, require each candidate to have faultless credentials, to ensure that in the future the profession will receive appropriate respect. In practice this adds up to possession of all public rights and a diploma of the law degree. In the course of training the candidate participates in a number of theoretical and practical courses of an academic and a seminar nature. Finally, the candidate takes part in placements on the job, which differ according to the sub-discipline of the legal profession selected. For example in general, judicial and prosecutor's applications, the candidate can receive a stipend, inclusive of health insurance, if she or he is not employed. Each of the candidates is obliged to work for minimum of three years according to their professional post-graduate training area, after they successfully graduate. Then, after the final exams, the *Director of the National School of Judicature and Public Prosecutor Office* allocates graduates of the application for a two years stage. The stage is formalised by an employment contract lasting for two years. At this time the stipend is over and a graduate is treated as an employee in accordance with the labour code. Should a candidate be removed from a list of applicants, decides not to work after graduation, he or she resigns from their position, or is fired (due to his or her own fault) he or she has to return the stipend received. Additionally, a candidate is obliged to participate in classes, study, sit exams and behave according to the school regulations.

Here one has to address the remaining forms of post-graduate training in other legal professions. One of the main differences is the fact that candidates have to pay an annual fee, which is stated in the ministerial regulations. The patrons that are in charge of their professional training do not have to employ them when the application period is over. There is an employment contract in the case of the bailiff's application; while in the notary application such a contract may be signed with a patron or a chamber. Usually the contract is part-time, while rates are far from market remuneration. Thus the rule of equal treatment does not occur, and the candidates have to ask their families for financial support. Interestingly in the case of obligations towards trainees there is no disproportion between the sub-disciplines of the legal profession.

2.1.3 Existence of any specific soft law/case law in relation to traineeships and whether this has had an impact on traineeships

There is no soft law or case law, however there are certain practices that can be traced. Informal discussions with employees of a major international construction company show that very strict recruitment procedures are adopted towards students who want to become trainees. There is a traineeship in the form of a regular employment contract for a couple of months and it is paid for by the company. At the end of this traineeship students receive their evaluation called *the recommendation*. If it is positive it will be a basis for potential future employment. In this way outstanding individuals are selected and attracted to the company. Also this is an early stage when students can juxtapose their theoretical perspective with the real life decisions taken on the construction site.

Finally, one should mention here another programme, which is called 'Grasz o staż', 'Compete for a stage'. It is a private programme organised in co-operation between Price Waterhouse Coopers and the 'Gazeta Wyborcza' daily newspaper. Currently at the 17th

edition of the programme, it allows students and graduates and potential employers to meet. The programme is open to all who are interested and they can select up to three cases that they have to solve. By selecting the case the players chose the profile of a potential placement of their interest. Those who will succeed are guaranteed a monthly placement, which is paid, even in the case of non-governmental organisations (<http://grasz.pl/czym-jest-grasz-o-staz>).

2.1.4 Specific legal/regulatory frameworks/legislation related to transnational placements schemes (if any) undertaken by foreign (EU) trainees in the Member State. Legal and administrative barriers in relation to transnational placements

Specific regulatory framework regarding transnational placements is embedded in the EU regulatory context with the major regulations listed. The most important at this stage seems to be the Recommendation (EC) of the European Parliament and of the Council No. 2006/961 of December 18th 2006 on transnational mobility within the Community for education and training purposes: *European Charter for Mobility*. It is a document that lays the ground rules for all parties that engage in transnational mobility of young people.

In fact the regulations of the transnational placements within the Erasmus programme do vary from the national traineeships. They regulate phases of the placements, such as:

- A recruitment phase
- A preparation phase – time between qualification for a placement and a departure for a placement
- A placement phase
- A closure of the placement phase – including financial and substantial reporting.

The Erasmus Handbook (*Program Erasmus. Poradnik*, 2010, p. 23) specifies the information related to the placements' recruitment process. With the use of various instruments, e.g. a website, the conditions of the placements should be mainstreamed. These include rules and conditions of qualification for the placement, rules of recruitment and rules of financial support. As a result a student would find out what his or her duties would be during various phases of the placement. The most important is the rule regarding the complete recognition of the placement abroad by the university. Of course the placement should be related to the field of study. The grant received by a student from the Erasmus sources is complementary, in other words it does not cover all the costs related to travel and life abroad. The placement might take place in various institutions such as companies, research centres etc. as long as it is in a country participating in the Erasmus programme. In the academic year 2010/ 2011 a Polish student could travel to as many as 30 countries. It is important to note that the placement cannot be carried out in the European Union institutions and in the diplomatic centres of the home country. The placement might last from three months up to 12 months maximum and it is granted only once for a given person.

Each academic institution participating in the Erasmus programme should elaborate its own rules of conduct which are approved by its management and accessible to all interested parties, e.g. on the website. These rules would state, among others, the formal criteria for students (being a student of the university etc.); internal university criteria (taking into account language certificates etc.); information regarding terms of recruitment like the commission, terms and schedule of recruitment proceedings; possibility to appeal; and finally procedure referring to the placement and its financing.

Before a departure for the placement the student should have the approval of the receiving institution and the training agreement signed. The training agreement covering duties of all parties is signed by all, i.e. the student, the host institution and the university. The training agreement is accompanied by the quality commitment attachment. Before the beginning of the placement the student should also sign a financial agreement with his or her home

university. Additionally, each student is obliged to possess valid health and accident insurance. It is also interesting to note that even though the programme does not require separate agreements between the student and the receiving institutions, the former often request signing it. The stay of the student is usually monitored, as the student is expected to stay in touch and report problems and challenges occurring. The university staff in charge is monitoring whether the placement is going according to the plans agreed and approved. The student returning to the home university should bring a confirmation of the duration of the placement issued by the receiving institution along with transcript of work with the mark. Furthermore the student is expected to fill in the Erasmus alumni form and settle the financial aspects of the placement with the home university (Program Erasmus. Poradnik, 2010, p. 23-32).

2.2 Definition of traineeships and trainees

The definition of a traineeship used here shows how complex, diverse and multidimensional traineeships can be. In addition, the discussion on traineeship is set in various policy areas. It must be pointed out that there is no single, official definition in use. The most common understanding of traineeship regards it as a process by which an individual, usually a young person, gains some competencies while working, not always being employed), in a manner similar to a regular employee. The main difference between a trainee and an employee is the contract, which is not a contract for employment, even though similar activities are carried out. The second main difference is pay, since the traineeship may be paid for, but it also might be free without any payment. However the above mentioned example of the interns employed on employment contracts in the construction industry shows the extent of confusion in terms of definitions adopted.

Also in the regulations various definitions emerge that are briefly be discussed below:

1. A trainee on placement – a *stagiaire* – can be used in reference to a young unemployed graduate, but at present the spectrum is wider and covers other groups of unemployed. It also must be mentioned that various companies would have their own placement programmes, targeting graduates, paid or unpaid.
2. A trainee – an intern (as a part of school and university curriculum) – learns the skills of a particular trade. Entry criteria have been listed above.
3. A trainee – a volunteer – an individual, who performs certain activities based on free will, on a voluntary basis.
4. A transnational trainee (within the EU mobility) – since it is co-ordinated by a university and it is based on training agreements, it refers to graduates and students, of a particular university in most cases.

2.2.1 How is the trainee's legal situation compared to that of a regular employee and/or apprentice

The situation of a trainee depends upon the status of the trainee discussed above. In general a contract should be signed. Depending upon the scheme various actors would be the parties of the contract. In the case of the placement financed by the job centre, targeting unemployed, the employer is not a part of the contract or of the financial flows. The placement contract is signed between a *stagiaire* and a job centre. However, there is an agreement signed between the job centre and the employer. If it is a company placement a contract is usually signed by a student/graduate and the company. When it comes to obligatory training as a part of university education, universities require tri-party agreements (involving the university, the employer, the student). The situation of volunteers has received the least attention. Finally, any forms of traineeship within Erasmus are subject to contracts signed and co-ordinated by the appropriate bodies (a university and

a company), with the university as the body in charge of co-ordinating and monitoring the trainee and his or her traineeship.

There is confusion about how trainees should be treated, whether as employees or trainees, or simply as students. In the case of unemployment placements it seems to have been the intention of policymakers not to create a relationship between the employers and the trainees or *stagiaires*, yet the present regulation and the way the placement is organised are seen as major obstacles in the existing legal framework. Some policymakers actually urge the creation of this bond, in order to include the employers in this relationship and also in the financial aspect. According to this proposal, a job centre would not control the financial side anymore, but instead the salary would be received directly from the employer. Thus, it is hoped, that employers would treat trainees as their employees (regional policymaker).

This would be reasonable taking into account the fact that while learning on the job the trainees and *stagiaires* perform tasks similar to, or even of the same nature, as employees. The fact that they are sent by a job centre and they are paid by the job centre often leads to them not being treated the same way as employees or perceived as such. However, depending on one's position and the place where training occurs, some will not notice much difference when it comes to tasks and responsibilities.

When one analyses the company placement programmes it is fairly clear that the approach is driven by the goal of selecting the best candidates for future employment. Hence, the trainees are verified in terms of skills and competencies and they are given an opportunity to act in real work situations. At the end of the traineeship period they are evaluated and they receive feedback, either a positive note with a job offer or a negative note (a major multinational construction company).

The transnational trainees appreciate the opportunity of working abroad in an international environment. All of the interviewed trainees praised the fact they had regular feedback from their employers and that they were questioned regularly about their level of satisfaction from their placements. Also they mentioned that they were offered interesting and demanding tasks. At the beginning they were introduced to other members of staff and they had the feeling they were treated as any other employee (*stagiaires*).

Student trainees, as they stay usually for a short period of time, are most often regarded as an external body, and are given some boring and tiring tasks like archiving. Employers do not see much use in their placement and find it impossible to involve them in even moderately responsible tasks. But on the other hand students realise that such first contact with the real world of work is essential (regional policymaker). In comparison to apprentice trainees, student trainees are usually in the later years of university education or are graduates, and they are treated more like grown-ups. Thus more responsible tasks are allocated to them.

Finally, volunteers are never regarded as employees but as voluntary workers due to the nature of their involvement, and they are often allocated demanding tasks, which might indicate potential high value of their input.

2.3 Legal provisions about aspects of traineeships

The status of the trainee differs according to the scheme in which it is located.

1. A trainee – an intern – a student (as a part of the school or university curriculum) would be enrolled to gain some skills and competencies on the job. It is usually unpaid and the undergraduate is expected to complete at least a month's training.

Here one should add the interns, who in fact are *stagiaires* in the private sector financed with private sector funds who are selected in a competitive manner, usually a few out of

a few hundred of interested ones, signing regular employment contracts, covered by the labour code regulations, and regarded as regular young employees.

2. A trainee – a *stagiaire* – a graduate who decides to follow opportunities of the stage for the unemployed, financed by a job centre, performing regular tasks of an employee and learning on the job. The law clearly defines a stage as lasting a minimum period of three months and a maximum period of 12 months. However, the most frequent length at present is around four to six months due to budgetary constraints.
3. A trainee – a volunteer – an individual who performs activities on a voluntary basis free of charge, receives some forms of benefits and reimbursement like insurance and reimbursement for travel, phone bills. There are no limits about the maximum duration of the voluntary work.
4. A transnational trainee (within the EU mobility area) – the contract is signed by the three parties, i.e. the student, the receiving institution and the home university that is sending the students. These students act like employees but receive a stipend for their activities paid out from the Erasmus funds allocated to the country where they study.

2.3.1 Formal obligations for the parties involved, i.e. trainee, organisation which offers the traineeship, educational establishment

All the 'sending' institutions would monitor the situation and would act if any discrepancy occurs. In Poland should a trainee be requested to perform completely unrelated tasks to the job and to the planned activities, then the job centre should be informed. Prior to the start of the traineeship a plan should be presented to be approved by an appointed employee of the job centre. A similar report is submitted at the closure of the traineeship.

However, some of the respondents note examples when reality varied from the stage plan. In some cases, like the traineeship within the EU, employers tend to liaise with the university administration and inform them of any difficult situations, which is clearly stated as the home university responsibility in the programme documents and guidelines (Program Erasmus. Poradnik, 2010).

In general there is a common pattern followed in all analysed institutions. If they decide to 'employ' *stagiaires* or trainees there is a person in charge of the trainees. At the end of a placement or traineeship plans and reports are issued. Additionally, in some places, *stagiaires* can expect a recommendation letter, which can be checked by future employers.

2.3.2 Legal and/or administrative barriers in relation to traineeships and traineeships undertaken by foreign (EU) students

There does not seem to be much interest among the EU students to have an Erasmus placement in Poland, even though the statistics for Erasmus mobility for various academic years show that more Polish students travelled abroad to study than foreign students came to Poland (10 lat Erasmus w Polsce, 2008, p.8, or Lifelong Learning Programme (2011) The Erasmus Programme 2009/2010. A Statistical Overview).

One would expect that EU students would be interested in having such a traineeship, or voluntary work if they had any specific research, educational or private interests in Poland. For example there is an Erasmus student in my department who I supervise in his research work. In this case he is also working on his Master's thesis dealing with the convergence of the Polish economy. Additionally, one of the respondents mentioned that her company had hosted as trainees a Chinese student and a French student, with no Polish proficiency (Regional Development Agency). Surely language proficiency cannot be an obstacle since Polish is the working language, all documents and communications are in Polish, thus the person in charge has to keep an eye on the trainee and inform her or him about all the procedures and changes all the time. Erasmus placements might be the best solution as

they provide some funds and all the documents, agreements are signed in English. Yet in a typical Polish organisation all must be translated into Polish, as this is the working language, so the problems might be mounting indeed.

3. Availability of and Access to Traineeships

3.1 Statistics/quantitative information about traineeships

It is well known amongst policy makers and scholars that there is not sufficient data and continuous research on the traineeship arrangements (central government policymaker). The study on the first steps in the labour market by Deloitte and Touche (2011) shows a very interesting picture of young people leaving the education system and entering the labour market. In fact they seem to be placed under pressure at the start of the experience. This is because they realise that the practical aspects of education are absent so they need to find a traineeship, a placement or work during studies as an essential element to fill this gap. This first experience is regarded as a way to complement their theoretical knowledge and to facilitate finding employment. In fact as many as 80 per cent of respondents share the opinion that those without practical experience have little chance to be hired. The forms of experience are varied, and they are presented in the table below (Deloitte and Touché, 2011, p. 6).

Table 3.1: Various forms of work experience acquired (in %)

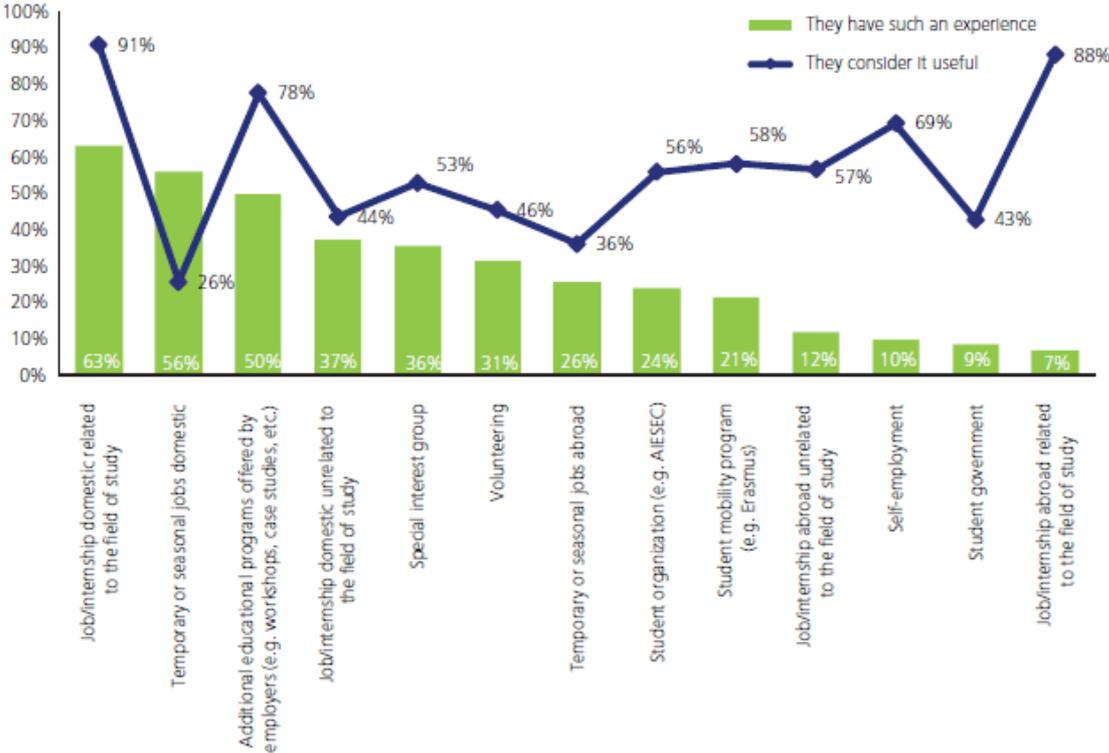
Type of experience	The average for the region	Czech Republic	Slovakia	Poland	Lithuania	Latvia
Student mobility program (e.g. Erasmus)	21,5%	26,8%	23,0%	20,4%	17,0%	28,5%
Additional educational programs offered by employers (e.g. workshops, case studies, etc.)	49,8%	34,0%	28,6%	58,9%	24,0%	25,1%
Job/internship domestic related to the field of study	63,4%	39,7%	31,0%	75,5%	24,4%	52,8%
Job/internship domestic unrelated to the field of study	37,3%	36,5%	37,3%	39,4%	24,6%	23,0%
Job/internship abroad related to the field of study	6,9%	8,0%	8,0%	6,4%	4,9%	11,9%
Job/internship abroad unrelated to the field of study	11,9%	10,2%	14,6%	12,7%	7,7%	5,1%
Temporary or seasonal jobs domestic	56,2%	58,2%	55,1%	57,0%	52,8%	43,8%
Temporary or seasonal jobs abroad	25,7%	21,9%	29,6%	27,2%	22,3%	10,2%
Volunteering	31,5%	25,4%	23,3%	33,2%	37,9%	24,7%
Self-employment	9,8%	15,6%	9,1%	6,4%	30,5%	17,9%
Special interest group	35,9%	12,4%	5,2%	46,3%	13,2%	22,6%
Student government	8,6%	5,4%	3,1%	8,7%	17,1%	11,9%
Student organization (e.g. AIESEC)	24,2%	17,9%	16,0%	28,3%	8,1%	12,8%

Source: Deloitte and Touche, 2011, p. 6.

This table shows that Polish students are regional leaders in seeking work experience in various forms. As many as 75.5 per cent of students undertake traineeships/jobs that are related to the degree that they are reading for. To compare, 39.4 per cent undertake traineeships which are not related to their field of study. Apart from traineeships, students engage in additional educational programmes organised by employers which bring them additional knowledge (58.9 per cent); in special interest groups (46.3 per cent); or student organisations like AIESEC (28.3 per cent). In addition one has to add that students work

seasonally and on a temporary basis in Poland (57 per cent) and abroad (27.2 per cent), as well as running their own businesses (6.4 per cent). They clearly see that being active in the labour market in the sense that they seek employment, even seasonal or auxiliary work, gives them access to funds. Finally, as much as 20.4 per cent of students participate in student mobility programmes. Thus, one can cautiously conclude that students look for experience that would boost their possibilities in the labour market (Deloitte, 2011, p.6-7). It is worth noting that many Polish students (81 per cent) admit that they have gained professional experience in the course of their studies. The experience is gained via various paths, i.e. traineeships, work and self-employment. The Polish lead in the region in this respect.

Figure 3.1: Experience and its usefulness for future job



Source: Deloitte and Touche, 2011.

The chart above presents very interesting conclusions made by respondents for the whole region analysed in the study. The most useful in the context of future employment prospects seem to be traineeships and jobs related to the field of study either in the country of one’s origin (91 per cent), or abroad (81 per cent), additional educational programmes (78 per cent) and self-employment (69 per cent). The least useful seem to be temporary and seasonal domestic jobs (26 per cent), which supposedly are seen as a way to earn some pocket money. Similar conclusions can be drawn from the chart presented below.

Figure 3.2: Work experience and its usefulness for future job in Poland

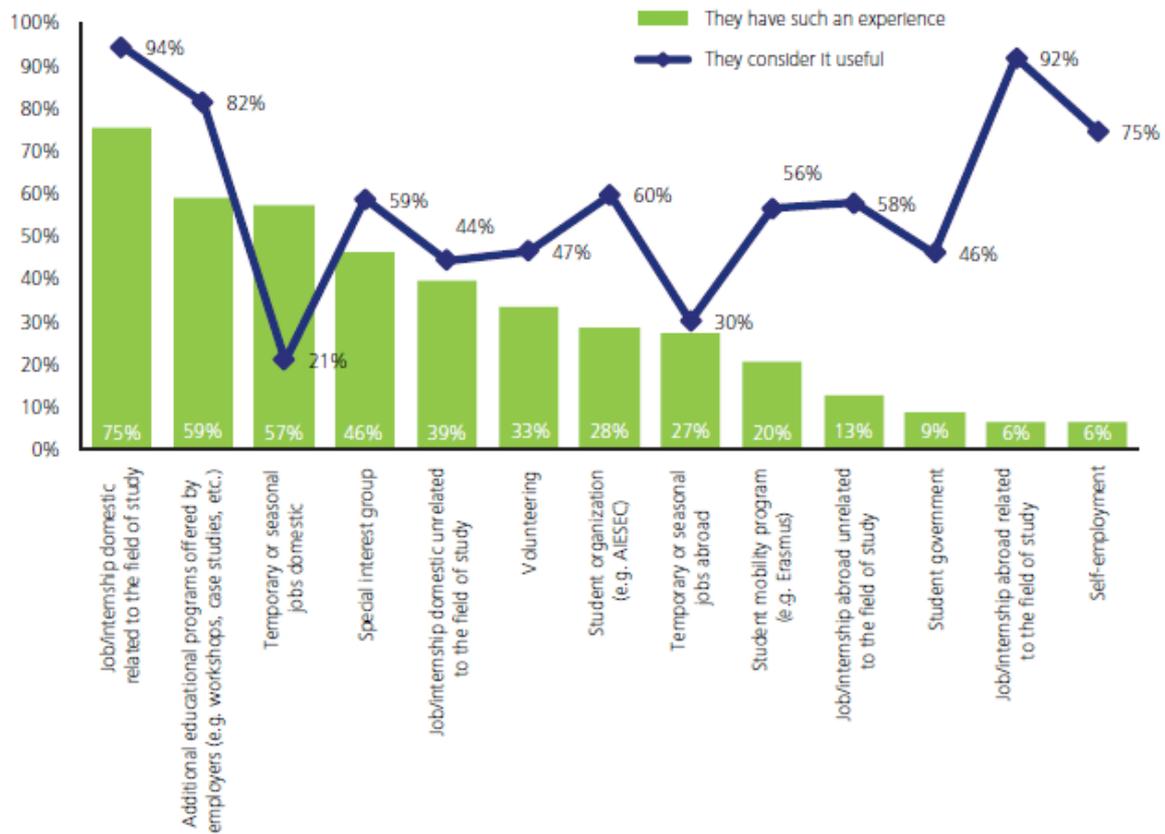


Table 3.1, above shows that 33.2 per cent of student respondents have an experience of voluntary work or are active in students' unions and self-government (8.7 per cent). There is a gender pattern here, women tend to be more interested in voluntary work, whereas men would rather engage in students' unions and self-government (Deloitte and Touche, 2011, p.6).

At this point it is essential to juxtapose the data above with the statistics of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs from several years starting in 2006 and ending in 2010. The table below shows that, in the analysed period, the number of *stagiaires*, both starting stages and those finishing is continuously increasing. Also in comparison with other forms of the labour market activation the share of *stagiaires* (beginners) is rising in the total structure of participants of the various forms of activation.

Table 3.2: *Stagiaires* within the stage scheme run by the labour offices

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
No. of people participating in the stage	169	173	169	256	299
	105	017	860	669	342
No. of people completing the stage	155	164	149	208	279
	602	988	971	863	968
Share of <i>stagiaires</i> among all activated people ³	28.5%	25.7%	26%	37.5%	38%

Source: MPiPS (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs), publications on efficiency of basic forms of professional activation, various years 2008-2011.

The transnational mobility of students paints an interesting picture. Within the Leonardo da Vinci (LdV) Mobility we can observe that between 2000 and 2006 as many as 24,560 beneficiaries were recorded in Poland (LDVII). During the following three years, between 2007 and 2009 as many as 14,174 people were beneficiaries (Training for mobility. Mobility for training, 15th anniversary of the Leonardo Da Vinci Programme, Education and Culture DG, 2010, p. 32). The data for 2010 and 2011 show that an additional 4,243 beneficiaries joined in 2010 and 5,766 in 2011 (http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/doc/stat/poland_en.pdf). These numbers clearly show that during five years of the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) the number of beneficiaries (24,183) almost equals the number of beneficiaries recorded during the six year period of the LDVII. In fact, the publication titled 'Erasmus Programme 2009/2010. A statistical Overview' (LLP, 2011, p. 70) notes that placements (traineeships) in companies are the fastest growing action within the Erasmus Programme⁴. The authors of the Overview argue that placements abroad have been enjoying a growing interest. In the academic year 2009/2010 a 17.2 per cent rise was observed in the whole programme, i.e. 35,561 Erasmus students *stagiaires* out of the 213,266 Erasmus students. To compare, the number of Erasmus student *stagiaires* amounted to 30,330 in 2008/2009. Hence placements represented 16.7 per cent of all the Erasmus mobility in 2009/2010 and 15.4 per cent in 2008/2009. The number of Erasmus students on placements in Poland amounted to 2,408 outgoing students and 536 incoming students in 2009/2010. The later data confirm that the interest for incoming students is not that high (Lifelong Learning Programme (2011) The Erasmus Programme 2009/2010. A statistical Overview p.70-73).

It is rather difficult to state with much precision the scale of voluntary work. The latest research shows the activity of the Polish in terms of their involvement in the third sector work has been deteriorating, from 16 per cent in November 2010 to 14.5 per cent in November 2011. It is known that during that year almost a quarter of Polish with a university degree and one-seventh with a secondary education worked voluntarily. On a positive note the younger generation is more active than the older ones when voluntary work (volunteering) is concerned. The report 'Youth on the Move' – shows that 16 per cent of Polish young people were involved in organised voluntary activity in the past 12 months as opposed to 24 per cent in the EU 27 (Feb. 2010- Feb.2011) (Youth on the move, 2011, p. 19). Hence, only a cautious conclusion can be drawn that the extent of voluntary work is not very high among the Polish, however young people still engage more than other cohorts.

³ The share of *stagiaires* among all activated people is calculated as a percentage of *stagiaires* within all participants of activation, e.g. training, intervention works, public works etc.

⁴ The placements had been previously managed within the Leonardo da Vinci Programme for vocational education and training. Since the academic year 2007/ 2008 the company placements have been a part of the Erasmus (Erasmus Programme. A statistical Overview, LLP, 2011, p. 70).

3.2 Sectors where traineeships are prevalent

Surely there is a lot of interest in traineeship amongst all sectors of the economy, with diverging characteristics, area of activity and size. This does not mean however that there are no specific patterns which can be traced. It seems that by introducing a placement system (stage) financed by national resources the regular placement solutions organised by companies themselves have been pushed out. The majority of employers, either in public, or private or the third sector, seem to be very attracted by the fact that they have a chance to recruit and check the potential employee in a regular work environment. Hence it appears that the system has been compromised by this solution (regional labour market policymaker).

The respondents observe that those most active in the traineeship area are in the private sector where students and graduates can practice either as *stagiaires* or interns (trainees). The likelihood that an organisation would receive a *stagiaire* with the funding is rather high when the organisation promises that the *stagiaire* would be employed after the completion of his or her stage e.g. solution used in the city of Krakow. Surely this approach increases the chances of young people in the labour market. On the other hand, as some respondents have argued, this approach generates some unethical behaviour as private organisations, in particular, can benefit from a trainee on the premises which they do not later employ (Regional Development Agency). Finally some respondents argue that this solution limits the possibilities of *stagiaires* gaining some valuable work experience, since the duration is too short (regional policymaker).

The public sector with its limits on new employment positions finds itself in a very tricky situation. On one hand there is a need for additional employment as there is plenty of work and, on the other hand, in the context of no vacancies, the *stagiaires* cannot be employed when the stage is over. Furthermore if there emerges a new position, a standard public sector recruitment procedure (concour) has to be adopted and the *stagiaire* cannot be employed or moved to this position right away but has to take part in this concour. The outcome of the concour is unknown as a more skilled and qualified candidate might appear and win it.

In the third sector, the possibilities for employment are equally scarce, thus one can observe that their participation in the placement (stage) schemes is not extensive. This is rather unfortunate as work of the *stagiaires* would be of great benefit for the third sector organisations.

Finally, both public and third sector organisations would see voluntary work schemes as an opportunity for young people to gain experience but also as a way to fill in the existing employment gaps which result from these organisations' scarce resources.

The transnational mobility of Polish students and graduates takes place in all sectors depending upon interest and entrepreneurship of students.

3.3 Profile/patterns of traineeships

No typical pattern of the trainee emerges from the qualitative research conducted. Based on the available research, informal conversations and comments made during the interviews the following patterns may be traced:

- A trainee – *stagiaire* – a graduate, who registers himself or herself in the local job centre. Very often actively seeking professional experience on its own, i.e. finding an organisation to work in as a *stagiaire*. This form of traineeship is financed from public sources, thus there is no direct relationship between a *stagiaire* and the employer, as the job centre acts as an employer (the one who gives the funds).

- A trainee – *stagiaire* in the private sector – whose stage is being financed by the company resources and who signs a contract, usually an employment contract. He or she might be still a student. There is a high likelihood that the student might be employed, a direct relationship here is observed – although it is not very frequent nowadays.
- A trainee – intern – a student who becomes a trainee, usually for a month full-time, sometimes longer but the number of hours per week is reduced. Following successful co-operation such an intern might become an employee later on if a vacancy emerges.
- A trainee – volunteer – a person, possibly a student or graduate who seeks employment related experience. Formalisation of voluntary work contract might take place but that does not happen often.
- A transnational trainee – a student or a graduate whose stage is being financed by the Erasmus programme sources and signs a tri-party contract, a quasi-employment contract. The relationship between employer and a trainee exists and it is quite strong, but the university is also an important actor here caring for the interests of the student stipulated in the contract and there might be a possibility for future employment.

3.4 Recruitment process of and equity of access to traineeships

The recruitment processes are transparent and essential in the case of public administration. The *stagiaires* cannot go directly into employment but would have to take part in the recruitment process (*concour*) that is open to all interested individuals meeting the formal criteria. The private and third sector would select potential *stagiaires* and trainees based on their internal procedures and can employ them directly when a stage or training is coming to its end. This often happens when a mandatory minimum period of a stage is over (i.e. three months). Recruitment is regulated by internal, corporate or public procedures. It is worth stating that the process is very specific depending on the type of an organisation, but access is open to all, or at least it is designed to be so.

3.4.1 Any measures taken by government to ensure greater equity of access to certain types of traineeships (e.g. those linked to mandatory professional training in law, medicine, unpaid company placements, etc.)

The conservative government introduced a number of changes to the system of professional training in law. It aimed at opening the legal profession to people of various backgrounds and dealing with the existing and prevailing social closure. The changes were not welcomed by the legal profession associations but they had to be accepted. Hence a number of people who would previously have had no chance of being admitted to legal training, due to quotas and semi-formal arrangements, joined the training schemes.

3.5 Evolution of traineeships over time and impact of recent economic crisis on traineeships

Students and graduates continue to plan their transition to the labour market having in mind a potential future career and success. Unfortunately, with the current economic crisis, unemployment has risen, and funds allocated for active labour market policies, which include funds for stages, have decreased. Job centres try to rationalise the situation by offering shorter period of stages, usually just above the minimum length for traineeships, bearing in mind that a larger number of graduates may need to have access to stages. In this context one also observes a steady growth in graduate and student entrepreneurs looking for various on-the-job-training schemes, including those which are unpaid, with which they enrich the content of their CVs.

3.5.1 Whether economic crises has had an impact on various types of traineeships and what impact

Based on the interviews conducted, it may be assumed that the crisis has forced individuals and institutions to rationalise their spending and to use various possibilities to access trainees and provide training in a more effective manner. However, available public money is scarce, whereas the need for it is much higher. In this context labour market institutions are forced to rationalise their spending, thus reducing the period of placements (stages) (local labour market official). This is quite interesting when one analyses the statistics on spending that show that more and more money was spent on placements between 2006 and 2010 (please refer to the table below).

Also there is a question which remains without an answer: whether the crisis has boosted entrepreneurship.

3.6 Financing of traineeships

The Labour Fund finances implementation of active and passive labour market policies in Poland. Each of the job centres receives an annual allocation for activities like unemployment benefits, training, stages, labour clubs etc. This area is being financed by the Labour Fund. Additionally, some areas are financed by the *European Social Fund* via the *Operational Programme Human Capital* (regional labour market policymaker and official).

The table below presents the funds allocated for the stages in the context of the active labour market policies. It must be noted that in annual planning the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs assigns funds to labour market policies, whereas the local job centres decide on particular goals and spending according to the needs of the local labour markets. As it can be seen from the data below, the local job centres perceive stages as an important element of the activation of the unemployed in the labour market. The annual spending has been on the rise since 2006. There is no data for 2011 available yet (MPiPS, 2008; MPiPS, 2009; MPiPS, 2010; MPiPS, 2011).

Table 3.3: Annual spending for the stage as a part of the labour market programmes

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Expenditure in PLN (thousands)	671,898.2	693,380.9	919,436.0	1,352,283.7	1,894,422.1
Dynamics (%- 2006/2007)	n/a	103.2%	132.6%	147.1%	140.1%

Source: MPiPS (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs), publications on efficiency of basic forms of professional activation, various years 2008-2011.

Placements in private organisations can be financed from public sources, see above, and from the company sources. There is no available information/data on the estimated placement budget in the private sector.

Obligatory traineeships of undergraduate students in the course of study at the university and voluntary work are not financed by any specific scheme or fund, as in general they are not paid for.

Finally, transnational mobility within Erasmus is financed by the sources of the *Lifelong Learning Programme*. The data for Poland show the value of the multilateral project between 2000 and 2009: the value of grants between 2000 and 2006 under the Leonardo Da Vinci Programme amounted to €21,931,045; whereas between 2007 and 2009 under the Lifelong Learning Programme it equalled €10,284,319 (Training for Mobility. Mobility for

3.7 Public perceptions about traineeships

In general there is a good perception of traineeships in the form of stages among the public. People realise that the situation of young people in the labour market is not easy and stakeholders and general public appreciate this paid and unpaid traineeship opportunity. Some argue however that the wage given to a *stagiaire* is too low, as it oscillates around the unemployment benefit, and that some institutions abuse the system by asking new trainees to work without employing them. However, the crisis has resulted in the introduction of some control and efficiency measures which will in fact reduce such abuses.

3.8 Practices and Content of Traineeships

3.8.1 Traineeships as part of education and/or labour market entry and integration for young people

Policymakers confirm that young people actively seek traineeships and placements (stage) or any type of activity that would equip them with additional skills and experience and hence make more them competitive and increase their employability in the labour market. This is confirmed by the available research, see already mentioned report by Deloitte and Touche (2011, p.7). Polish students are the most active in the region in terms of acquiring experience and preparing themselves for a smooth transition to the labour market, as many as 81 per cent have gained experience during the university period via traineeship, work and self-employment. In comparison to other countries in the region, Polish students seem to much more actively seeking professional experience than students of other nations in the region. Unfortunately, there is no research to analyse this information from the perspective of the area of the study or students' major.

Here one should add a very special case of social integration processes observed in an emerging sector of the social economy. Some social enterprises introduce a stage mechanism for their beneficiaries, for example in the case of people with psychiatric problems e.g. schizophrenics, who go for a few weeks training, free of charge, as part of their rehabilitation process. They need to find a place and a role in a company that they would enjoy working at. If the stage is successful, upon a positive recommendation, this trainee might be offered a job if there is a vacancy (social economy representative).

3.8.2 Formal/informal evaluation procedures at the end of a traineeship

In all forms of formally acquired traineeship arrangements, students and graduates are evaluated towards the end of their stay. The evaluation procedures are in line with internal organisational procedures irrespective of one's future position. The trainee would receive a written document containing information on the competencies gained (Regional Development Agency), in some cases it is a positive recommendation which opens the door for prospective employment after the degree is completed, in other cases it is a negative recommendation. Also it is common to have a feedback meeting with a superior when a trainee's accomplishments are discussed, at times also with a representative of the human resources team.

3.9 Issues about employer practices as regards traineeships

All the employers seem to be enjoying the benefits of access to the workforce free of charge. In fact this form of work experience financed by public sources has pushed other

forms out of the labour market (regional labour market policymaker). Interestingly, some companies, as mentioned informally, are not interested in recruiting *stagiaires* via job centres, as such candidates might be of low quality. As a result they participate in job fairs at universities where they have offices and try to recruit the best potential *stagiaires* (construction sector/ financial sector). As far as trainees who undertake an obligatory month of traineeship are concerned various approaches are observed. Some companies use traineeships as an opportunity to teach trainees, give them some responsibilities and also to some extent benefit from their work. They sometimes allow for extending the period of the traineeship but decide to reduce the number of hours per day (Regional Development Agency). There are some cases where companies allocating very basic responsibilities to trainees including brewing tea or archiving. Such examples were not mentioned in the case of the Erasmus placements, which were praised for value added, e.g. the professional and cultural side of traineeship.

4. Trainee's Rights and Terms and Conditions

The interviews conducted show that corporate culture plays an important role in traineeships. In some places, usually with a developed corporate culture, trainees, *stagiaires*, volunteers and transnational trainees can enjoy the same treatment as regular employees or as temporary staff. Formally regulated contracts protect their rights and set conditions, yet if there are any problems, organisations sending students and graduates (like job centre or the students' centre at the university) can discuss the problems on behalf of the students. If this is a private placement in a company based on the signed employment contract and if there are any cases of abuse of the law, a student can take the opportunity to discuss the problem with his or her mentor in the company or even discuss it with a lawyer. The labour code is the set of regulations that protects the employee in an employment relationship.

Finally, volunteers and trainees are in the least favourable position, as they are not regarded as employees. Both, volunteers and trainees sign agreements where their duties are specified. However, it is common to see trainees as a short-term help, or even as people demanding time, attention and interest. With volunteers, it is very individual and depends upon the organisation and the volunteer, the written form of agreement helps but flexibility also gives volunteers some power to protect their interests.

5. Quality Assurance of Traineeships

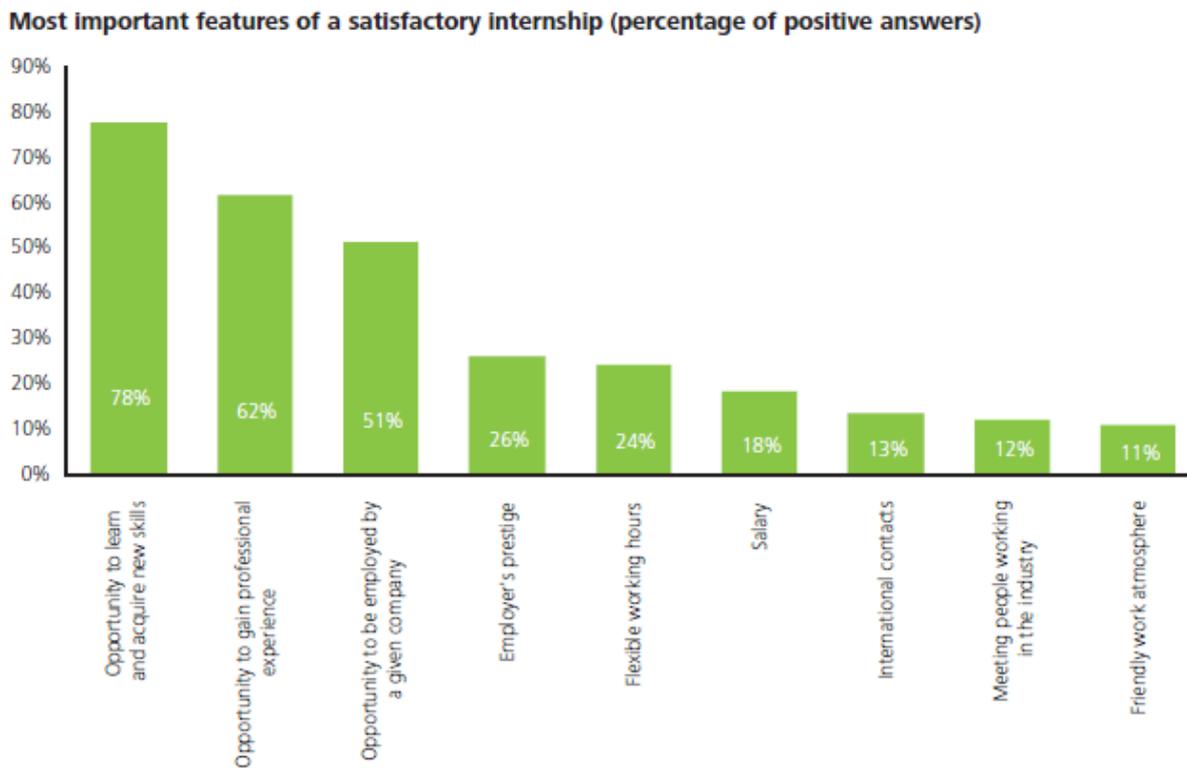
It seems that all stakeholders of the traineeship should be interested in smooth co-operation and a dialogue between various actors of this process. On one hand the traineeship providers should aim at choosing the most appropriate people to work for them during placements, traineeships and as volunteers. Traineeship is there to provide individuals with an opportunity to learn and at the same time juxtapose their knowledge against the real world of work. On the other hand employers also benefit from what is being done by the trainees. The question is how they rely on the trainees, whether they bother to give them real responsibility or rather consider them only as temporary workers that could do some easy tasks.

The research of Deloitte and Touche (2011, p. 23) actually shows that trainees as a group consider and expect a traineeship to bring a number of benefits. The most important features of a satisfactory traineeship listed by trainees are as follows (please refer to the table below):

- an opportunity to learn and acquire new skills (81%)

- opportunity to gain professional experience (62%)
- opportunity to be employed by a given company (51%)
- employers' prestige (26%)
- flexible working hours (24%)
- salary (18%)
- international contracts (13%)
- meeting people working in the industry (12%)
- friendly working atmosphere (11%).

Figure 5.1: Most important features of satisfactory traineeship (% of positive answers)



Source: Deloitte and Touche, 2011, p. 23.

Thus it seems that trainees are predominantly keen on learning in a working environment of the traineeship.

Among the Erasmus interns (*stagiaires*) 35.4 per cent find their placement an important element of their studies (Program Erasmus Poradnik, 2008, p. 4).

6. Overall Assessment as Regards Traineeships

6.1 Benefits and drawbacks of traineeships

6.1.1 Benefits:

For trainees:

- Learning on-the-job, getting acquainted with the work environment and learning specific skills and gaining real experience; sometimes finding out that a dream job is not suitable for them. All of the above might contribute to the future success of an individual.
- In comparison to others who do not participate in traineeship *stagiaires*, trainees and volunteers are tested in the labour market and can compare their expectations with reality. Some get employed immediately after the stage is over, others can use skills e.g. from the tax office (inland revenue) or social insurance institution as a solid base to build additional competencies and thus increase their employability (local labour market official). Also in the case of the student traineeship, it is about learning the procedures of working life, getting up to go to work and spending the whole day at work, which is not very common amongst students who enjoy a more free lifestyle (regional policymaker). Elements listed in the study by Deloitte and Touche (2011) can also be seen as confirmation of the opinions of the stakeholders.

For employers, who are providers of the traineeship:

- Access to future labour force and possibility to find and test employees – hence to verify knowledge provided during their education in the universities.
- Benefits related to work of trainees only if they are allowed to work.
- Impact on the development of the company and of the state (Program Erasmus Poradnik, p. 3-5).

6.1.2 Drawbacks:

For trainees:

- Risk of abuse. This was not mentioned by the employers, but by students and other stakeholders;
- A danger of questionable practices towards trainees e.g. treating them like free labour, or asking them to do photocopying and making tea rather than allocating any even slightly more responsible jobs.
- A threat of very low remuneration in the case of the publicly provided stage.

6.2 Main risks that young people face in relation to traineeships?

There is of course a danger of endless traineeships, but, as stated by job centre officials due to the strict choice of companies involved who have indicated an interest in employing a *stagiaire* most of the trainees are employed later on, at least in cities like Krakow. Also when it comes to traineeships and placements students learn some skills and include these in their CVs.

However, the quality of employment contracts for the young should be further discussed. The young people are usually employed on short-term contracts, badly paid, often at the

minimum wage, and they cannot really dream of the employment security that their parents had enjoyed. This puts them in a very unfavourable situation and it is feared that a new group of the working poor is emerging.

Sometimes extra money can be paid under-the-table as a part of the shadow economy in private sector.

To sum up, one of the major risks for young people is a precarious employment which does not give security and possibilities in the labour market.

6.3 Any measures taken by the Government or plans to mitigate these risks

Present political discourse related to the parliamentary elections of October 9th 2011 is full of the ideas put forward by every political party to ban and abolish precarious employment contracts, called in Poland the *junk contracts*. However, experts stress that banning these will increase the level of unemployment. In the context of the crisis it is very probable that only minor changes to such contracts will be introduced. None of the parties mentions any changes to the regulatory framework of traineeships and it is suspected that politicians perceive them as effective instruments for transition from education to the labour market.

The Office of the Prime Minister has produced a report '*The Young 2011*' where various aspects of the lives of young people are analysed. As it seems that none of the recommendations which were formulated have been introduced to the regulatory or legislative framework, it might be suspected that neither the previous nor the present Minister in charge of labour and social affairs is interested in the report's findings.

6.4 Effectiveness of traineeships

Based on the interviews with the *stagiaires*, who carried out a paid traineeship, in Poland and abroad, various benefits are pointed out. These benefits (already discussed) can be seen as the added value, contributing towards increasing the employability of the individual. These forms are worth promoting and introducing into the regulatory framework. Yet some suggestions to introduce changes should be taken into consideration, like bonding people via contracts between employers, institutions and trainees.

Traineeship of students as a part of curriculum appears to be of very little use in a currently dominant form. Rather it is seen as an obligatory activity with not much involvement on the side of either the students or traineeship organisers. It has value in the case of graduates, whether it is a stage, traineeship or voluntary work. When it is treated seriously then it is of value to all sides, however it is suggested by all stakeholders that it must be a part of the overall university curricula. Then perhaps the university should be more in charge of evaluation of the traineeships, their content and effects. In theory it is, but students argue that it is not the case.

6.5 Effectiveness of the current financing of traineeships

The effectiveness of the *stagiaires* appears to be very high (as evidenced by the number of people employed as a result of traineeship). This is stated by the labour market institutions (local labour market official). In fact other stakeholders argue that there is an ethical problem, as the job centre would not grant a stage to an organisation which does not wish to employ someone. Public institutions do not have new positions, which places them at a disadvantage. On the other hand private companies often abuse this system declaring an interest in employing someone although the *stagiaire* is not employed later on (Regional Development Agency). Thus there is a question of ethics in this approach.

On the methodological note it should be added that the employment offices use the concept of employment efficiency rather than effectiveness. It is defined as the so called repeated employment ratio. This is the number of people, who, following the stage, were employed within three months after the stage, i.e. registered out of the unemployment registry or did not register again after that period, in relation to the numbers of people who completed their participation in a given form of activity in a particular year studies (MPiPS, 2011, p. 4).

The statistics below present the following picture. With the increase of expenditure on stages in the country, a growing interest among people to participate is noted. The triple increase in spending leads to almost double increase in the number of participants. However, an analysis of employment efficiency proves that it is decreasing, still oscillating around 50 per cent, with the highest above 55.2 per cent in 2007 and the lowest at 48.4 per cent in 2010. This might lead to speculation and suspicion that the opportunities for employment are not as widely available during the crisis period. It might also be the case that all of the vacancies have been filled by the *stagiaires*.

Table 6.1: Efficiency of the stages

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Expenditure in PLN (thousands)	671,898.2	693,380.9	919,436.0	1,352,283.7	1,894,422.1
No. of people participating in the stages	169,105	173,017	169,860	256,669	299,342
No. of people completing the stages (3)	155,602	164,988	149,971	208,863	279,968
No. of people who were employed after stage (4)	79,441	91,059	81,299	103,343	135,536
Employment efficiency (4/3) in PLN	51.1%	55.2%	54.2%	49.5%	48.4%

Source: MPiPS (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs), publications on efficiency of basic forms of professional activation, various years 2008-2011.

6.6 Good practice examples and recommendations

6.6.1 Good practices

- A solution described above adopted by the construction company.
- A solution conducted by the audit company in co-operation with a daily newspaper 'grasz o staż' – 'compete for a stage'.
- A paid stage from the public sources with strict regulations and selection criteria, including eligibility, duration and effects, to be measured and monitored; yet inclusive of comments and suggestions of policymakers.
- Transnational mobility.

Also, it is worth noting the opinions of the Erasmus trainees expressed after returning from their mobility placement. The *Program Erasmus Poradnik* (p.20) quotes some opinions:

- 'From day one I had a responsible task, a desk, a computer and a phone. The team is very nice and supportive. I was shown around the company and informed of the rules

and customs in the company... this placement allowed me to find out the specifics of the job, gain experience and realise if I like it and if I manage this type of work.'

- 'I think that unpaid internship should not last longer than a month. After a month a student excels in jobs allocated, and the employees do not want to delegate new tasks... negative side – hours of boredom... and the awareness that you do not really need any qualifications to perform this type of work...'

6.6.2 Recommendations:

- Include traineeship in both labour market and education policies as cross-cutting issues.
- Promote dialogue and co-operation between institutions, especially between education and labour market (in particular between companies and universities) in various phases of their policies implementation.
- Promote co-ordination of activities between these institutions and policies.
- Promote grass root initiatives and entrepreneurship e.g. 'grasz o staż' –'compete for a stage'.
- Consider self-employment as a part of traineeship and support it financially.
- Link older workers with youngsters for the purpose of intergenerational transmission of experience and skills.

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The Law on graduate placements (praktyki absolwenckie) of July 17th, 2009 (Dz.U. z 2009 nr 127 poz. 1052).

The Regulation of the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs on care and education institutions of October 19th 2007 (Dz. U. z 2007 nr 201 poz.1455).

The Regulation of the Minister of National Education with a programme basis for various (11) construction professions like roofer, water buildings fitter, pipes systems' fitter, bricklayer, building technician, water building technician, land-surveyor technician, geophysicist technician, sanitation facilities' technician, technologist of completion works in the building industry, driller of exploitative and geophysical bore-holes of June 15th 2011 (Dz.U. z 2011 r. nr 141 poz. 826).

The Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the recognition of professional qualifications no 2005/36/EC of September 7th 2005 (Dz. Urz. UE L.05.255.22 z późn. zm.).

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The Law on higher education of July 27th 2005 (Dz.U. z 2005 r. nr 164 poz. 1365 z późn. zm.).

The Law on solicitors of July 6th 1982 (Dz.U. z 2002 r. nr 123 poz. 1059 z późn. zm.);

The Law on the Bar (advocacy) of May 28th 1982 (Dz.U. z 1982 r. nr 16 poz. 124 z późn. zm.);

The Law on the education system of September 7th 1991 (Dz.U. z 1991 r. nr 95 poz. 425).

The Law on the institution of the notary public of February 14th 1991 (Dz.U. z 2008 nr 189 poz. 1158);

The Law on the National School of Judicature and Public Prosecutor Office of January 23rd 2009 (Dz.U. z 2009 r. nr 26 poz. 157 z późn. zm);

The Recommendation (EC) of the European Parliament and of the Council no. 2006/961 of December 18th 2006 on transnational mobility within the Community for education and training purposes: European Charter for Mobility

The Regulation of the Minister of Justice regarding an organisation of notary post-graduate training (application) of December 22nd 2005 (Dz.U. z 2005 r. nr 258 poz. 2169);

The Regulation of the Minister of Justice regarding an organisation and process of bailiffs' post-graduate training (application) of December 21st 2007 (Dz.U. z 2007 nr 244 poz. 1804).

The Regulation of the Minister of Transport on independent technical functions in the building industry of April 18th 2006 (Dz.U. z 2006 r. nr 83 poz. 578 z późn. zm.

Training for mobility. Mobility for training, 15th anniversary of the Leonardo Da Vinci Programme (2010) Education and Culture DG, European Commission, Brussels;

Wejście młodych ludzi na rynek pracy (2010) Główny Urząd Statystyczny, Warszawa;

Polish Case Study Report

Traineeship in focus for this case study

In view of the high (above 20 per cent) graduate youth unemployment, upon completion of their studies the traineeships offered by job centres (public labour market institutions) can be offered to young unemployed people (up to age 25) and to unemployed graduates (up to age 27, within a year of the graduation as stated in the graduation diploma). During these traineeships, which can last up to 12 months, a young person should acquire practical work-related skills at a workplace, without, however, entering into an employment relationship with the employer. The trainee does not receive a salary, but is entitled to compensation, amounting to 120 per cent of the unemployment benefit. These traineeships are provided in the context of the Traineeship Programme, based on the programme called the 'First Job', which used to be the official public sector programme implemented by the state institutions. For the purpose of this study, the term 'First Job' is adopted, as it is commonly used, even though technically it is not the Programme itself anymore. Finally, it must be pointed out that it is still financed from public sources, as its predecessor used to be.

Policy framework

It must be stressed at the very beginning that the original programme called the 'First Job' is no longer operational. Additionally, it must be pointed out that this programme was nothing new, as the programme 'Graduate' was implemented previously, but it was not widely promoted and did not win too much media interest. The 'First Job' programme was the only one which raised interest amongst various stakeholders and was promoted as a quasi-ideal programme fit for jobless graduates. At present the scheme based on the 'First Job' programme refers to a placement (stage) which is offered to graduates via job centres (regional labour market official and policymaker).

Please note that all of the relevant background information has been provided in the national report, from the legislative framework, to policy and politics.

To summarise:

Young people in the labour market are seen as an important group which requires the special attention of policymakers; a number of studies are being conducted, but there seems to be no follow up in terms of policy formulation and implementation. It is recognised that the present system is not perfect, in fact it has been shown to be faulty. The instruments used to help groups in unfavourable situations are good and rational, however, the way that they have been formulated and implemented has caused a very difficult situation, which will be seen more clearly when the data are presented⁵. The placements (stages) have pushed the normal offers which were previously provided by employers themselves on their own initiative out of the labour market. In other words the employers are the major beneficiary of the programme and in many cases they decide not to run their own placement programmes, but rather employ *stagiaires* from the job centres. It is better to employ an individual for free, train and check him or her, and finally, possibly, employ them after six months (regional labour market official and policymaker). As stated in the National Report, the placement (stage) scheme is not obligatory, in fact it is used by those

⁵ Please note that tables 3.3 and 6.1 from the National Country Report are repeated here.

who wish to be supported by the job centres and public sources. Not all students request such support, some find a good job just after graduation or even when they are still studying, e.g. as a result of the industry internships (paid ones). In summary, it is a voluntary action of graduates who cannot find employment matching their expectations, or, sometimes, any employment at all. There is a definition of the placement in the Law on *Promotion of Employment and the Labour Market Institutions* of April 20th, 2004 (Dz.U. of 2004, no. 99, pos. 1001). The following elements are highlighted:

1. A placement (stage) refers to an unemployed person – thus it is a specific instrument targeting those entering the labour market or those wishing to return to the labour market.
2. A placement is related to the process of learning – it is not about conducting activities as an employee, learning refers to gaining practical abilities and skills essential to perform tasks related to a particular position.
3. A process of learning that takes place in the working environment – it is important as it prepares the unemployed to undertake tasks related to a particular position.
4. Learning occurs within the framework of a placement, without settling an employment relationship i.e. between an employer and employee.

The labour market institutions are in charge of the placement (stage). Unfortunately, as the contracts are not signed by the employers (stage providers), there is no relationship between the *stagiaire* and the employer. If the employer and the *stagiaire* had signed the contracts then clearly an employment relationship would emerge (regional policymaker).

It is worth noting that the maximum duration of the placement is 12 months, the period which is seen as the most effective. The job centre has up to six months to find a placement for a registered unemployed person. If this is not successful any other forms of the labour market activation should be offered.

The placement (stage) scheme aims at raising the employability of the person undertaking the placement. There is a mentor in charge of each *stagiaire* and both a programme and the evaluation must be prepared. The final evaluation should show the scope of skills and abilities developed to perform specific tasks related to a particular position. There is a clear similarity between the placement and the apprenticeship as learning on the job occurs.

As far as target groups are concerned there is no specific division or groups that are covered. All graduates of the education system are eligible in accordance with the specific regulations of the Law. The placements target those who are unemployed, who have to register in job centres; and to register these individuals have to meet the criteria listed. However, at present, in the context of placements (stage), the *Law on Promotion of Employment and the Labour Market Institutions*, target various people e.g. below 25, above 50, unemployed without a right for the unemployment benefit, those in long-term unemployment with no right for social employment (kontraktu socjalnego), women who have lost and not found employment after giving birth to a child etc. Thus widening of the scope of intervention in terms of the group eligibility is observed.

For the time being only the labour market institutions are of interest, i.e. local job centres which are linked with the local administrative unit. In other words provision of stages is part of the labour market policies implemented in the local area as the stages are part of the labour market programme (LMP). Though, the *Law on Promotion of Employment and the Labour Market Institutions* lists goals and expected effects of the stages, which should be considered as an element of the broader policy of increasing employability skills, it is difficult to see it as a realistic strategy for **skill formation**.

Organisation of traineeship under study, relevant stakeholders and their role

This section is about any existing formal operational framework within which the traineeship under study should take place.

The stage scheme operates under the operational framework defined by the *Law on Promotion of Employment and the Labour Market Institutions* of April 20th, 2004 (Dz.U. of 2004).

In terms of the structure there are three types of actors/stakeholders involved:

1. job centres and their agents (intermediaries dealing with the unemployed people)
2. employers, representing companies, NGOs, public institutions who host *stagiaires*
3. *stagiaires* themselves.

Before the stage begins an agreement has to be signed. The labour market agents analyse the situation of the potential *stagiaire* and the employer, including analyses of the proposed stage programme. The agent would then recommend either amendments or signing of the agreement. During its implementation the stage is monitored as much as possible. The situation in various offices varies, but for example each job centre agent in Krakow has approximately 400 unemployed people to support which limits the possibility of monitoring every *stagiaire*. At the end of the stage a report is submitted and approved. Should there be any discrepancies between the plan and the stage implementation, the agent working at the job centre should be notified and corrective actions should take place and be monitored by him or her.

Relevant stakeholders to be considered in the stages are as follows:

1. **The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs** is in charge of macro-level labour market policy formulation, implementation, control and evaluation. The stages are a part of the active labour market policies. The sources of the Labour Fund are allocated according to the requests from the regions in areas pointed out by the Regional Labour Offices. Ten per cent of the Labour Fund is left to an individual decision of the Minister in charge for some outstanding job centres. The Ministry participates in the formulation and implementation of the Operation Programme Human Capital co-financed from the European Social Fund (ESF).
2. **Regional Labour Offices (RLO)** are administratively linked to the region as their unit. Their employees prepare estimates and tasks/ areas allocations for the Labour Fund that are later approved by particular regions and finally by the Minister. The suggested tasks and areas are often changed by the local job centres as they know the situation in their area best – unfortunately these changes are only discovered at the end of the year. The regional job centres cannot interfere or support the local job centres which are in charge of the stage scheme and might decide to move the funds from the stages e.g. to fostering entrepreneurship via grants. There is some control over spending via *Operational Programme Human Capital* (ESF) as projects which are granted financial support need to deliver what had been planned and approved. Additionally, the Regional Labour Offices support the Ministry in various actions, often not stated in the regulations, such as evaluation of projects for some extra programmes. The RLO see their role as an institution managing the labour market from the regional perspective and suggesting new solutions in the regional labour market. Some think that the regional labour offices are underestimated and not taken seriously at the moment (regional labour market official and policymaker).
3. **Local labour market institutions (labour offices/job centres)** which are the public labour market institutions linked to the lower local administrative units. They contact and engage directly with unemployed people. The contact takes place via the job centre's employees (agents/intermediaries), who are often serving huge numbers of the

unemployed (regional labour market official and policymaker/ local labour market official).

4. **Employers** – there is a wide spectrum of those acting as employers. The following should be mentioned: companies, enterprises, microenterprises, SMEs, large enterprises, global and multinational enterprises, non-governmental organisations. As mentioned previously the employers of international and global corporations often do not take the opportunity of hosting *stagiaires* during a stage provided by the job centres. They often run their own stages and traineeships, presumably keeping in mind the negative opinions and stigma concerning people who are registered as unemployed (multinational company). However, the majority of employers take the opportunity to have access to a free employee, who can be trained on the job, checked and then, if successful, could be employed (regional labour market official and policymaker). Surprisingly some entrepreneurs who were recruited out of the unemployed (micro entrepreneur), express very positive opinions on the *stagiaires*.
5. **Educational institutions, schools and universities, teachers and trainers.** Some university employees who hold senior governmental positions, monitor developments in the labour market. Universities also provide support to their graduates and students via student career centres, which organise traineeships and stages. Both, traineeships and stages are organised within the Erasmus transnational mobility scheme and as a part of internal, national programmes.
6. **Stagiaires** are people who participate in the traineeship of a national and international character.

Funding and resource allocation

The stage scheme is financed by the Labour Fund. The funds come directly from the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, but they consist of two parts, the 'factual' Labour Fund sources and the European Social Fund allocation which is reported according to the ESF procedures (regional labour market official and policymaker). There is no separate money devoted to graduates only. It is the labour market status that determines individual position and eligibility in the labour market. There were no indications of cost sharing arrangements between the parties concerned like co-financing by the social partners and/or employers.

The table below shows that in the period of 2006 to 2010 there was an increase in spending on the stages. Almost a triple increase is observed in that period. Also, year by year, more funds have been allocated to the activity of job centres.

Table A 1: Annual spending for the stage as a part of the labour market programmes

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Expenditure in PLN (thousands)	671,898.2	693,380.9	919,436.0	1,352,283.7	1,894,422.1
Dynamics (%- 2006/2007)	n/a	103.2%	132.6%	147.1%	140.1%

Source: MPiPS (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs), publications on efficiency of basic forms of professional activation, various years 2008-2011.

There are some cases of projects that aim at bridging various professional groups, such as scholars, especially young ones, and employers. These projects should bring about not only co-operation between representative of these two worlds but also additional competencies and experience for both. One of these projects is financed by the *Operational Programme*

Innovative Economy – the European Fund for Regional Development (for more see <http://www.marr.pl/wipkadry/>).⁶

Description Of Traineeship Under Study

Content and practices related to the traineeship under study

Under this particular scheme no systemic solutions have been identified. However, the interviewed *stagiaires* mentioned the existence of the quasi-systemic solutions, e.g. agreements of companies with the universities, where students can apply for a stage via academic career centres.

Every stage is a different and special case, with its particular goals, with its own plan and finally with its own final report. All of these elements should be verified and analysed by agents of the job centres, yet it does seem that the amount of work makes it difficult to focus much on an individual *stagiaire*, even though the agents are trying hard. All the 'sending' institutions try to monitor the situation and act if any discrepancies occur. In Poland should a trainee be requested to perform a completely inadequate job and tasks unrelated to the planned job, the job centre should be informed. Before the stage starts, a plan of the traineeship should be presented for approval. Similarly, at the end of the stage a report should be presented and approved. Often the job centres request, for example, a list of competencies that will be acquired during the stage, and use this as the basis for the selection of employers to host a *stagiaire* (local labour market official). The respondents note some cases when the reality and the plan differ and sometimes clash.

According to the regulations, a traineeship should last up to 12 months. Actually the 12 month period is seen as the optimal, yet, due to the crisis, it is reduced in most cases (local labour market official).

The employer who provides the stage does not sign any agreement with the *stagiaire*, thus there is no relationship. It is the job centre which signs the agreement and makes the payment. The job centre is a quasi-employer for whom the *stagiaire* is working on a stage, which is said to be rather unfavourable for the effectiveness of the stages (regional policymaker).

Traineeship contract and trainee's terms and conditions

The individual stage agreements are signed between the interested parties, i.e. the job centre and the employer. Yet the employer plays the role of host of the stage although no employment relationship exists between the *stagiaire* and the employer. There is a recommendation, however, to change this so that the money is transferred first to the employer who hosts the *stagiaire*. Thus the one who uses the labour of the *stagiaire* would pay the salary rather than the job centre (regional policymaker). The *stagiaire* is entitled to a salary that equals 120 per cent of the unemployment benefit, which as of March 1st, 2012 amounts to **913.70 PLN**.

(<http://www.psz.praca.gov.pl/main.php?do=ShowPage&nPID=867744&pT=details&sP=CONSENT,objectID,867779>).

The health insurance of the *stagiaires* is covered and they are registered as unemployed. It was a change in the Law on promotion of employment and the labour market institutions a couple of years ago, that linked medical insurance and access to the health care services

⁶ Leonardo programme, the European Social Fund, the Marie Curie Actions and the Science Education Initiative; Culture, Lifelong Learning, PROGRESS, MEDIA, Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs, Competitiveness & Innovation Programme and Structural Funds.

with individual status in the labour market. As a result of this legislative change, the size of unemployment recorded in Krakow doubled (local labour market official). Yet, this way the registered unemployed have access to health care and the rest of the social security payment is gained through a stage relationship and the contract signed.

Quality assurance mechanisms

In general there is a common pattern. Every *stagiaire* has a contact person, who acts as his or her guardian. At the end of a placement or a traineeship, plans and reports are submitted for the guardian's analysis and approval.

In some organisations the *stagiaires* can enjoy the same treatment as regular employees. The formal side of the stage is regulated by the contract which protects the *stagiaires'* rights and sets conditions. Yet, if there is a problem, organisations sending students, graduates or unemployed people (e.g. job centre) can notify the employer, discuss the problems and request a solution.

If it is a private placement in the company, based on the signed employment contract and if there are any cases of abuse of the law, a trainee can discuss the problem with his or her mentor in the company, discuss it with lawyers and if there is a need, sue the traineeship organiser. This stems from the fact that the labour code protects both the employee and the employer.

Current debate

It is difficult to state with certainty what the reputation of the traineeship arrangements within the 'First job' scheme is. In fact opinions are divided, as they have much to do with the personal experiences related to the stages and also those in a close environment of friends and family.

What is worrying is the fact that many employers, including public institutions, see the stage as an access to free labour. With this perspective the *stagiaires* are not offered any ambitious tasks, but rather those of an uncomplicated and boring character, which in fact do not require any academic education. There is an example of graduates of the archiving degree working on preparing documents for the national archives. The job is being done in accordance with certain national procedures. To the surprise of the employer the graduates feel humiliated by performing such simple tasks, which are basic activities for any archivist (regional labour market official and policymaker).

As stated and shown in the national report, students and graduates see various placements and traineeships as a way to learn new skills and knowledge and gather new experience. In the context of the volatile labour market and the situation as described, i.e. the fact that the stage system has pushed out of the labour market previously organised stages by companies and regular employment offers for the graduates, many young people are forced to register and find a stage where they could train for a couple of months hoping to be employed at the end of the stage. Still, many graduates take a risk and try to find regular employment when they graduate. Some are lucky, others register as unemployed and try to find a stage. In many cases it does seem to be an element increasing employability and future chances in the labour market.

It is stated by specialists proficient in the area of the labour market that the present solution is not the best. Focusing on one group, such as a particular age group, pushes other vulnerable groups out of the attention of the policymakers (local labour market official). The present system drastically reduces opportunities for people who should be helped by the job centres, i.e. those with no qualifications or those with obsolete qualifications, who were outside the labour market for a long time, like mothers returning to work after a couple of years of parental leave (regional labour market official and policymaker).

Various stakeholders blame the existing mismatch of the competencies gained in the education system and the competencies required by the labour market for the difficult situation of graduates and young people (former government official, central government policymaker, local labour market official, regional policymaker, regional labour market official and policymaker). This topic appears quite often in the public debate and seems to be evident to many. However, surprisingly no direct and thorough actions have yet been taken, although there are plans related to forming a regional institution linking all the educational and labour market institutions. The labour market institutions are of the opinion that they should take the lead as they know the specifics of the labour market (local labour market official).

Effectiveness of case-studied traineeship: outputs and results

It is worth pointing out that the job centres are expected to spend the annual allocation that they receive from the Ministry for Labour market policies implementation. The offices are expected to act effectively. To simplify the picture, there are two main groups served by the job centres at the moment. These are the well-educated graduates and those with no qualifications, often with experience of long-term unemployment, who keep coming back to the unemployment register. The latter are surely in a far more difficult situation, as it is virtually impossible to compete with those young and well-educated. Also, from the perspective of the job centres, offering a stage to a young graduate rather than to a person with obsolete skills and with experience of long-term unemployment is a better idea as it would imply higher likelihood for employment at the end and thus higher effectiveness. This way the older, less qualified unemployed are systemically marginalised by the present policies. Some managers of job centres are aware of this drawback, thus, to reach their effectiveness indicators they try to marry the two, and send both groups. But it should be understood that the public system should really support those who cannot cope with reality. The current situation is that the system creates further exclusion circles (regional labour market official and policymaker).

Various rates of effectiveness are given. There are no nation-wide data available for 2011 yet. The data for the period 2006 throughout 2010 are presented below.

The statistics below present the following picture. With the increase of expenditure on stages in the country, a growing interest of people wanting to participate is noted. The triple increase in spending leads to almost double the number of participants. However an analysis of employment efficiency proves that it is decreasing, still oscillating around 50 per cent, with the highest at above 55.2 per cent in 2007 and the lowest at 48.4 per cent in 2010. This might lead to speculation and suspicion that opportunities for employment are not as widely available during the crisis period. It might also be the case that all of the vacancies are taken by the *stagiaires*.

Table A 2: Efficiency of the stages⁷

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Expenditure in PLN thousands	671,898.2	693,380.9	919,436.0	1,352,283.7	1,894,422.1
No. of people participating in the stages	169,105	173,017	169,860	256,669	299,342
No. of people completing the stages (3)	155,602	164,988	149,971	208,863	279,968
No. of people who were employed after the stage (4)	79,441	91,059	81,299	103,343	135,536
Employment efficiency (4/3) in PLN	51.1%	55.2%	54.2%	49.5%	48.4%

Source: MPiPS (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs), publications on efficiency of basic forms of professional activation, various years 2008-2011.

At a regional level, employment efficiency of 60 per cent is noted, while locally it can be around 80 per cent-90 per cent at times, depending on the situation in the local labour market as stated by officials. These numbers can be interpreted as high, showing presumably that the young make use of the stages and find employment. However, they also show a trend that young people are taking over the places available for stages for more vulnerable groups and replacing them. Also, the young are potentially more likely to become *stagiaires* who will be employed more easily and frequently than other, more vulnerable groups in the labour market. This approach delivers very good statistics and proves high levels of effectiveness, but the picture is not real (regional labour market official and policymaker/local labour market official). The local job centres use this approach on purpose to make sure that they achieve good statistics and indicators, and to include other vulnerable groups with more problems in the labour market in the stage schemes (regional labour market official and policymaker/ local labour market official).

Some stakeholders argue that there is a certain ethical problem as the job centre would not grant a stage to an organisation which does not wish to employ someone. In some cases this is stated as a criterion for employers interested in organising a stage in the calls published by the job centres.

(http://www.up.warszawa.pl/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=99&Itemid=151).

Public institutions do not have new job positions, which places them at a disadvantage. On the other hand private companies often abuse this system declaring an interest in employment although the *stagiaire* is not employed upon completion of the stage (Regional Development Agency).

Many *stagiaires* complain of being treated in an instrumental manner, something that is actually known to the job centres and seen as a threat to success of the stage scheme (regional labour market official and policymakers). Some *stagiaires* argue that apart from time spent and money earned, it was a troublesome experience, e.g. because of the

⁷ On the methodological note it should be added that the employment offices use the concept of the employment efficiency rather than effectiveness. It is defined as the so called repeated employment ratio. It is a number of people, who, following the stage, got employed within the three months after the stage, i.e. registered out of the unemployment registry or did not register again after that period in relation to the number of people who completed their participation in a given form of activation in a particular year studies (MPiPS, 2011, p. 4).

supervisor's behaviour. On the other hand, many *stagiaires* show the benefits, e.g. knowledge, experience gained on the job, the possibility to reflect and juxtapose professional expectations with the reality of a certain job, performing tasks that they found a lot of pleasure in doing, and finally an offer of employment (Regional Development Agency).

There is some evidence that the most difficult moment for young people when entering the labour market is to find the first job. If they participate in stages, even as a voluntary worker, then they somehow manage better in the labour market. Hence one can say that the stages are effective as they improve employability, and inform other employers of the person's value in the labour market. This is because the theoretical education young people possess is of less value and what matters more is work experience (local labour market official).

There is a question of whether the stages would finish with employment? Or is it more important to acquire new skills that would give additional opportunities in the future? There is an example of young people working as *stagiaires* in the inland revenue (tax office), who choose that particular stage despite being aware that they will not be employed afterwards due to limits on employment positions. Interestingly, the tax office turns out to be a very attractive stage as they learn procedures and tricks of the trade, which are seen as an asset by employers in the open market (local labour market official).

Employers, if they have a choice, prefer to employ young people, even without experience, as *stagiaires*. Bearing in mind potential future employment they see young people as a valuable resource that the company could use. The employers mention that the young people have not formed their own working habits yet and they are easier to monitor and influence (local labour market official).

Effects of the case-studied traineeship on companies

All organisations, like companies, public institutions, also NGOs, perceive the stage schemes as a way to access skilled labour in a cost-effective manner. The period spent at the host organisation is used as time to verify the person, check his or her abilities, and if found suitable, keep and offer a job. Taken the fact that the time limit exists, some, especially in public institutions, request *stagiaires* when they know that there is a vacancy or a replacement is needed e.g. in the case of pregnancy and maternity leave (regional labour market official and policymaker).

There is a need to evaluate the net efficiency i.e. what the results would be without any funds involved (regional labour market official and policymaker).

Conclusions

At present the labour market policies and their implementation are verified only from the perspective of the allocations (money) spent. The extent of support, in terms of who actually was helped is not being analysed. It seems to be the wrong emphasis. The bulk of support targets people who would do well anyway and who just require some minor support and guidance, like young graduates, instead of those lost in the labour market who need versatile and long-term support (regional labour market official and policymaker).

In fact job centres should support both those who have relatively better and those who have fewer chances in the labour market. The age division which is applied in labour market policy is not the best approach. There should be an approach based on the objective problems with participation in the labour market. The offer should be more diverse, training specialised etc., to match the employment opportunities of the unemployed individuals. Also some examples of other countries could be adopted, e.g. Germany, where there is co-operation with the social aid institutions and the social worker goes and analyses the environment of the unemployed person, checking pathologies, poverty etc. The support to

the unemployed should start with support at the very core, and the labour market position and wellbeing should be one of final elements of 'treatment'. This would be a very integrated approach, which would require the co-ordination of actions between various institutions. This is not however present in Poland (local labour market official).

There is a suggestion that the philosophy related to the activity of the labour market institutions should change. They should become institutions of public benefit and as such their budget would be constructed in a different manner, taking into account the fluctuations related to economic situation. The way it is now, with the economic crisis deepening, there are less funds while the problems of the labour market are mounting. In this new reality there should be some more money gathered via the anti-unemployment fund, which could be saved up during prosperous periods and could be used when a crisis hits, in order to top up the budget of the labour market institutions (regional labour market official and policymaker).

There is also an idea that for public institutions like insurance offices, inland revenue, job centres etc. which have limits on vacancies and employment, to support their work regularly with the work and training of the *stagiaires*. This could be a part of the university curricula. Students/graduates could learn while the public institutions would have access to a well qualified workforce (regional labour market official and policymaker).

The image that emerges from this brief presentation of the stage scheme, as well as long discussions and interviews with the stakeholders is not straightforward. On one hand the stakeholders note various problems and faults in the present system, such as the wrong approach of the job centres, the lack of co-ordination of activities between various institutions (an approach led by the bureaucracy), the fact that stages are misused in the present system, the problems arising from the mismatch between the labour market and the education system, to name just a few. On the other hand, the benefits of the stage scheme are observed and create a huge platform for future improvements. Surely, a national and even pan-national debate is needed and a change of mindset of many politicians. It is high time to start to consider the labour market as an area which is not marginal and problematic, but one playing a central role in creating the wellbeing of all citizens. This change would also require a change in the position of the labour market and related policies in national policymaking. This in turn would require changes to the roles, responsibilities and mandate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

National Report on Traineeships Portugal

Sandra Naaf, IRS

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1. Traineeships as part of Member State's Youth Policy Measures

1.1 Overview of current situation of young people and traineeships as part of youth policy measures

The economic crisis is having a negative impact on the job performance of young people. In 2010, the **employment rate** of the 15-24 years old declined to 28.5 per cent (34.9 per cent in 2007) and to 74.8 per cent in the 25-29 age group (77.2 per cent in 2007). The qualification level plays an important role in the labour market participation, with lower employment rates (25.9 per cent) of those with low educational levels, and 30.3 per cent within the group with upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education, while those with tertiary education (47 per cent) have higher rates (2010).

In 2010, the data on **unemployment** of 15-24 year-olds was 22.4 per cent (16.6 per cent in 2007), and 14.4 per cent among 25-29 year-olds (11.7 per cent in 2007). Overall, unemployment is slightly higher for young women than for young men and an increasing number of unemployed young people have a university degree.¹

In the last few years, a significant increase in temporary and part-time contracts is also noticeable, while a decrease in workers with permanent contract has been resisted. About 57 per cent of 15-24 years-olds and 31 per cent of 25-34 years-olds, many of whom have tertiary education, work under some form of precarious contract. Since the beginning of 2011 the increase in those working on precarious contracts has been 14 per cent.² Many young people might be employed as self-employed through the services contracts, the so called 'green receipts' (*recibos verdes*). From the second year of activity on, they are responsible for paying their own contribution to the social security system (if they earn €2,515 per year³) and have access to some social benefits. However, job security is not given and an unemployed grant is not included.⁴

Young workers above the age of 18 are entitled to the Guaranteed Minimum Income (*Rendimento Mínimo Garantido*), while a reduced rate (75 per cent) is set for people below this age. Lower rates might also apply for trainees and apprentices.

Besides the high youth unemployment rate, **early school leaving** and the **low educational level** are also of concern in Portugal. Only about 32 per cent of the total population has completed at least upper secondary education (relative to an EU27 average of 2.7 per cent), while 23 per cent of the age group 30-34 has tertiary education (relative to EU27-33.6 per cent) and 68 per cent of the overall population had no more than basic education in 2010.⁵

In the last few years some efforts have been made to promote participation in education and training and to reduce the early school leaving rate (28.7 per cent in 2010), which is higher for boys (32.7 per cent) than for girls (24.6 per cent). Compared to 2005 (with 38.8

¹ <http://www.diebrucke.it/geracao-a-rasca-la-generazione-dei-precari/>

² http://economico.sapo.pt/noticias/recibos-verdes-com-maior-aumento-da-decada_111311.html

³ <http://www.recibosverdes.org/segsocial>

⁴ da Conceição Cerdeira, Maria/ Dias, João (n.y.), Economic Crisis, Trade Unions Strategies and Precarious Employment in Portugal. <http://www.fafono.irec/papers/MariadaConceicaoCerdeira.pdf>

⁵ Eurostat data on education and training.

per cent) the situation is somewhat better, but far from the EU27 level of 14.1 per cent (2010).⁶

The inclusion of young people has been considered by different labour market policies in recent years, and has been specifically fostered by national programmes for improving qualifications and facilitating the job entry of young people. The aim is to give young labour market entrants the opportunity to gain job experience and use their qualifications in a real working environment, to give them the chance to develop competencies and their employment abilities in order to facilitate their entry into the labour market. A series of programmes for supporting young people with no employment history into work, as well as improving their qualifications (including vocational education) has been launched.

One important programme for improving qualifications is the **New Opportunities' Initiative (NOI)** (2005-2010), which addresses the qualification deficit of young people and adults and aims to encourage their participation in upper secondary education and in vocational and technological courses. The target group is the low-qualified population (about 3.5 million).⁷ Until the first half of 2009, this reached about 900,000 people.⁸

Secondary school education was also reformed and measures to diversify the vocational training offer and increase available places for dual certification courses were taken. More emphasis was put on practical training and on adjusting technical qualifications to specific occupations, as well as the extension of social support to secondary education.

Recently introduced labour market initiatives the **Employment 2010 Initiative (IE2010)** and the **National Reform Programme 2020**⁹ implement measures to facilitate the labour market inclusion of young unemployed people. These work alongside short-term measures introduced since beginning of the economic crisis, such as incentives for firms hiring unemployed people by participating in placement initiatives, or strengthening existing programmes (such as the INOV-JOVEM).¹⁰

The Vocational Training and Employment Institute (*Instituto do Emprego e Formação Profissional*, IEFP), as the main public agency, plays an important role in providing work placement schemes, especially the Youth placement programme and the INOV initiative. The **Youth placement programme** (*Programa Estágios Profissionais*) is for first-time job seekers under 30 years old and unemployed people under 36 years of age with at least secondary education. (There is no age limit for disabled people.)¹¹ It also creates retraining conditions for unemployed people under 36 years of age by providing them with work-based opportunities to complement school-based education or vocational training. The **INOV-Jovem** placements (since 2005) aim to facilitate the integration of graduate job seekers aged up to 35 years into higher education.¹² They are placed as trainees in SME (small and medium-sized enterprises), where investment is low and training is not often provided, in order to stimulate innovation and mobility. Areas where traineeships can be taken up are in agriculture (and related areas), the manufacturing industries, construction, commerce, transport, tourism and other services. The INOV programme also offers specific sub-programmes, such as INOV-art, INOV-mundus (in the field of development cooperation), INOV- Energi@ (engineering, chemistry, life sciences, environment, agriculture, enterprise,

⁶ Eurostat data

⁷ van den Dungen et.al, Noi Evaluative research Final review external experts. <http://cinop.brenqtlentotleven.nl/downloads/publicaties/16-01-0940.pdf>

⁸ Cedefop (2010), A bridge to the future European policy for vocational education and training 2002-10, National policy report – Portugal, ReferNet.

⁹ Portugal 2020, National Reform Programme. http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nrp/nrp_portugal_en.pdf

¹⁰ EEO: Quarterly Reports Executive Summary, March 2010. http://www.eu-employment-observatory.net/resources/quarterly_reports_exec_summary/EN-March2010-QRES.pdf

¹¹ <http://cdp.portodigital.pt/estagios/programa-de-estagios-nacionais/programa-de-estagios-profissionais-do-iefp>

¹² Areas include: arts; social sciences; business sciences; life sciences; physical sciences; mathematics; statistics; computer sciences; engineering; manufacturing sciences; architecture; construction; health sciences; personal services; and environmental protection. See: Nádía Simões and Reinhard Naumann (2010), Anticipating and Managing restructuring Portugal, International training centre, ILO.

economy and law), INOV-Contacto (for international placements, considered Best practice¹³), INOV Vasco da Gama (international).

Another initiative is the traineeship programme for those finishing technological and professional courses leading to level 3 or 4 qualifications and incentives to companies for employing the trainees participating in professional courses.

For promoting **regional mobility**, the government is granting incentives in the form of financial support to individuals living in areas with high unemployment to encourage them to move to another region with less unemployment. It includes mobility benefits for travel and packing costs as well as re-settlement benefits, however this is less efficient than other programmes.

International mobility is supported by internship programmes for young graduates, such as the INOV Contacto, INOV Mundo, INOV Vasco da Gama and INOV Art, targeting young unemployed or those seeking for a first or new job. The **INOV Contacto**, (considered Best practice in 2007 and co-financed by ESF through the Operational Programme Human Potential), is managed by aicep Portugal Global and promoted by the Ministry of Economy and Innovation of Portugal. It offers international traineeships in 54 countries, placed in key areas of knowledge.¹⁴ The **INOV Mondo**, in cooperation with the Ministry for Development Support (*Instituto Português de Apoio ao Desenvolvimento*, IPAD) offers international traineeships in public or private organisations promoting development cooperation for young people below 35 years old with tertiary qualifications. **INOV Vasco da Gama** is for young entrepreneurs of SME and **INOV Art** is for graduates in arts or cultural areas. International traineeships is also offered by AIESEC (Programme OUT), the traineeship schemes of IAESTE, the Erasmus Mundus, Programme Atlantis, Vulcanus (to Japan), Project Scan (for 18-35 year-olds), Work Experience USA & UK (for 18-30 year-olds) offered by CCUSA Iberian Office, Programme Alfa (to Latin America) and Agência de Inovação, S.A. (Adi).¹⁵

Apprenticeship contracts between a trainee and training entity has a legal basis, and they establish the rights and duties of the contracting parties. It also establishes the duration of the training courses etc.

Table 1.1: Summary of main Traineeship Programmes in Portugal

Traineeship Programme	Brief Description
Work placement programme	The Portaria 92/2011 establishes the fundamental principles and target groups. According to this, professional placements target young qualified people below 30 years old as well as those older than 30 years, that are unemployed and in search of employment, who in the last three years obtained a qualification of level 2-9 and who have not been registered with the social security system in the last 12 months. No age limit applies to disabled people (art. 3). They have to be registered with the IEFP. According to this, a contract is made between the employer and the trainee. The duration is of a maximum of 9 months (art. 11). During this period the trainee receives a grant, which depends on the qualification level of the trainee; a lunch allowance and work accident insurance. ¹⁶

¹³ <http://www.portugalglobal.pt/PT/inovcontacto/Paginas/InovContacto.aspx>

¹⁴ http://www.portugalglobal.pt/PT/InovContacto/Documents/INOV_PT_V_final.pdf

¹⁵ <http://cdp.portodigital.pt/estagios/programas-de-estagios-internacionais-1/programa-alfa>

¹⁶ http://www.inovjovem.gov.pt/download/Portaria_1103_2008_INOV.pdf

Traineeship Programme

Brief Description

INOV Jovem in SME	This traineeship scheme supports the job entry of young people in SME with a higher qualification. The target group are 35 year olds searching for their first job or a new job. The duration is for 12 months, including one month for holiday. The objectives are to contribute to the processes of innovation and development in SMEs, enable young people with higher qualification levels to improve their skills and assist with their socio-professional entry in active life, as well as to stimulate innovation and organisational development of the SME.
INOV – Art, INOV-Energi@, INOV-Export, INOV-Social	Job placements in different areas, according to the sub-programme for people up to 35 years old with higher qualifications. Duration is up to 12 months and a financial grant is given.
INOV Contacto	International job placements for young unemployed people up to 30 years old with Portuguese companies with an international orientation or in foreign countries. Qualification must be to at least level 5, including English knowledge and one additional foreign language and knowledge of IT. Financial support is provided (approx. €800) as well as social security. The duration is from 6-9 months. It was considered best practice by the EC. ¹⁷
PEPAL - Programa de Estágios Profissionais na Administração Local	<p>Traineeship programmes in local administration for unemployed aged below 35, with at least an upper secondary education.</p> <p>The number of available places is decided annually by the Government. They are published in the <i>Bolsa de Emprego Público</i> (BEP)¹⁸ and in the Newspaper (Diário da República). In 2011 there were 1,330 traineeships available (Northern region: 485, Central: 515, Lisbon: 10, Alentejo: 319 and Alentejo: 1).¹⁹ It is regulated by Law n.º 65/2010.²⁰</p>
PEPAC - Programa de Estágios Profissionais na Administração Pública Publicada	<p>For young people up to 35 years old taking up their first employment. The target group is those with higher qualifications. It lasts for 12 months and can be taken in (directly or indirectly) public administration units, except for public corporations (enterprises).²¹ It also aims to promote new competences for the modernisation of the public services.</p> <p>Applications are through an online portal. During the programme trainees receive financial support, and their social security contributions. In 2010 about 5,000 places were planned.²²</p> <p>It is regulated by the Law no. 18/2010 and Portaria 172/2010, and Portaria 290/2010</p>

¹⁷ <http://www.portugalglobal.pt/PT/inovcontacto/Paginas/InovContacto.aspx>

¹⁸ <https://www.bep.gov.pt/pages/SobreBep/Objectivos.aspx>

¹⁹ <http://juventude.gov.pt/Emprego/Estagiaretrabalar/Paginas/pepal.aspx>

²⁰ <http://dre.pt/pdf1sdip/2010/06/11200/0197501977.pdf>

²¹ <https://www.bep.gov.pt/pages/Estagios/Default.aspx>

²² <http://juventude.gov.pt/Emprego/Estagiaretrabalar/Paginas/pepacdefault.aspx>

2. Legislative Framework for Traineeships

2.1 Legal framework for and governance of traineeships

Vocational education and training has been regulated by the Comprehensive law on Education system (*Lei de Bases do Sistema Educativo* – LBSE, Law No. 46/86) since 1986. During the last few years, starting in 2001, comprehensive reforms of the education and vocational education and training (VET) system have also been introduced to address the problems of low qualifications and the school drop-out rate. Portugal introduced the European Qualification Framework (EQF) instruments and the EC-VET system to adjust the national VET system to the European standards, to improve international mobility and reform the education system to facilitate and modernise education and training and motivate the young to improve their skills.²³ The reforms were based on the two National Reform Programmes of 2005-2008 and 2008-2010, and included basic education, especially for promoting the 'valorisation of basic education', secondary school education (such as through New Opportunity Initiative, NOI), with the main objective being to raise the qualification levels of the adult population, and tertiary education (2007 through the Legal Regime of Higher Education Institutions.). Several traineeship initiatives, such as the Youth employment programme and INOV, have also been introduced.

In 2007, the National Qualification System (*Sistema Nacional de Qualificações* (SNQ)) was set up, providing a new institutional framework for VET. These activities were highly supported by the European Funds (2007-2013).²⁴ A National Qualifications catalogue (CNQ) has also been introduced, based on the European Qualification system.

2.2 Legal provisions about aspects of traineeships

Internships are regulated by Ministerial Order No. 129/2009 (30 January 2009). According to this, vocational internships are intended for young persons up to 35 years of age, who are looking for their first or a new job, and have completed secondary education or a level 3 or higher qualification, according to the Council Decision no. 85/368/EEC. No age limit is set for people with disabilities.²⁵

The INOV programme, organised by the IEFP, is regulated by the Portaria N. 1103/2008, including most aspects of the traineeship, such as eligibility, remuneration, duration and target group, and application procedures.²⁶ However, many laws and regulations have been issued in the last few years for the different traineeship schemes (see the annex)²⁷.

In the Agreement on Employment Policy, the Government and Social Partners agreed to create better conditions for unqualified young labour market entrants (aged 16-18) in order for them to achieve qualifications in combination with working activity.²⁸ According to the background report of the OECD 'the introduction of a contractual clause ensuring a compulsory training period during the hours of work, which should not be shorter than 40

²³ European Commission (2010), Inclusive Modules, Moving young people on.

²⁴ Simões, Nácia (2010), Portugal, EEO Review: Youth Employment Measures. European Employment Observatory

²⁵ Regulamento dos Estágios Profissionais (2.3.1., p. 6), <http://www.iefp.pt/apoios/candidatos/Estagios/Documents/Programa%20Est%C3%A1gios%20Profissionais/Regulamento%20dos%20Est%C3%A1gios%20Profissionais.pdf>

²⁶ http://www.inovjovem.gov.pt/download/Portaria_1103_2008_INOV.pdf

²⁷ http://www.ugt.pt/site/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=125&Itemid=98

²⁸ Agreements are presented in: OECD (2004), The role of national qualifications systems in Promoting Lifelong learning. P. 34.

per cent of the total working time, will lead to qualification profiles (level I or II), in accordance with the schooling level of access'.²⁹

3. Availability of and Access to Traineeship

3.1 Statistics/Quantitative Information about traineeships

The number of self-organised internships, which are not provided by public entities and private organisations are difficult to estimate, while some data is available for public.

The number of places in the two programmes offered by the Public Employment service shows that many young people profited from these schemes.

The number in the INOV-Jovem programme has increasing since its implementation in 2005 (912 in 2006, 693 in 2007, 3,139 in 2008 and 8,421 in 2009).³⁰ The number of placements offered through the **Youth Placement Programme** was relatively constant and PEPAL and PEPAC (since 2005) also offered some traineeship programmes in public administration.

Table 3.1: Number of placements in the youth placement programme, PEPAC and PEAL

Number of placements	2006	2007	2008	2009
Youth placement programme	20,127	20,576	19,260	21,324
PEPAC and PEPAL	–	1,399	1,000	1,114

Source: Simões, Nádía (2010), Portugal, EEO Review: Youth Employment Measures. European Employment Observatory

According to the National Reform programme 2020, **Professional Placements** and the **INOV programme** will be intensified, targeting 50,000 young people in 2011, of which 40,000 are from higher education. The allocated budget for this measure is €170m per year, of which €120m is coming from Structural Funds.³¹

In the international programmes INOV Contacto, INOV Mundo, INOV Vasco da Gama and INOV Art, many young people profited from the traineeships. The **INOV Contact** (since 1997) led to 2,155 placements (29,419 applications)³², more than the initial objective of 500, placed in about 500 enterprises in 50 countries.³³

The objective of the **INOV Mondo** programme (in 2008) was to reach a target of 250 traineeships up to 2010, with about 5,000 young people in the Inov-Jovem scheme, 150 young entrepreneurs annually helped through **INOV Vasco da Gama**, and 200 people with **INOV Art** (2008).³⁴

²⁹ OECD (2004), The role of national qualifications systems in Promoting Lifelong learning. www.oecd.org/dataoecd/17/21/33776801.pdf, p. 16

³⁰ Simões, Nádía (2010), Portugal, EEO Review: Youth Employment Measures. European Employment Observatory

³¹ Portugal 2020, National Reform Programme. http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nrp/nrp_portugal_en.pdf

³² <http://live.networkcontacto.com/pt/inovc/inovcontacto/Documents/INOV%20Contacto%20-%20Apresenta%C3%A7%C3%A3o%20resumo.pdf>

³³ http://www.portugalglobal.pt/PT/InovContacto/Paginas/Estagiarios_InovContacto_Faceb.aspx

³⁴ The sectors most addressed in the INOV JOVEM placement scheme are: *marketing, design, product innovation, internationalisation, and innovation capacity of SME.* http://www.portugal.gov.pt/pt/GC17/Governo/Ministerios/MTSS/Documentos/Pages/20080407_MTSS_Doc_Programas_Inov.aspx

In the last few years the EU programme **Erasmus** has also become more popular, both for outgoing and incoming students. In 2009/2010, 711 participants left Portugal (to ES-327, IT-56, UK-50, BE-43, FR-43) and 769 foreign students came to Portugal through Erasmus for a placement (ES-163, PO-108, DE-49, FI-44).³⁵ In 2008/2009 500 foreign students came (ES-103, PL-49, DE-47, FR-46) and 560 students left Portugal ((ES-249, BE-30, FR-37, IT-35, DE-22)³⁶

Table 3.2: Outgoing and incoming Erasmus student mobility for placement³⁷

	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010
Incoming	316	500	758
Outgoing	282	560	711

The **Leonardo da Vinci programme** also offers students placements abroad during their course of study. The programme is for students in initial vocational training as well as people in the labour market (GHK) (for a duration of 2-6 weeks). From 2000-2006 7,016 students participated in this programme. In 2008, 985 students went abroad through this programme, compared to 1,262 in 2007 and 1,422 in 2006.³⁸ Since 2000 (when 675 students participated), the number increased up to 2006.

Table 3.3: Leonardo da Vinci mobility figures 2000-2008

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
PT	675	833	866	891	988	1,342	1,422	1,262	985

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/doc/stat_en.pdf

3.2 Recruitment process of and equity of access to traineeships

The low rate of people with tertiary education³⁹ compared to the EU27 average (PT: 23.5 per cent, EU27: 33.6 per cent), the increasing competitive labour market and the current economic crisis have aggravated the employment situation for the young. At the same time, requirements for entering employment have increased, as more qualifications are required, making it more difficult for the lower educated to enter the labour market. However, placement difficulties are not only related to the current crisis, but also to the economic structure, with a high share of small and micro enterprises with less than ten employees SME (about 86 per cent are micro enterprises with less than ten employees, 2008⁴⁰).

The **Vocational Training and Employment Institute** (*Instituto do Emprego e Formação Profissional*, IEFP)⁴¹ is responsible for initiatives for providing job placement schemes for the unemployed. It has five regional delegations and various local executive bodies.

³⁵ http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc920_en.htm#09

³⁶ <http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc/stat/table108c.pdf>

³⁷ http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc920_en.htm#09

³⁸ European Commission, Statistical Data on Leonardo da Vinci programme, http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc/stat_en.pdf

³⁹ According to Eurostat the share of the population aged 30-34 years who have successfully completed university or university-like (tertiary-level) education with an education level ISCED 1997 (International Standard Classification of Education) of 5-6.

⁴⁰ INE (2010), Estudos sobre Estatísticas Estruturais das Empresas.

⁴¹ <http://www.iefp.pt/Paginas/Home.aspx>

These are Vocational Training centres (31), Employment centres (86) and Vocational Rehabilitation centres (1). It also participates in Private Vocational Training centres (26) and in privately run Rehabilitation centres (2), set up with employers' associations or trade union organisations.⁴² The IEPF runs also 'Units for Active Inclusion' (*Unidades de Inserção na Vida Activa* – UNIVA), which provide cost-free support for placement, including information, coordination and management units for integration projects. They are situated in schools, training centres, associations, non-governmental agencies or in public institutions (Legal basis Despacho Normativo no 27/96 de 03-08).⁴³

In order to better reach the unemployed and support them with finding a job, especially those below 23 years old, the IIEFP contacts young unemployed people directly, and develops together with them a Personal Employment plan (*Plano Pessoal de Emprego*, PPE) based on the individual's needs. It includes different activities, such as improving self-esteem, personal and social skills, techniques of job seeking, RVCC (Recognition, validation and certification of competences⁴⁴), occupational training and participation in job creation programmes, etc.⁴⁵ The PEE is a kind of contract between the Employment centre and the unemployed, who may suffer reductions in their unemployment benefits if they do not comply with the requirements.⁴⁶ They might participate, for instance in the programme 'Insertion Companies' (*Empresas de Inserção*).⁴⁷

The two trade unions CGTP (General Confederation of Portuguese Workers, *Confederação Geral dos Trabalhadores Portugueses*) and UGT (General Union of Workers, *União Geral de Trabalhadores*) also have their own VET-Centres: The *Centro de Formação Sindical e aperfeiçoamento profissional* (CEFOSAP) (UGT) and the *Centro de Formação e de Inovação Tecnológica* (INOVINTER /CGTP), which offer traineeships.

3.3 Evolution of traineeships over time and impact of recent economic crisis on traineeships

The economic crisis led to increasing numbers of people registered unemployed with the Public Employment Service centres, but at the same time the available traineeship places did not increase to the same extent. However, the government increased investment in internship programmes as an attempt to overcome the effects of the recession among the younger population.

The **Employment 2010 Initiative (IE2010)** includes several measures to facilitate the transition of young unemployed people into the labour market, or the qualification of entrepreneurs in small and micro enterprises, or the promotion of the re-qualification of young graduates in scientific areas of low employability. Due to the restricted budget, some measures could not be realised and were suspended. Measures which were continued were those supporting the employability of unemployed people and job creation measures. For instance, more investments in the INOV programme were provided as well as technological and professional traineeship programmes, and incentives for companies hiring young unemployed people through traineeships.

⁴² da Conceição (2007), Vocational education and training in Portugal. Cedefop

⁴³ <http://www.bolsaempregosantarem.pt/pdf/Unidades%20Apoio%20Emprego/UNIVA.pdf>

⁴⁴ Reconhecimento, Validação e Certificação de Competências, see <http://www.iefp.pt/formacao/RVCC/Paginas/RVCC.aspx>

⁴⁵ Naumann, Reinhard, Wochnik, Markus (2008),

⁴⁶ Naumann, Reinhard, Wochnik, Markus (2008), Critical aspects of effectiveness and transferability of the Irish Individual Learner Plan to Portugal. Peer review.

http://www.mutual-learning-employment.net/uploads/ModuleXtender/PeerReviews/33/Portugal_IE08.pdf

⁴⁷ http://portal.iefp.pt/portal/page?_pageid=277,146703&_dad=gov_portal_iefp&_schema=GOV_PORTAL_IEFP

3.4 Financing of traineeships

Financial support can be provided in the form of payment to the trainee or incentives to employers occupying the unemployed. The Youth Placement Programme and the Inov-Jovem placements Programme are financed by the IEFP under the Ministry of Economy and the Ministry of Labour.

INOV trainees who participate successfully in the traineeship receive financial support (up to €838) as well as social security benefits. In the **INOV Contacto programme**, for instance, trainees also receive financial support, which corresponds to two times the Social Support Index (*Indexante de Apoios Sociais, IAS*), during their preparation phase as well as during their period abroad. Under this programme, additional support is provided in the form of housing and meal expenses. This programme is managed by the aicep Portugal Global and promoted by the Ministry of Economy and Innovation of Portugal (and co-financed by ESF through the QREN | POPH), which also covers insurances and travelling costs.⁴⁸

Financial support to unemployed workers (and for those in employment) who want to develop their skills through professional re-training is also provided through **scholarships**, which consists of a grant, lunch allowance and tuition fees. Employed individuals receive a subsidy for each training hour and a lunch allowance if the training takes place outside of work time.

Financial incentives for employers are provided by different programmes. A Programme to promote Job Creation (PEOE), providing subsidies for job creation, self-employment and the stimulation of long-term contracts had already been implemented in 2001. Measures to encourage jobs for young people by offering exemptions from social security contributions were also part of this programme.⁴⁹

Financial incentives for companies hiring unemployed people are also provided through the Local Employment Initiative (*Inicativas Locais de Emprego*), Incentives for Hiring (*Apoios à Contratação*) for LTU and people under 35 years old who achieve a 36-month contract, and the 'Insertion Companies' (*Empresas de Inserção*)⁵⁰ being NGOs which employ unemployed people registered with the IEFP.⁵¹ Additionally, under the New Opportunities Initiative programme incentives are granted to firms that hire those finishing these placements on open-ended contracts.⁵²

In 2008 the **Initiative for Investment and Employment** (*Iniciativa Investimento e Emprego, IIE*) provided a fifth part of the budget for the financial support of trainees, who were paid according to their educational level and subsidised by the IEFP. The share of the IEFP payment depends on the type and the dimension of the entity that offers the traineeship.⁵³ All over, in 2009 about €100 million were invested through this initiative to support labour market inclusion, reaching approximately 40,000 young people.⁵⁴

⁴⁸ <http://www.portugalglobal.pt/PT/InovContacto/Paginas/CondicoesGeraisdoPrograma.aspx>

⁴⁹ Cedefop – vocational training II

⁵⁰ http://portal.iefp.pt/portal/page?_pageid=277,146703&_dad=gov_portal_iefp&_schema=GOV_PORTAL_IEFP

⁵¹ http://www.lex.unict.it/eurolabor/documentazione/altridoc/fe/NEET_Feb12.pdf

⁵² EEO: Quarterly Reports Executive Summary, March 2010. http://www.eu-employment-observatory.net/resources/quarterly_reports_exec_summary/EN-March2010-QRES.pdf

⁵³ Naumann, Reinhard (2011), Portugal: EIRO CAR on 'Helping young workers during the crisis: contributions by social partners and public authorities.' Eurofound. <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/studies/tn1101019s/pt1101019q.htm>

⁵⁴ Dornelas, António/Ministro, A./Ribeiro Lopes, F./Albuquerque, J. L./Paixão, M./Santos, N. (2010), Emprego, contratação colectiva de trabalho e proteção da mobilidade profissional em Portugal. <http://www.gep.mtss.gov.pt/edicoes/outras/livroverde2010.pdf>, p. 45.

3.5 Public perceptions about traineeships

Traineeships or internships are periods of time where students, graduates or other young people gain work experience, which are often or mostly under unpaid conditions.

Among young people there is concern about employment perspectives: 'The only work we can get is 'work experience,' the only future we are offered is emigration'⁵⁵, said a protester on one of the recent demonstrations in the last year.

Public awareness of the precarious situation of young workers is also increasing due to the social protests taking place at the end of 2011, where hundreds of thousands of people (up to 300,000) demonstrated against youth unemployment and their precarious situation in the largest Portuguese cities (like Lisbon, Porto and eight others). The March demonstration in 2011 - the 'Movimento doze de Março' (M12M)⁵⁶ was organised by the 'Geração à Rasca' (The 'Scraping⁵⁷-By' or 'desperate generation') movement through Facebook and blogs. The group was created in February last year and is rapidly gaining followers among underpaid and part-time workers, students, the unemployed and the '500 euro-ists' (those working for €500 under the *green receipts*), many of whom are university graduates aged 21 to 35 years old.⁵⁸

The paradox of the situation is that more people achieve a degree, but they do not find employment. There are increasingly more people working as independent workers on the 'green receipts' (*recibos verdes*), both in public institutions and private enterprises, without job security. Often, dependent workers are hired as independent workers, known also as 'false green receipts'.⁵⁹ While officially only about 7,500 people were found to be working on 'false green receipts', the National Statistical Institute estimates that in 2010 they were about 77,000.

Social movements representing precarious workers also emerged in 2008/2009, known as the 'Tired of These Green Receipts' (*Fartos de Estes Recibos Verdes* -FERVE), 'Inflexible Precarious Workers' (*Precários Inflexíveis*)⁶⁰, 'Performances Intermittent' and the 'Association of Scientific Research Grant holders' (*Associação dos Bolseiros de Investigação Científica* - ABIC).⁶¹

According to the daily newspaper 'Público', youth unemployment is double the official rate, due to the fact that most young people are contracted under the *recibos verdes*, and many (one in every ten employees) emigrate⁶², so that the current emigration rate has reached the rates which occurred during the 60s. Even if no data is available on the age of emigrants, experts underline that many are young people; and international traineeship programmes favour this process, especially among the more qualified. Even the Prime Minister recently advised young unemployed people to emigrate to alleviate the social tension.⁶³

⁵⁵ Cited by a young person on a demonstration, see: <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2011/mar2011/port-m15.shtml>

⁵⁶ <http://geracaoenrascada.wordpress.com/>

⁵⁷ <http://www.precariosinflexiveis.org/>

⁵⁸ World Socialist Web Site, International Committee for the Fourth International (ICFI). <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2011/mar2011/port-m15.shtml>

⁵⁹ <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/comparative/tn0801018s/pt0801019q.htm>

⁶⁰ <http://www.precariosinflexiveis.org/>. An media-effective action was organised by the 'Precários Inflexíveis' (Inflexible Precarious), by a violent-free occupation of a call centre, which recalled public attention on low-paid jobs, short-term contracts and non-voluntary self-employment.

⁶¹ da Conceição Cerdeira, Maria/ Dias, João (n.y.), Economic Crisis, Trade Unions Strategies and Precarious Employment in Portugal. <http://www.fafu.no/irec/papers/MariadaConceicaoCerdeira.pdf>

⁶² Público (24.11.2010), Portugal está a deixar cair a geração mais qualificada.

http://www.publico.pt/Sociedade/portugal-esta-a-deixar-cair-a-geracao-mais-qualificada_1467864?all=1

⁶³ German tv-report 'Weltspiegel', from 26.2.2012

The two national Trade Unions – the General Confederation of Portuguese Workers (*Confederação Geral dos Trabalhadores Portugueses* - CGTP) and the General Union of Workers (*União Geral de Trabalhadores* – UGT) – are supporting these social protests and defending the economic and social rights of the young people⁶⁴. At the same time, awareness exists about the difficulty of defending employees' rights during a period of high unemployment.

However, 'atypical' workers – and especially the young – are little represented in workers unions. The social movements are increasingly considered by the trade unions, however, their involvement is still scarce. The UGT has restructured its organisation in order to better include 'precarious' workers directly and not under a sector or company trade union body, and the CGTP is increasing its efforts to report incidents of false '*receibos verdes*' of those working in the public or private sector.⁶⁵

According to Naumann, however, the 'CGTP's strategy seems to exclude (or at least reduce strongly) the possibility of specific measures for the employment of young people if these imply any kind of discrimination (as for instance lower salaries for the same work)'. The UGT has taken a much clearer position, supporting paid traineeships for unemployed graduates, for up to one year, and their entitlement to unemployment benefits if they do not get a contract after the traineeship.⁶⁶

Nonetheless, it is mostly recognised that the austerity programme implemented to overcome the crisis will not help this process, even if more traineeships are supported.

4. Practices and Content of Traineeships

4.1 Traineeships as part of education and/or labour market entry and integration for young people

Labour market policies addressing the young population mainly focused on promoting participation in education and training due to the overall low qualification level (68 per cent of the overall population had no more than basic education in 2010) and the high school drop-out rates (which however are decreasing).

Traineeships play an important role and are a successful instrument for supporting the labour market inclusion of young unqualified and qualified people, promoting job creation (through incentives) and promoting active labour market policies. The economic conditions, characterised by stagnation since 2008, have resulted in lower job creation and higher unemployment, by which young people are especially affected. Low-skilled males have been particularly affected by this trend, making it harder for them to find a job. The labour market policies of Portugal aim to combat this tendency by providing people with opportunities to obtain work experience and improve qualifications 'on the job'. Since 2005 the government has sought to launch programmes to improve the qualification of the workforce and to enhance labour flexibility. It has also brought forward reforms of vocational training in the frame of the EES and Lisbon Agenda, as with the 'New Opportunity Initiative'.

⁶⁴ Naumann, Reinhard (2011), Portugal: EIRO CAR on 'Helping young workers during the crisis: contributions by social partners and public authorities.' Eurofound.
<http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/studies/tn1101019s/pt1101019q.htm>

⁶⁵ da Conceição Cerdeira, Maria/ Dias, João (n.y.), Economic Crisis, Trade Unions Strategies and Precarious Employment in Portugal. <http://www.fao.no/irec/papers/MariadaConceicaoCerdeira.pdf>

⁶⁶ Naumann, Reinhard (2011), Portugal: EIRO CAR on 'Helping young workers during the crisis: contributions by social partners and public authorities.' Eurofound.
<http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/studies/tn1101019s/pt1101019q.htm>

4.2 Issues about employer practices as regards traineeships

Social movement groups, developed in the last years, have strongly criticised employers practices, as the high unemployment rate has made it more difficult for young people to find a stable employment with a regular contract, and many jobs are offered as traineeships, being a back-door to employ young workers without pay.

In the National Reform programme 2020, the government states that '**social protection for interns** must also be increased so as to assure them the same social security coverage as employed workers'.⁶⁷

5. Trainee's Rights and Terms and Conditions

The terms and conditions for trainees are set out in the respective legislation, which is regulated by the general framework for traineeships 'Programa Estágios Profissionais, Regulamento'.⁶⁸ Conditions are set out in special contracts. Trainees participating in official placement programmes have, for instance, the right to financial support if they complete the full duration of their traineeship. Furthermore, trainees have the right to the support of a personal mentor in the enterprise where they are working. The rights also include social security contributions and accident insurance, as well as certification at the conclusion of the traineeship. Under certain circumstances, the trainees can interrupt the traineeship, provided that they provide notification in writing by registered letter 15 days in advance.

6. Quality Assurance of Traineeships

Following an agreement on employment, labour market and education and training policies, a National System of Vocational Certification (NSVC) was created in the 1990s for training integrated with the employment market.⁶⁹ The NSVC certified the achievement of training objectives and the qualification level reached. In 2001, it was replaced by the Recognition, validation and certification of competences (RVCC) (*Sistema Nacional de Reconhecimento, Validação e Certificação de Competências*), which laid out the standards for educational and vocational training (supported by the ESF). The process of recognition, validation and certification of skills has been developed by the 450 New Opportunities Centres (since 2005), which are based in institutions of primary and secondary education, vocational training centres of the IEFP and in other accredited public or private training institutions. The validation happens in three steps: recognition, validation and certification of competences. These activities are supported by the ESF.⁷⁰

The **Employment and Vocational Training Observatory** (*Observatório do Emprego e Formação Profissional*, OEFP), a tripartite body set up in 1993, assesses and monitors the implemented measures and programmes. A challenge is to better adapt the VET system to the skill needs of employers.⁷¹

⁶⁷ Portugal 2020, Programa Nacional de Reformas. http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nrp/nrp_portugal_en.pdf (Point 6.1.1 (2), page 57)

⁶⁸ <http://www.iefp.pt/apoios/candidatos/Estagios/Documents/Programa%20Est%C3%A1gios%20Profissionais/Regulamento%20dos%20Est%C3%A1gios%20Profissionais.pdf> and Programa De Estágios Profissionais (Portaria N.O 92/2011, De 28 De Fevereiro)

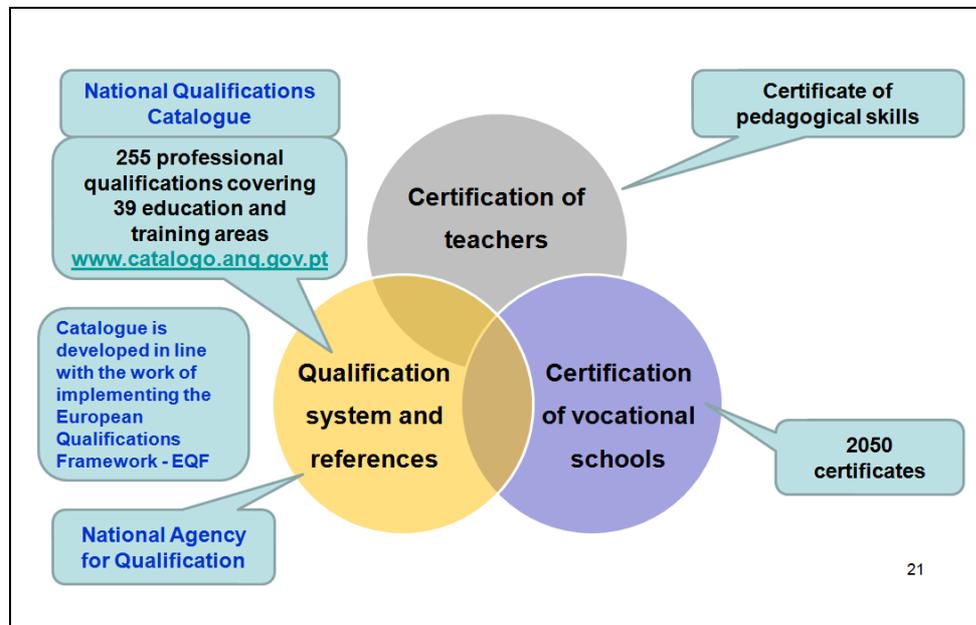
⁶⁹ OECD

⁷⁰ <http://www.igfse.pt/news.asp?startAt=1&categoryID=281&newsID=2403>

⁷¹ Nádia Simões and Reinhard Naumann (2010), Anticipating and Managing restructuring Portugal, International training centre, ILO.

For a long time vocational training and education did not consider the skill requirements of the private sector. Therefore a National Qualifications Catalogue (*Catálogo Nacional de Qualificações*) for National Vocational training standards in each occupational area was set up, which is managed by the National Qualification Agency (Agência Nacional para a Qualificação (ANQ)).⁷² The catalogue considers 39 professional areas and describes 255 qualifications framed in a range between level 1 and level 8.⁷³

Figure 6.1: Portuguese qualification and certification system



Source: http://www.euexcert.org/pdf/EUExNet_Newsleter_May_2011.pdf

More efforts have been made to improve the requirements, through the creation of the **Local Advisory Councils for Qualification** (*Conselhos Sectoriais*, LACQ) in 2007. They are responsible for guaranteeing a stronger matching between demand and supply of skills and for ensuring that the skills and competences of the trainees fit the labour market needs. There are 16 LACQ addressing most business areas (such as food, construction, manufacturing, commerce, transport etc.).⁷⁴ The LACQ are responsible for updating the National Qualification Catalogue (*Catálogo Nacional de Qualificações*, CNQ) to the needs of the labour market and are cooperating with the National Qualification Agency. This is done by consulting specialists of the different activity sectors, trade unions and employers associations, reference companies and training entities.⁷⁵

Also, the **Information and Management System of the Education and Training Offer** (*Sistema de Informação e Gestão da Oferta Educativa e Formativa*, SIGO) is an important instrument for monitoring the demand for skills, processes and results.⁷⁶

⁷² <http://www.catalogo.anq.gov.pt/FAQ>

⁷³ http://www.euexcert.org/pdf/EUExNet_Newsleter_May_2011.pdf

⁷⁴ In Portugal there are 16 Local Advisory Councils for Qualification: food sector; construction and urbanism; the manufacture of chemicals, ceramics, glass and others; informatics, electronics and telecommunications; the metal industry; the fashion Sector; business activities; health; transport and logistics; environment and energy; handicraft and jewellery; trade and marketing; culture, heritage and content production; wood, furniture and cork; personal services activities; and tourism. In: Nádia Simões and Reinhard Naumann (2010),

⁷⁵ Nádia Simões and Reinhard Naumann (2010), Anticipating and Managing restructuring Portugal, International training centre, ILO.

⁷⁶ Nádia Simões and Reinhard Naumann (2010), Anticipating and Managing restructuring Portugal, International training centre, ILO.

Another institution, the **Permanent Forum for the Employability of Young Graduates**, established by the National Reform programme 2020, is promoting meetings between employers, institutions and youths in order to stimulate debate and coordinate of measures aimed at better matching the training supply with the demands of the labour markets and fostering employers' involvement in planning the training supplied by higher education institutions. It also promotes mechanisms supporting companies' offer of sustainable employment for young graduates.⁷⁷

The two trade unions CGTP and UGT are also participating in the development of traineeship standards, being represented in the Standing Committee for Social Concertation (*Comissão Permanente de Concertação Social – CPCS*) where the public VET-policies are discussed, and are partners of the IEFP.⁷⁸

7. Overall Assessment as regards Traineeships

7.1 Benefits and drawbacks of traineeships

Traineeships give young people the opportunity to get work experience supported by a mentor. On the other hand, Simões (2010) also considers that 'activation measures can simply postpone unemployment since a job placement or a training opportunity does not guarantee that an individual will subsequently attain work'.⁷⁹

According to a study of INE 'Entrada dos Jovens no Mercado de Trabalho – 2009', the period necessary to find an employment for students already working during their studies is on average 20.4 months, while for the age group 30-34 years it is 25.2 months.⁸⁰

7.2 Effectiveness of traineeships

Job placement schemes have had a positive effect, as shown by the IEFP Evaluation conducted in 2004. According to this evaluation, most participants had been unemployed or in search of a job before being enrolled in employment (75 per cent). Overall, the placement schemes increased the employability of trainees, as three months after completing the placement, 71 per cent of the trainees were already employed (60 per cent of these trainees remained in the same firm after the work placement). For those, who did not find a job, the lack of job vacancies in their region and in their area of expertise (35.1 per cent and 20.1 per cent, respectively) were considered the main reason. The survey also showed that nearly 76 per cent of the former trainees considered the placement as crucial to their integration into the labour market.⁸¹

More recent data on the '**Professional Traineeship programme**' shows that in the last 12 years more than 170,000 unemployed young people (below 30 years old) benefitted from this programme, and 72.5 per cent of these found employment. Of these, 76 per cent were

⁷⁷ Portugal 2020, National Reform Programme. http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nrp/nrp_portugal_en.pdf

⁷⁸ Naumann, Reinhard (2011), Portugal: EIRO CAR on 'Helping young workers during the crisis: contributions by social partners and public authorities.' Eurofound. <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/studies/tn1101019s/pt1101019q.htm>

⁷⁹ Nádia Simões and Reinhard Naumann (2010), Anticipating and Managing restructuring Portugal, International training centre, ILO

⁸⁰ Dornelas, António/Ministro, A./Ribeiro Lopes, F./Albuquerque, J. L./Paixão, M./Santos, N. (2010), Emprego, contratação colectiva de trabalho e proteção da mobilidade profissional em Portugal. <http://www.gep.mtss.gov.pt/edicoes/outras/livroverde2010.pdf>, p. 33

⁸¹ Nádia Simões and Reinhard Naumann (2010), 27 National Seminars, Anticipating and Managing Restructuring Portugal, A.R.E.NA.S, International Training Centre, ILO

employed by the employer where the traineeship had been carried out. The programme is considered as one of the most effective, since its implementation in 1997 it has brought about 12,763 highly qualified individuals into employment per year.⁸² One reason for this success is seen in the public co-funding of the programme.

Also the Programme **Inov Contacto**, facilitating international traineeships showed positive results in recent years. About 50 per cent of the trainees placed in the period 2005 to 2008 were still in employment, of which 25 per cent were abroad.⁸³

7.3 Good practice examples and recommendations

The **INOV Contacto** was considered 'Best Practice', in 2007 in the field of Management Development Programmes – Graduate Programmes, by the national experts of the 'Small and Medium Enterprises Internationalization Support' task force. As a result, the INOV Contacto has been part of a good practices publication by the Enterprise and Industry Directorate General of the European Commission which aims to determine how public policies can help SMEs in their international growth efforts and to adopt a more European and international orientation standard.⁸⁴

⁸² Ramos, Florindo (2009), How to cope with an extremely unqualified workforce? Peer review on 'Professional Traineeships for Young Adults', held in Portugal, November 2009, Mutual Learning Programme http://www.mutual-learning-employment.net/uploads/ModuleXtender/PeerReviews/74/Portugal_HOST_COUNTRY_paper_FINAL.pdf

⁸³ http://www.portugal.gov.pt/pt/GC17/Governo/Ministerios/MTSS/Documentos/Pages/20080407_MTSS_Doc_Programas_Inov.aspx

⁸⁴ <http://www.portugalglobal.pt/PT/InovContacto/Paginas/AboutInovContacto.aspx>

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Annex

Table A 1: Legislation on Traineeship/vocational Education

Programa de Estágios Profissionais na Administração Pública Central (PEPAC)

[Decreto-Lei n.º 65/2010](#) - Adapta à administração local o regime de estágios da Administração Pública.

[Decreto-Lei n.º 18/2010](#) - Estabelece o regime do Programa de Estágios Profissionais na Administração Pública.

[Portaria n.º 172-A/2010](#) - Fixa o número máximo de estagiários a seleccionar e respectiva distribuição pelas entidades promotoras, de acordo com a área de educação/formação.

[Portaria n.º 172-B/2010](#) - Regulamento do PEPAC. (Alterada pela Portaria 290-A/2010)

Portaria 316/2001 - Classificação Nacional de Áreas de Formação (CNAF).

[Despacho 9221-A/2010](#) - Adopção medidas necessárias a assegurar o cumprimento dos objectivos do PEPAC, designadamente o alargamento da possibilidade de aceitação de estágios.

[Despacho 10444-B/2010](#) - Mobilidade geográfica de Estagiários.

[Modelo de Contrato de Estágio](#)

[Ficha de Avaliação de Estagiário](#)

Inov – Social

[Portaria n.º 285/2010](#) - Altera o regulamento da medida INOV-Social.

[Resolução do Conselho de Ministros n.º 112/2009](#) - cria o INOV-Social.

[Portaria n.º 154/2010](#) - Cria novas medidas para reforço do Programa INOV - regulamento e normas de funcionamento do INOV-Social.

[Portaria n.º 1103/2008](#) - Estabelecimento do regime de concessão dos apoios técnicos e financeiros das medidas INOV-JOVEM, INOV Contacto, INOV Vasco da Gama, INOV-ART e INOV Mundus e respectivas normas de funcionamento e acompanhamento.

[Decreto Regulamentar n.º 84-A/2007](#) - Estabelece o Regime Geral da Aplicação do Fundo Social Europeu (FSE).

Inov – Jovem

[Portaria n.º 1103/2008](#) - Estabelecimento do regime de concessão dos apoios técnicos e financeiros das medidas INOV-JOVEM, INOV Contacto, INOV Vasco da Gama, INOV-ART e INOV Mundus e respectivas normas de funcionamento e acompanhamento.

[Resolução do Conselho de Ministros n.º 63/2008](#) - Aprova uma nova fase do INOV Jovem e do INOV Contacto, assim como o lançamento do INOV-Art e do INOV Vasco da Gama

[Resolução do Conselho de Ministros n.º 93/2008](#) - Criação do INOV-Mundus.

[Recomendação da Comissão n.º 2003/361/CE](#) - Define micro, pequenas e médias empresas.

[Portaria n.º 1212/2000](#) - Institui o regime de majoração dos apoios financeiros previstos nas medidas de política de emprego para as profissões significativamente marcadas por discriminação de género e define quais são estas profissões.

[Resolução do Conselho de Ministros n.º 190/2005](#) - Aprova o Plano Tecnológico.

Inov – Energia

[Despacho n.º 7384/2010](#) - Regulamento da medida INOV-Energi@

[Portaria n.º 154/2010](#) - estabelece o reforço do Programa INOV, ampliando o seu âmbito de aplicação, mediante a criação de novas medidas INOV, que integram, nomeadamente, programas de estágio para licenciados nas áreas da economia social, da mediação sociocultural, do ambiente, da protecção civil, das energias renováveis ou de outras que venham a ser consideradas prioritárias

[Resolução do Conselho de Ministros n.º 5/2010](#) - Programa Iniciativa Emprego 2010.

Inov – Export

[Portaria n.º 238/2010](#) - Estabelece o regime de concessão dos apoios técnicos e financeiros do INOV-Export e define as respectivas normas de funcionamento e acompanhamento. Aprova igualmente o Regulamento da medida.

[Resolução do Conselho de Ministros n.º 115/2009](#) - Estabelece as medidas que concretizam a estratégia de internacionalização da economia, nomeadamente a criação do Programa INOV-Export.

Inov – Art

[Despacho n.º 24508/2009](#) - Regulamento de execução do INOV-Art.

[Portaria n.º 1189-A/2010](#) - Regulamentação dos apoios directos e indirectos às artes.

Inov – Contacto

[Resolução do Conselho de Ministros n.º 93/2005](#) - Alarga o âmbito do Programa Contacto, que passa a denominar-se Programa INOV Contacto - Estágios Internacionais de Jovens Quadros.

[Portaria n.º 1103/2008](#) - Estabelecimento do regime de concessão dos apoios técnicos e financeiros das medidas INOV-JOVEM, INOV Contacto, INOV Vasco da Gama, INOV-ART e INOV Mundus e respectivas normas de funcionamento e acompanhamento.

Source: *Comissão de Juventude*, http://www.ugt.pt/site/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=125&Itemid=98

National Report on Traineeships Romania

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1. Traineeships as part of Member State's Youth Policy Measures

1.1 Overview of current situation of young people and traineeships as part of youth policy measures

Young people aged 15 to 34 years used to account for 30.8 per cent of the total population of Romania in 1996, and for 29.7 per cent in 2010. A comparative chart of this age group's social and professional profile is given in Table A 1 in Annex for the two reference years.

Statistics show a growth in the population in the age segment 25 to 34 years old, but also growing numbers and ratios of young people that are outside any classification: neither part of the school population, employed population, or unemployed individuals on record (No Employment, Education or Training i.e. NEET; No Income, No Jobs or Assets i.e. NINJA).

The employment rate of young people 15 to 24 age range has been a constant 24 per cent in recent years (2006 – 2010), compared to the approximate average of 34 per cent in the EU 27.

The unemployment rate in this age bracket, was (during the same period) 22 per cent, compared to the EU 27 average of 21 per cent.

The share of long-term unemployed young people among the overall number of jobless in Romania dropped from 51 per cent in 2006 to 34 per cent in 2010, but continued to be above the EU 27 average of 28.4 per cent in 2010.

Existence of minimum wage for young people

In Romania, the gross monthly minimum wage is determined every year by a Government decision and is valid for all types of workers, irrespective of gender or age.

The gross monthly minimum wage set by the Government for 2011 was 670 lei for a full-time work schedule of 170 hours/month (equivalent to approximately €158).

Young people of up to 18 years of age enjoy the same monthly minimum wage even though, according to the Romanian Labour Code, their work schedule may not exceed six hours/day, i.e. 30 hours/week.

Main challenges that young people face today. Most effective policy interventions/measures on transition to work and role of traineeships in facilitating this transition

In general, young people do have a problem in finding a job. In the discussions on access of young people to the labour market, employers complain about the lack of correspondence between school curricula and the demands of the labour market. Neither do young people have the experience which is sometimes required.

From this point of view, practice can play an important part.

The current status of this segment of labour, and the results of involving graduates of upper secondary and academic education in practical training have been surveyed during the European project '*Practice how to Learn, and Learn how to Practice*', project ID 20143.¹

Of the interviewed youths, 46 per cent pointed to 'experience on the job' as the main condition for employment; and 34 per cent indicated the employers' demand for strong practical skills.

The public employment agency and the Government of Romania have developed instruments designed to stimulate both employers and fresh graduates, and thereby help the absorption of the latter into the labour market.

Such instruments are: subsidies to employers that hire young graduates; job exchanges for young applicants; tax-free employment bonuses for young people that take a job prior to expiry of the unemployment benefit period; mediation and vocational counselling afforded to youths threatened with social marginalisation, etc.

The public employment agency also grants first hire/relocation bonuses to stimulate geographical mobility of labour force.

One such state aid scheme, still in progress, under the title '*money for vocational training*' provides funds for initial vocational training aimed at helping young people adapt to the requirements of their first job. This state aid scheme is co-financed by the European Social Fund through the *Sectoral Operational Programme for Human Resource Development (SOP HRD) 2007-2013*.

Romanian law provides for monthly financial incentives to employers who hire high-school (upper secondary) and higher education students during summer holidays.

One of the most efficient measures, particularly after Romania's accession to the EU, and mostly during the period 2010 – 2011, was the *Sectoral Operational Programme for Human Resource Development (SOP HRD) 2007-2013*, co-financed from the European Social Fund (ESF), which includes several priority axes and key areas of intervention.

Priority Axis 2. '*Linking Life-long Learning and Labour Market*', key area of intervention 2.1, '*The transition from school to active life*' sustains projects designed to enhance employability of people still undergoing schooling and initial professional training. The target group for key area of intervention 2.1 are the students of upper secondary and tertiary national educational establishments.

The key area of intervention provides financial support for professional practice and for the training of tutors working in the companies/organisations where practical training is given. Practical training sessions are funded only if an agreement with potential hiring companies exists. In 2009-2010, over 28,000 people took part in this programme.

Under the same key area of intervention 2.1, funding is provided through several calls for proposals such as '*Learn a Trade*', for the practical training of high-school pupils and higher education students, on the premises of a potential hiring company, during which the graduates' adaptation capacity is monitored, and awareness campaigns are conducted to make it easier for them to pass from pupil status and studentship to employment.

¹ The study, co-ordinated by senior researcher PhD Anca Tomescu, was developed under the project co-financed by European Social Found, Sectoral Operational Programme for Human Resource Development (SOP HRD) 2007-2013, having as beneficiary EDU-TIM Consulting.

Existence of policy interventions/measures that actively promote the geographical learning and/or job mobility of young people as part of traineeship-related programmes, eg transnational placements undertaken by young people in another Member State and those undertaken by foreign (EU) trainees in this Member State

The Erasmus Lifelong Learning Programme which is available to tertiary students gives them the chance to learn mobility and participate in a practical training assignment in a company/enterprise/NGO located in one of the countries included in the programme (other than their own) for a period of three to 12 months.

Similarly, the Leonardo da Vinci Programme finances international mobility, accompanied by the recognition of the acquired competences.

How do traineeships compare to these other mechanisms for the labour market integration of young people (eg Apprenticeships) in this Member State?

In our view, the other existing instruments for the integration of young people into the labour market which are also useful are incentives granted to employers and the employees (subsidies, employment bonuses, etc.); but practical training sessions yield better results in the medium and long-term.

Table 1.1: Main traineeship programmes and initiatives in Romania

Main traineeship programmes and initiatives in Romania	Brief description	Web link
Act 258/2007, regarding practical training	<p>Specific legislation laying down clear rights and obligations for both trainees, traineeship organisers (the pre-academic and academic educational establishments), and the traineeship partners (business corporations, central or local public institutions, or any other corporate entities taking part in the practical training of high school and tertiary students). The Traineeship Act also provides the incentives for the entities that organise and admit trainees in practice sessions.</p> <p>The responsibility for enforcing the Traineeship Act and overseeing compliance with it resides with the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports (Ministerul Educației, Cercetării, Tineretului și Sportului, MECTS), through its county school inspectorates, and educational establishments.</p> <p>MECTS also has the task of updating the various regulations regarding education to the curricula that include traineeships.</p>	

Main traineeship programmes and initiatives in Romania

Brief description

Web link

National Education Act (NEA)

Target groups: secondary (ISCED 3 and 4) and tertiary education students (ISCED 5)

http://www.cdep.ro/proiecte/2010/500/80/7/leg_pl587_10.pdf

The National Education Act 1/2011 (NEA) sets forth that traineeships shall be designed to match two levels: the level of vocational (or trade) schools and technical upper secondary schools (technical high schools), and the level of tertiary (academic) education.

The NEA lays down the following conditions for the technical and vocational pre-academic education:

- Practical training along the entire course of studies in the technical or vocational education stream may be organised on the premises of the educational establishment itself and/or at the location of the business entities or public institutions with which such schools have agreed (by contract) on practical training; or at the location of host organisations abroad, as part of EU programmes for initial vocational training. The length of the practical training session must be stipulated in the framework curriculum approved by the MECTS.

- Businesses that, by contract with educational establishments, provide tuition scholarships, or practical training sessions to trainees, or the requisite equipment in the training spaces, or offer employment to graduates, may enjoy the tax incentives afforded by law.

- Graduates of the XI-th form (in a 12-form pre-academic educational system) of a technological or vocational stream who complete a practical training session may take a practical examination to obtain certification, according to the qualification grid provided by the National Qualification Framework Rules.

In higher education institutions, short-term courses include compulsory practical training sessions. Universities are bound by law to provide at least 30% of the necessary practice places; of these, at least 50% must be outside university premises. For the others, each student must identify a company/institution and to obtain its

Main traineeship programmes and initiatives in Romania**Brief description****Web link**

	<p>agreement to perform the stage.</p> <p>By Government Decisions and Orders of the Minister of Education, Research, Youth and Sports are approved the curricula and the length of the practical training stages.</p> <p>Applicants to a teaching position in a pre-academic educational establishment must demonstrate, in addition to their theoretical qualification in the subject, that they have acquired a master's degree in teaching sciences, and have taken a practical training course.</p> <p>Practical training of students of medicine is regulated by specific rules. It is conducted in medical establishments, research institutes, diagnostic and health care centres, laboratories, and consulting rooms for specialised medical services.</p> <p>Students of artistic and sporting higher education institutions do their practical training in artist and music studios, theatres, cinema halls, sporting facilities. They are based on corporate partnership agreements.</p>	
European Social Fund, SOP HRD 2007-2013, Priority Axis 2 'Linking Life-long Learning and Labour Market', Key Area of Intervention 2.1 'Transition from School to Active Life'	<p>Includes financing of practical training, and vocational guidance and counselling activities aimed at increasing employability.</p> <p>The projects co-financed by ESF under KAI 2.1 are implementing practical training/traineeships only if they are included in the curricula. The projects could be submitted by schools, universities, county school inspectorates, NGOs, chambers of commerce etc.</p>	<p>http://www.fseromania.ro/index.php/posdr_u</p>
The Erasmus Lifelong Learning Programme	<p>Available to tertiary students gives them the chance to learn mobility and accept a practical training assignment in a company/enterprise/NGO located in one of the countries included in the programme (other than their own) for a period of three to 12 months.</p>	<p>http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc/stat/0910/countries/romania_en.pdf</p>
Leonardo da Vinci Programme	<p>Provide support for international mobility by financing stages, accompanied by the recognition of the acquired competences.</p>	<p>http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/doc/stat/romania_en.pdf</p>

Main traineeship programmes and initiatives in Romania**Brief description****Web link**

Labour Code Act, (Act no. 53/2003) republished in 2011

Target groups: graduates.
General rule is that the graduates of higher education are deemed to be doing their training period during the first six months from debut.

http://www.mmuncii.ro/pub/imagemanager/images/file/Legislatie/LEGI/LEGE_53-2003R.pdf

An exception from this rule is made for professions that are governed by specific regulations (physicians, lawyers, financial auditors, etc.).

Other initiatives of the Government of Romania through public employment services

Instruments designed to stimulate both employers and fresh graduates, and thereby help the absorption of the latter into the labour market, such as: subsidies to employers that hire young graduates; job exchanges for young applicants; tax-free employment bonuses for youths that take a job prior to expiry of the unemployment benefit period; mediation and vocational counselling afforded to youths threatened with social marginalisation, etc.

<http://www.mmuncii.ro/pub/imagemanager/images/file/Legislatie/ORDINE/O309-2009.pdf>

The public employment agency also grants first hire/relocation bonuses to stimulate geographical mobility of labour force.

On the others, one such state aid scheme, still in progress, under the title 'money for vocational training' provides funds for initial vocational training aimed at helping young people adapt to the requirements of their first job. This state aid scheme is co-financed by the European Social Fund through the Sectoral Operational Programme for Human Resource Development (SOP HRD) 2007-2013.

European Social Fund, the Sectoral Operational Programme for Human Resources Development (SOP HRD) 2007 - 2013, Priority Axis 1 'Education and vocational training in support for economic growth and the development of a knowledge-based society', Key Area of

Target groups: graduates.

Scholars receiving doctoral and post-doctoral grants must take international mobility traineeships of a minimum three months in a university or research institute in an EU Member State. Such traineeships are financed from the European Social Fund and from national resources.

<http://www.fseromania.ro/index.php/posdr>
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Intervention 1.5
'Doctoral and post-doctoral programmes to support research'.

2. Legislative Framework for Traineeships

2.1 Legal framework for and governance of traineeships

The legal framework currently in force that governs traineeship is the Traineeship Act 258/2007, regarding the practical training of upper secondary (high school/vocational school) and tertiary students (Table 1.1, Chapter 1).

Starting from the rather weak and random correlation between educational establishments and corporate employers on practical training matters, the need was felt for specific legislation laying down clear rights and obligations for both trainees, traineeship organisers (the pre-academic and academic educational establishments), and the traineeship partners (business corporations, central or local public institutions, or any other corporate entities taking part in the practical training of high school and tertiary students). The Traineeship Act also provides the incentives for the entities that organise and admit trainees to practice sessions.

The responsibility to enforce the Traineeship Act and oversee compliance with it resides with the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports (Ministerul Educației, Cercetării, Tineretului și Sportului, MECTS), through its county school inspectorates, and educational establishments.

MECTS also has the task of updating the various regulations regarding education to the curricula that include traineeships.

The National Education Act 1/2011 (NEA) sets forth that traineeships shall be designed to match two levels: the level of vocational (or trade) schools and technical upper secondary schools (technical high schools), and the level of tertiary (academic) education.

Among other rules, the NEA lays down the following conditions for the technical and vocational pre-academic education:

- Practical training along the entire course of studies in the technical or vocational education stream may be organised on the premises of the educational establishment itself and/or at the location of the business entities or public institutions with which such schools have agreed (by contract) on practical training; or at the location of host organisations abroad, as part of EU programmes for initial vocational training. The length of the practical training session must be stipulated in the framework curriculum approved by the MECTS.
- Businesses that, by contract with educational establishments, provide tuition scholarships, or practical training sessions to trainees, or the requisite equipment in the training spaces, or offer employment to graduates, may enjoy the tax incentives afforded by law.
- Graduates of the XI-th form (in a 12-form pre-academic educational system) of a technological or vocational stream who complete a practical training session may take a

practical examination to obtain certification, according to the qualification grid provided by the National Qualification Framework Rules.

Syllabuses for the various courses of study, and the optional training modules are developed in each school, in consultation with the school's teachers' board, students' advisory board, parent's association, representatives of the local community, and (where applicable) with the business entities with which the school has entered into a practical training contract for its students. Syllabuses are subject to the approval of each school board.

In higher education institutions, short-term courses include compulsory practical training sessions. Universities are bound by law to provide at least 30 per cent of the necessary practice places; of these, at least 50 per cent must be outside university premises. For the others, each student must identify a company/institution and to obtain its agreement to perform the stage.

Public higher education institutions must ensure, during the training periods planned in the curriculum, the students' meal, accommodation and travelling expenses during the time such practical training takes place outside the university campus (within the limit of the funds allocated for the overall practical training of their students).

NEA contains provisions for specific areas, such as:

Applicants to a teaching position in a pre-academic educational establishment must demonstrate, in addition to their theoretical qualification in the subject, that they have acquired a master's degree in teaching sciences, and have taken a practical training course.

For the master's degree in teaching, the practical training may be a training session abroad under the EU programme for the initial training of teachers, which brings the trainee a certification for the time spent in training, in the form of a mobility Europass.

The masters degree is a precondition for the admission to the one-year practical training in a school, under the supervision of a mentor.

Teachers who fail the permanency examination, which they can sign up for after completion of three years of teaching, may repeat the examination only two more times, subject to having repeated, each time, the one school year practice term.

Practical training of students of medicine is regulated by specific rules. It is conducted in medical establishments, research institutes, diagnostic and health care centres, laboratories, and consulting rooms for specialised medical services.

Students of artistic and sporting higher education institutions do their practical training in artist and music studios, theatres, cinema halls, sporting facilities. They are based on corporate partnership agreements.

According to the revised Labour Code Act, adopted in 2011, the general rule is that the graduates of higher education are deemed to be doing their training period during the first six months from debut.

An exception from this rule is made for professions that are governed by specific regulations (physicians, lawyers, financial auditors, etc.).

Main target groups covered by this legislation? (e.g. young people in either secondary or tertiary education, young graduates, etc.)

The main target groups of the Traineeship Act, and the National Education Act are secondary education (ISCED 3 and 4) and tertiary education students (ISCED 5), while the Labour Code and profession-related regulations deal with graduates.

Laws and regulations for traineeships in specific areas/professions? (eg trainee lawyers, trainee doctors, etc.)

For physicians, the free practice license may be obtained after a one-year practice in accredited health establishments. For lawyers, the practice period is two years. For financial auditors, the practical training lasts for minimum three years, etc.

Existence of any specific soft law/case law in relation to traineeships and whether this has had an impact on traineeships

By order of the Minister of Education, Research, Youth and Sports, a Framework Agreement on the Practical Training of Students of Vocational and Technical Schools was approved.

The Romanian Government gave a Decision (no. 844/2002) regarding the occupations for which a vocational certification examination must be taken by the graduates of lower secondary education (9th and 10th forms).

The syllabi for the practical training required to obtain a Level 2 vocational qualification are approved by Order no. 3646/2011 of the Minister of Education.

The Order of the Minister of education, research and youth n° 1702/ 6.08.2007 regarding the approval of the framework convention for carrying out internships in enterprises/public institutions by pupils from technical and vocational education and training

Another MECTS Order (no. 3.955/2008) lays down the general framework of the practical training for the short-term (bachelor) and long-term (master) higher education qualifications.

The common Order of the Minister of public health and of the Minister of education, research and youth n° 140/1515/2007 for approving the Methodology for the collaboration between hospitals and medical higher education institutions and pre-university medical institutions.

Government Emergency Ordinance (OUG no. 58/2001) regulates internships and probation stages for physicians and pharmacists, and a joint order (Order no. 140/2007) of the Minister of Public Health and the Minister of Education regulates the framework of co-operation between hospitals and higher medical school.

Another professional group, represented by the Romanian Corps of Auditors, adopted, by a decision of its own, the rules regarding the period of practical training for the fresh graduates doing financial audit as a specialisation.

Specific legal/regulatory frameworks/legislation related to transnational placements schemes (if any) undertaken by foreign (EU) trainees in the Member State. Legal and administrative barriers in relation to transnational placements

For transfer and recognition of the knowledge acquired during practical training by graduates of vocational and technical schools, MECTS developed a methodology, approved by Minister's Order no. 4931/2008, which certifies compliance with the mobility and quality requirements of the Leonardo da Vinci programme, pursuant to which the Europass mobility certificate is issued, according with the Decision of the European Parliament and Council 1720/2006, regarding the Life-long Learning Programme.

International placements raise for such students the problem of having the traineeships recognised or equivalated upon return to their countries.

2.2 Definition of traineeships and trainees

In Romania, the words 'trainee/stagiar' and 'traineeship/stagiatura' is used in principal for the graduates of a higher education.

The general length of the traineeship is six months from commencement of a graduate's first regular assignment in the profession (according to the Labour Code Act).

Traineeships for high school and university students mean (according to law) the practical work conducted by pupils and students according to their curricula, and determining the students' capacity to apply in practice the theoretical knowledge acquired in the course of scholastic education.

A trainee is any pupil or student undertaking practical activities for the purpose of reinforcing his/her theoretical knowledge, and for developing the practical skills required in the field of work for which he/she is preparing.

A traineeship organiser means any pre-academic or academic educational establishment that gives both scholastic education and practical training.

As traineeship partner may be any corporate business, central or local public institution, or any other legal entity the business scope of which corresponds to one or several of the qualifications provided in the National Classification of Occupations published by the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection, and entitles such entity to join in the practical training of secondary and tertiary students.

Practical training of secondary and tertiary students is subject, in point of structure and schedule, to a framework contract or a co-operation agreement between the traineeship organiser and the traineeship partner. The standard format of such a contract/ agreement is given: a) for the pupils/students in technical and vocational education and training in the Order of the Minister of education, research, youth and sport n° 1702/ 6.08.2007, b) for higher education students in the Order of the Minister of education, research, youth and sport n° 3955/9.05.2008, c) for the pupils/students and higher education students which attend medical pre-university and higher education institutions in the common Order of the Minister of public health and the Minister of education, research, youth and sport n° 140/1515/2007.

Educational establishments may act as traineeship organisers both for their own students and for the students of other schools or universities.

The practical training may be structured as a weekly assignment, or in blocks of several weeks at the end of a term, or at the end of the school/academic year, in line with the curriculum.

Practice is based on a syllabus or practice schedule developed by the trainee's school.

The length of the practical training, the assessment and rating methods, and the credits obtained are all described in the curriculum.

Practical training activities forming part of the curriculum are compulsory and a condition for promotion.

How is the trainee's legal situation compared to that of a regular employee and/or apprentice?

During traineeship a trainee enjoys the same rights as all the other employees, but his/her professional obligations, and, in relation to this, his/her salary, will be proportionally lower than those of long-standing employees.

During the traineeship stage, trainee pupils and students don't have an employee status, even if sometimes (in practice) it is possible that the company/institution may recompense their contribution during the work performed.

2.3 Legal provisions about aspects of traineeships

Trainees doing practical work as part of their secondary or tertiary education plan, the trainee's educational establishment and any establishment's traineeship partner (be it corporate business or public institution) are bound by law to observe the terms and conditions of the contracts or co-operation agreements they must enter into.

These terms and conditions cover the duties devolving upon:

- **The traineeship partner:** appoint a tutor; brief the trainee on the labour security regulations and work safety rules; provide the technical means the trainee needs in order to acquire the skills; ensure access to occupational health care; assess the trainee's work and to rate it according to established standards.
- **The traineeship organiser:** appoint a member of the teaching staff to take charge of the practical training. The teacher and the tutor appointed by the traineeship partner will then agree on the practice topics and the skills to be acquired by the trainee, in accordance with the applicable vocational training standard and school curriculum.
- **The trainee:** compliance with the labour security and safety at work standards; confidentiality of the information to which the trainee gains access during training; abidance by the syllabus/practice schedule, etc.

Legal and/or administrative barriers in relation to traineeships and traineeships undertaken by foreign (EU) students

No information available.

3. Availability of and Access to Traineeships

3.1 Statistics/Quantitative Information about traineeships

Compulsory practical training as provided by curricula of pre-academic and academic students

High school students, as well as students of trade schools and vocational/technical schools have to undertake a number of hours of compulsory practical work during their education, varying with the specifics of each curriculum.

Currently, high school² and vocational school students are youths aged between 15 and 18 years. Of the entire population in this age group, a proportion of 74.9 per cent was enrolled in schools in the school year 2004/2005. The rate had increased to 81.3 per cent by the 2009/2010 school year. Among the female population of the same age group, school attendance was higher at 77.1 per cent and 82.5 per cent, respectively.

Official statistic data indicate that the number of youths attending high school has been on the rise: 773,800 in the 2004/2005 school year, and 837,700 in 2009/2010. Females accounted for 54.5 per cent and 50.0 per cent, respectively.

The proportion of students in comprehensive high schools³, where practical training holds a lower share of the learning time, accounted for 47.8 per cent in 2004/2005, and for 41.1 per cent in 2009/2010.

² Forms 9th to 12th, or 13th, in pedagogical schools, which prepare primary school teachers – school masters

³ In Romania, they are called 'theoretical' and cover the entire range of subjects

The students attending vocational high schools (technical, agricultural, veterinary, and business schools), where practical training holds a higher share in the curricula, accounted for 45 per cent in 2004/2005, and for 53.4 per cent in 2009/2010 (Table A 2 in Annex).

The number of students enrolled in trade and vocational schools tends to decrease: there were 289,000 individuals in 2004/2005, and 115,000 in 2009/2010. Female students holding a share of 37.9 per cent and 36.8 per cent, respectively (Table A 3 in Annex).

The age group 19 to 23 years and over includes students of tertiary education, post-high-school education or post-secondary non-tertiary education, and foremen schools. In this age segment, the number of enrolled students was also growing: from 45.7 per cent in 2004/2005 to 59.3 per cent in 2009/2010 (with higher ratios for the female students: 50 per cent and 64.8 per cent, respectively).

For this category of students, the curricula provide a greater number of hours of compulsory practical training.

Post-secondary non-tertiary school and foremen schools were attended by 48,700 students in the school/academic year 2004/2005 and 62,600 students in 2009/2010; with female students representing a higher proportion: 63.1 per cent and 72.2 per cent (respectively) of the total number of students on record (Table A 4 in Annex).

Statistical data indicate a total number of students of 650,300 and 775,300 in the academic years 2004/2005 and 2009/2010; with female students holding a majority of 54.9 per cent and 55.3 per cent (Table A 5 in Annex).

The structure and duration of traineeships vary with the specialisations taken by tertiary students.

Traineeship during after graduation of tertiary studies

As a general rule, laid down in the Labour Code, all graduates of higher education institutions are deemed to be trainees/on probation during the first six months from commencement of employment. In Romania, the total number of graduates from higher education institutions doubled between the academic years 2004/2005 and 2008/2009, from 108,500 to 214,800 (Table A 6 in Annex).

International mobility traineeships

During the period 2007-2012, for example, the number of Erasmus Romanian students doing company placement abroad increased from 426 in 2007/2008 to 865 in 2009/2010. The average monthly Erasmus grant for each student increased from €427 in 2007/2008 to €469 in 2009/2010⁴.

- The information regarding the number of Romanian students' beneficiaries of Leonardo da Vinci Programme placements are presented in Table A 7 in the Annex.
- In addition to these, a growing number of youths gain admission to EU or non-EU universities abroad, based on individual applications.
- To round up the picture, doctoral and post-doctoral school projects started receiving funding since 2009 from the European Social Fund, the Sectoral Operational Programme for Human Resources Development (SOP HRD) 2007 – 2013, Priority Axis 1 '*Education and vocational training in support for economic growth and the development of a knowledge-based society*', Key Area of Intervention 1.5 '*Doctoral and post-doctoral programmes to support research*'. Scholars receiving doctoral and post-doctoral grants must take international mobility traineeships of a minimum three months in a university

⁴ Lifelong Learning Programme, Education and Culture DG,
http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc/stat/0910/countries/romania_en.pdf.

or research institute in an EU Member State. Such traineeships are financed from the European Social Fund and from national resources.

3.2 Sectors where traineeships are prevalent Profile/Patterns of traineeships

Practical training is a mandatory component of curricula in both academic and pre-academic vocational and non-vocational education.

After graduation from an academic institution, in addition to the six-month compulsory probation period stipulated in the Labour Code, the trainee may have to accomplish a traineeship tailored in length and contents to the specifics of his/her profession.

This applies to physicians and pharmacists (whose number grew in the reference period from 6,400 in 2004/2005 to 8,100 in 2008/2009); to the legal profession (where the number of graduates doubled during the same time span from 10,900 to 21,400); and to graduates of academic pedagogical studies i.e. university departments training future teachers (where the number of graduates increased from 35,200 to 66,100 during the same period).

3.3 Recruitment process of and equity of access to traineeships

The first selection and recruitment phase is the admission examination to high school (forms 9 to 12/13), trade school, post-secondary non-tertiary school, or university.

With practical training for pre-academic and academic students being a compulsory part of the curriculum, recruitment is not required. The training is organised by the student's school/university in co-operation with its traineeship partners (corporations and other entities) for all its students.

After completion of short (Bachelor's) or long-term (Master's) education, access to the labour market, including traineeships specifically for certain professions (physicians, legal practitioners, tax auditors, notaries public, teaching staff, etc.) is subject to examination.

Traineeships abroad under EU programmes like '*Life-long Learning*', '*Erasmus Mundus*' and '*Youth in Action*' (for the period 2007-2013, as approved and regulated by Government Decision 67/2007) are subject to selection based on criteria set forth in the financing agreements entered into between the National Agency for Community Programmes in Education and Vocational Training (Agenția Națională pentru Programe Comunitare în Domeniul Educației și Formării Profesionale, ANPCDEF) and the sender institution, with the strict observance of the principles of transparency, equal treatment, and conflict of interests.

Applicants for doctoral and post-doctoral scholarships for projects financed from the European Social Fund for Human Resources Development (SOP HRD) are selected by examination in the same terms of transparency, equal opportunities, and avoidance of conflict of interests.

After admission, the duty to make the arrangements for international traineeships resides with the project beneficiary, in partnership with establishments/ universities in other EU Member States.

Extent to which it is a common practice in the Member State that young people who possess a vocational degree actively seek and undertake traineeships, variations between type of vocational education and training and sectors.

One can hardly say that employers have made it a practice of offering graduates of vocational schools the chance of taking on-the-job training in their companies.

SOP HRD 2007-2013, Priority Axis 2 '*Linking Life-long Learning and Labour Market*', Key Area of Intervention 2.1 '*Transition from School to Active Life*', includes financing of practical training, and vocational guidance and counselling activities aimed at increasing employability.

The projects co-financed by ESF under KAI 2.1 are implementing practical training/traineeships only if they are included in the **curricula**. The projects could be submitted by schools, universities, county school inspectorates, NGOs, chambers of commerce etc.

3.4 Evolution of traineeships over time and impact of recent economic crisis on traineeships

In recent years, a novelty for the vocational and practical training component of education has been the possibility to receive financial contributions from the European Social Fund, via the SOP HRD 2007-2013.

With money constraints limiting the chances for both corporate businesses and trainees to cover practical training requirements, the European source of funding came as a relief (including for the money incentives paid to trainees) and has boosted the number of participants.

The economic crisis drastically diminished the corporations' interest to hire new labour, and, in consequence, to offer on-the-job training.

On the other hand, the new National Education Act provides for subsidies from the central budget differentiated by the rank assigned to higher education institutions, proportional to certain performance criteria.

As such, the number of places in some (lower rank) of the state universities, will be reduced; and candidates in excess of the set number will be admitted for a fee. In other words, such students will pay tuition, which shall include the practical training.

Beyond the negative consequences of these new rules some analysts anticipate that there may be one positive effect: induce more interest in students for practical training since they pay for it.

3.5 Financing of traineeships

Under Traineeship Act 258/2007, regarding the practical training of secondary and tertiary students, educational establishments receive an additional subsidy equal to 5 per cent of the annual amount allocated to each student. These additional amounts are exclusively assigned to traineeship requirements. Tertiary and pre-tertiary educational establishments transfer to their traineeship partners, under the contracts entered therewith, the traineeship amounts for each student.

Students that pay tuition fees must also cover the costs of the practical training.

When the post-graduation six-month probation/trainee period is completed, the trainees become regular employees.

According to Government Emergency Ordinance 58/2001, the post-graduation training period for physicians, pharmacists, and dentists is one year, and must have the structure described in the methodological rules of the Ministry of Public Health (Ministerul Sănătății Publice, MSP), which also lays down the places available in each of the certified health establishments. The accredited medical establishments, by examination, choose the best candidates for traineeship, and enter one-year individual employment contracts with them.

For the payment of the salary due to each trainee, the medical establishment receives a monthly amount covering 70 per cent of such net monthly salary (no more than 50 per cent of the national net monthly average salary) from the unemployment benefit fund, and the balance of 30 per cent from the public health insurance fund.

As mentioned above, some funding may also come from the SOP HRD 2007-2013.

Through Priority Axis 2 'Linking Life-long Learning and Labour Market', key area of intervention 2.1, 'The transition from school to active life' from Sectoral Operational Programme for Human Resource Development (SOP HRD) 2007-2013, starting with 2008 and until October 2011, on the Authority of Management SOP HRD website, we identified as accepted for funding approximately 128 strategic or grant projects, which enclosed practical training sessions.

The total amount of these projects was of approximately €213 million (using the annual exchange rate RON/EUR, published by National Bank of Romania), of which from the European Social Fund €181.6 million, from the national budget €13.4 million and the contributions of the beneficiaries €11.8 million.

The total value of accepted projects in 2008 was of approximately €10.3 million, in 2009 €12.3 million, in 2010 and 2011 over €190 million.

The amount of eligible costs for one strategically project is of €500,000 – €4,999,999 and for one grant of €50,000 – €499,999.

Among the eligible activities for grant projects (according with the Call of proposals from September 2010) there are enclosed:

- Practical training sessions enclosed in the compulsory curricula for students of upper secondary national educational establishments (practical training sessions organisation, identification of the companies or partners institutions in Romania or in other European Union Member State, establishing the conditions for practical stages development and the evaluation of the results obtained by students, distribution of pupils by groups, concluding the practical stages conventions, preparing and distributing the support documentation for the stages and workplace learning, etc.).
- practical training sessions enclosed in the compulsory curricula for students of tertiary national educational establishments at potential workplaces (practical training sessions organisation in Romania or in other European Union Member State, identification of the companies or partners institutions, including those of pedagogical training for future teachers, , preparing and distributing the support documentation for the stages and workplace learning, evaluation of the practical stages' results, exchange of experience and good practices dissemination, etc.).
- The length of a grant is of minimum six months and maximum two years. The target group (composed of at least 75 people) is represented by students of upper secondary and tertiary national educational establishments (EU citizens and with the legal place of residence in Romania) enrolled in the national education system and the personnel with tutorial attributions from companies/organisations.

3.6 Public perceptions about traineeships

Due to the very low pay trainees receive, traineeships do not enjoy popularity among trainees or the public at large. In fortunate cases, a post-graduate trainee is paid a maximum of two national minimum wages (approximately €300 /month). Most trainees are paid a monthly 600-700 lei gross per month (€140-165), and these are none others than physicians, legal practitioners, teaching staff, etc.

Students in most of the higher education sections of universities have their own representative bodies and members on the board (the academic senate). These representative bodies share, as a rule, the responsibilities for traineeships. Although, generally, secondary and tertiary students are not affiliated with trade unions, the teachers' unions have a say in respect of curricula and traineeships. The Government and the administrative bodies are represented through the MECS, and the universities are represented through the Romanian Council of University Rectors.

In the past decade, there has been bitter dispute over the share of gross domestic product (GDP) to be allotted to education. In theory, the budget act sets the allocation to 6 per cent, but in practice the money has never been there to cover it. Teachers' pay has been another topic of fierce debate, not to mention the endless controversies on the countless attempts to reform the educational system in every respect, including length and syllabuses.

The latest version of the National Education Act was no better than its preceding versions in bringing stakeholders to a consensus, which is why it was adopted this year through an extra-parliamentary procedure, under the Government's own responsibility.

4. Practices and Content of Traineeships

4.1 Traineeships as part of education and/or labour market entry and integration for young people

Framework syllabuses are based on the following structural pattern: 1. common stem – TC, 2. differentiated curriculum – CD, 3. curriculum for local development – CDL.

The first two tiers cover the compulsory disciplines/modules taught in each basic field of study, and the number of hours allocated to each of them. A curriculum for local development lays down the number of hours allocated for curricula responding to the interests of each educational establishment, and developed in partnership with interested business corporations.

Framework syllabuses for the 9th form (the first level of lower secondary education) of day and evening technical courses provide (according to Minister of Education Order [OMECS] 3411/16.03.2009) 90 hours (30 hours/week, for three weeks), for practical training adapted to local needs.

The 10th form (the second level of lower secondary education in technical high schools), has been restructured so as to enable its graduates to obtain a Level 2 vocational qualification upon completion of lower secondary education. The change is aimed at creating favourable conditions for long-term employment of graduates, and at helping them to acquire:

- general technical competencies needed for continuous adaptation to the demands of employers and the dynamics of the labour market;

- transferable key competences needed for social and vocational integration all through active life.

The framework curricula for the 10th form (lower secondary education) of day and evening courses in technical schools (OMECTS 3081/27.01.2010) provides 90 hours of training (30 hours/week, for three weeks).

The same Order provides that the practical training will be compulsory for the students who wish to obtain a Level 2 vocational qualification certificate.

Based on the number of approved applications, students are grouped, for practical training purposes, in classes for each type of qualification. Classes should be comprised of an average number of 25 students, with a maximum that may not exceed 30 students per class, and a minimum that may not be less than 15 students per class.

A special roll is maintained to record the students' attendance of and performance in technical training.

OMECTS 3646/2011 approved the syllabuses for the practical training sessions required to obtain a Level 2 vocational qualification, upon completion of the 10th form. There are 16 basic fields of study, which branch off into 33 areas of general education, and 131 Level 2 trades/qualifications, namely:

- basic fields: mechanics (11 fields of general education, and 39 trades/ qualifications)
- electromechanical engineering (2 fields of general education, and 11 trades/ qualifications)
- electronics and automation (1 field of general education, and 2 qualifications)
- industrial chemistry (1 field of general education, and 6 qualifications)
- building materials (1 field of general education, and 4 qualifications)
- electrical engineering (1 field of general education, and 10 qualifications)
- construction, installation and public works (5 fields of general education, and 14 qualifications)
- agriculture (1 field of general education, and 8 trades)
- forestry (1 field of general education, and 1 trade)
- trade (1 field of general education, and 2 qualifications)
- tourism and catering (2 fields of general education, and 3 trades)
- food industry (1 field of general education, and 9 trades)
- wood working (1 field of general education, and 5 trades)
- textiles and leatherwear (1 field of general education, and 11 trades)
- printing technology (1 field of general education, and 3 trades)
- human body aesthetics and hygiene (1 field of general education, and 1 trade)
- media production (1 field of general education, and 1 trade).

For example, to qualify as a **lathe operator**, the basic field of study is mechanics, and the specific field of study is the cold processing of metals. The practical training plan provided by the curriculum for a Level 2 qualification consists of 720 hours (distributed over six months x four weeks/month x 30 hours per week) and is formed of the following modules: Module I – Turning machinery and tools (240 hours, of which 96 hours for technical laboratory work, and 144 hours of practical skills); Module II – Gauging tools and callipers for turning (120 hours, of which 48 hours for technical laboratory work, and 72 hours for practical skills); Module III – Metal turning techniques (240 hours, of which 96 are assigned

to technical laboratory work, and 144 to practical skills); Module IV – Ergonomics of metal turning operations (120 hours, of which 48 hours for technical laboratory work, and 72 hours for practical skills). In brief, almost two thirds (432) of the 720 curricular hours are assigned to practice on-the-job, and the remaining 288 hours to laboratory work.

The syllabus sets out the details for all 24 weeks, 120 days, and six hours/day; every week, the first two days are reserved for six hours of laboratory work, and the following three days are scheduled for six hours of practical work.

Each module defines: the levels of competence, and the means to measure student performance; how to quantify the acquired knowledge and skills by assessment criteria; the thematic contents of training; the minimum material resources required to complete a module; proposals for teaching, learning, and evaluation methods, and recommended readings.

In respect of how the practical training as a component of the curriculum should be organised, OMECTS 3313/2009 (regarding the approval of curricula) determines the number of hours for the specific theoretical subjects, for practical training, and for the traineeships provided for the technological curricula. For example, in a **school of crafts and trades**, a number of 630 hours is assigned to the 15 fields of study in the **10th form**. The 180 hours of practical training are condensed in six weeks, five days/week, and six hours/day. The time balance between theory, technical laboratory work, and practical training varies with each field of study (Table A 8 in Annex).

Other examples:

The **11th form in a technical high school**, the direct route, (i.e. the normal, four-year cycle) is assigned an annual number of 516 hours for 36 qualifications as technician. Of these, the condensed practical training session consists of 120 hours (30 hours/week, in four weeks), and the curriculum for local development has 66 hours (two hours/week, for 33 weeks).

The **12th form in a technical high school**, the direct route (for 36 qualifications as technician), is assigned an annual number of 522 hours, of which a condensed session of 150 hours is reserved for practical training (30 hours/week, for five weeks), and 66 hours are devoted to the locally developed curriculum (two hours/week for 33 weeks).

The curriculum of a **12th form in a technical high school**, the recovery route (an extended, five-year, cycle, for finalists of the 8th form who fail the graduation exam, and are given the chance of an extra, preparatory, year), for 36 qualifications as technician, includes 516 hours, of which 120 hours are allocated to a condensed practical training session (30 hours/week in four weeks), and 66 hours are allocated to the locally developed curriculum (two hours/week, for 33 weeks).

And last, the current curriculum of a **13th form in a technical high school**, the recovery route, for 33 qualifications as technician, provides a total annual number of 522 hours, of which 150 hours are allotted to a condensed practical training session (30 hours/week in five weeks), and 62 hours are reserved for the curriculum for local development (two hours/week in 31 weeks).

The successful completion of the 12th form in a normal four-year cycle and of the 13th form in an extended five-year cycle is recognised as a **Level 3** qualification.

Traineeships as components of bachelor's and master's degrees (short-term and long-term studies) are regulated by the Academic Tertiary Studies Act 288/2004, and OMECTS 3955/2008. Under these two pieces of legislation, the mandatory practical training period must be at least one week, and may not exceed 12 months, for the entire cycle of short- or long-term studies. The length of the traineeship depends on the specialisation, and on the options of each educational establishment. The academic institutions providing

practical training arrangements decide on the educational aims, the skills to be acquired, and the structure of the practical sessions, duly described in the traineeship portfolio.

The successful completion of a traineeship fetches the student a number of transferable credits (1.5 credits for a one-week practical training session/stage, and a maximum of 30 credits for a semester, and 60 credits for one year). The transferable credits so earned are entered in the Addendum to the Graduation Diploma (in accordance with the Europass Decision 2241/2004/EC of the European Parliament and the Council).

The situation as regards traineeships which form part of international youth exchange programmes, eg AIESEC, Erasmus, VSO, etc.

Traineeships taken by **students in other EU Member States** as part of the Life-long Learning Programme (Decision 1720/2006/EC) will be recognised as practical training programmes; the practice organiser and the tutor will take care that the requisite Mobilipass certificate is issued, provided that the trainee fulfilled all the obligations assumed under the framework traineeship agreement.

Medical students are subject to specific regulations.

Whether traineeships form part of private/public/third sector organisations' recruitment policies.

In general, traineeships are not viewed by employers as a labour recruitment tool.

A representative of the Centre for Excellence in Vocational and Technical Education was recently commenting on the difficulties encountered by educational authorities in persuading employers to accept undergraduate trainees and to develop training partnerships as part of their labour recruitment policy. Employers show reluctance to traineeship schemes even when such schemes are financed with money from the European Social Fund, Key Area of Intervention 2.1, Transition from school to active life, which provides money incentives for employers.

Nonetheless, students' interest in vocational and technical education at high school level has been constant, and even growing in recent years, which is not the case of teenagers' interest in crafts and trades schools.

Formal/informal evaluation procedures at the end of a traineeship

During the practice sessions, the tutor and the teacher/professor in charge of the training component keep a permanent monitoring and evaluation chart for each student. Some of the most important criteria are: the student's level of technical knowledge, behaviour and capacity to integrate in the company's daily activity (in respect of discipline, timeliness, accountability to the tasks assigned, observance of the company/public institution's internal rules of order, etc.). At the end of the module/traineeship, the tutor and the teacher/professor in charge of the practical training make an assessment of the competence acquired by the trainee, based on: the evaluation chart, an oral examination/interview, and a practical test. The overall score of this evaluation will be considered by the traineeship teacher for the student's final mark.

All along the training, and upon completion thereof, the trainee must have, ready for inspection, a traineeship notebook, which is part of his/her portfolio, and must indicate: module title, practical training title; practised competencies; activities conducted during traineeship; personal remarks on such activities. When evaluation is complete, a traineeship report must be made.

At the end of a traineeship, the students who successfully completed all modules gain the right to sign up for the **Level 2**, respectively **Level 3** qualification certification examination, which must be administered in accordance with the methodology approved by order of the minister of education.

4.2 Issues about employer practices as regards traineeships

A survey commissioned by the PACT Foundation, under a SOP HRD project, into '2009 Traineeships by Students of the Polytechnical University, Automation and Computer Department', which also reflects students' opinions on how training was conducted in 2009, shows that 49 per cent of them considered the practical training as very good, 38 per cent described it as good, and only 8 per cent termed it as just satisfactory.

In its turn, the 'Practice how to learn, and learn how to practice' project (ID 20143) reveals that 31 per cent of high school trainees found the equipment at the training site very good, 38 per cent as good, 25 per cent as satisfactory, and 5 per cent as poor and very poor.

High school trainees' opinions on how the practical training was co-ordinated are distributed as follows: 26 per cent were very satisfied; 46 per cent moderately satisfied; 26 per cent considered it acceptable, and only 2 per cent were rather dissatisfied.

Academic trainees' opinions on the technical equipment at the training site were divided as follows: 25 per cent very good, 41 per cent good, 27 per cent satisfactory and 7 per cent poor and very poor. With regard to co-ordination, they were: 21 per cent very satisfied, 42 per cent moderately satisfied, 30 per cent considered it acceptable, and 6 per cent were rather dissatisfied.

In other words, no data on record indicate that there are sectors where employers have a questionable reputation in respect of training practices.

5. Trainee's Rights and Terms and Conditions

As a general rule under the Secondary and Tertiary Students Training Act 258/2007, practical sessions/stages for secondary and tertiary students are governed by a framework contract or co-operation agreement between the educational establishment concerned and the traineeship partner.

Practical training may be evenly distributed during the weeks of a school year, or it may be condensed at the end of a semester or year of studies, as prescribed in the curriculum.

The trainees are admitted to the practical activities at the site of the traineeship partner only if such activities are in tune with the specifics of their specialisation, if they help them improve knowledge and skills, and only after they have been duly briefed on labour security and fire prevention rules.

During the training period, the traineeship partner (company or institution providing the training premises) may hire a trainee according to the laws in force, by way of a fixed-term employment contract, in exchange for a pay that can be negotiated.

The traineeship partners must evaluate the trainees' knowledge and skills in full abidance of the applicable syllabus and practical training portfolio.

OMECTS 1702/2007, which approves the standard format of the traineeship co-operation agreement for the practical training of secondary vocational and technical students in industrial ventures and public institutions; and OMECTS 3955/2008, regarding traineeships for students of short- and long-term academic courses, clearly stipulate that, during the entire length of a training session, the trainee maintains the status of student or candidate to a bachelor's or master's degree of the educational establishment with which he/she is enrolled.

As to payment rights and social security obligations during traineeship, there are several options:

- The traineeship partner and the trainee enter into an employment contract according to the Incentives for Students Employment Act 72/2007. An employer that hires secondary and tertiary students during school holidays may receive, for each student, upon request, a monthly financial incentive equal to 50 per cent of the social reference indicator, payable from the unemployment benefit fund. The balance from the incentive amount (which, at present, stands for some 70 per cent of the national gross minimum wage, i.e. RON 470, equivalent to €110) and the pay agreed upon, which may not be lower than the national minimum gross salary (approximately €160), shall be borne by employer. The maximum period for which the incentive may be paid is 60 days in a calendar year. The obligation to pay social security contributions resides with the employer.
- The trainee receives a scholarship for a project that qualifies for financial assistance from the Social European Fund.
- The trainee receives scholarship for other types of projects, funded from other sources.
- The trainee does practical training free of any employment contract and of any involvement in a project.

In the last three cases, the trainee is not entitled to demand pay from the traineeship partner. A traineeship partner may, however, pay the trainees an allowance, a bonus, or other benefits in kind (payment of travelling costs to and from the training site, meal coupons, free access to in-house canteen, etc.).

All trainees are covered for social security indemnification in the event of work accidents and professional hazards, for the entire length of the practical training session; they have free access to occupational health care services (Labour Code), and the traineeship partner is bound by law to indemnify a trainee who suffers a material loss sustained during and caused by practical training.

After completion of the educational level, the trainees on probation enjoy the rights of a permanent employee.

The probation period at work is different for some categories of graduates: physicians, lawyers, legal counsels, tax auditors, teachers, etc. For physicians, dentists and pharmacists, the probation period lasts for one year, in accredited medical facilities, and is subject to a one-year individual employment contract. Salaries are paid by the medical facility, from the unemployment benefit fund (70 per cent of the net base salary agreed upon), and from the state health insurance fund (30 per cent).

Employees on probation are not entitled to unemployment benefits for a period of two years after the end of the probation period, unless they produce evidence that no employment offers adequate to their qualification are/were available. In other words, after completion of the one-year traineeship, they may not accept employment in another medical establishment.

Remuneration and variations across sectors and types of traineeships and existence of minimum wage

During the first year of traineeship, the pay of the trainees is practically equal to the national minimal wage, a step back from the two national minimal salaries per month for higher education graduates, and from the 1.5 national minimal salaries for secondary school graduates, provided by the National Collective Agreement that ended on 31 December 2010.

Under the pressure of the economic and financial crisis, and of the terms of the loan agreement entered into with the International Monetary Fund, the European Commission, and the World Bank, and bound by the provisions of the revised Labour Code and of the

Social Dialogue Act. One of the austerity measures taken in 2011 was to abolish the national collective agreement, the provisions of which were minimal and applicable to all workers in the Romanian economy.

Any measures taken by Government to strengthen the trainee's rights, terms and conditions?

The Students Employment Act 72/2007 provides for financial incentives to corporations and public institutions that hire students during school holidays.

SOP HRD includes axes designed to provide finance for the practical training of secondary and tertiary students, particularly with effect from 2010. The purpose is to finance supportive measures helping the transition from school to active life, such as financial incentives to employers, and scholarships to secondary and tertiary students during practice sessions.

6. Quality Assurance of Traineeships

Education Quality Act 87/2006 provides the general framework of the regulatory principles that govern the educational system.

The responsibility for quality assurance in education resides with the two government agencies created for the purpose: the Romanian Agency for Assurance of Quality in Academic Education (Agenția Română pentru Asigurarea Calității în Învățământul Superior – ARACIS), and the Romanian Agency for Assurance of Quality in Pre-academic Education (Agenția Română pentru Asigurarea Calității în Învățământul Preuniversitar – ARACIP).

The two agencies have developed quality assurance standards, guidebooks, and methodologies for the two components of the educational system, all of which include regulation of practical training/traineeship.

For vocational and technical education, a National Framework for Quality Assurance in Vocational and Technical Education was developed, with the assistance of the PHARE Programme(s), and under the coordination of the National Centre for the Development of Vocational and Technical Education (Centrul Național pentru Dezvoltarea Învățământului Profesional și Tehnic – CNDIPT) a National Framework for Quality Assurance in Vocational and Technical Education (Cadru Național de Asigurare a Calității în Învățământul Profesional și Tehnic, CACIPT) was devised.

Quality assurance in education has for a purpose, inter alia, to introduce European good practices, monitoring and evaluation by external and internal experts, and to focus on beneficiaries (secondary and tertiary students, employees), etc.

Quality of education is a concept based on the principles laid out in the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework (EQARF) in respect of methodology, aim, planning, implementation, assessment and evaluation, feedback and change, and conforms to the standards and recommendations for the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

CACIPT, for example, has been thought out both for the entire system and at the level of education providers.

To attain the aim of reaching European objectives regarding the quality of vocational and technical education, all stakeholders, with an emphasis on employers, are involved actively for the purpose of a better coordination between demand and supply of training services, improvement of employability among secondary and tertiary students, and broadening access to training for vulnerable groups.

Local school inspectorates are the bodies in charge of monitoring quality, and of validating the self-assessment reports of educational entities under their territorial/county area of responsibility, when the quality requirements are fulfilled.

Peer evaluation, monitoring, and accreditation of each curriculum (including the compulsory practical training components) are carried out by ARACIS and ARACIP.

Starting from the 2006/2007 school year, for example, the quality assurance instruments (self-assessment guide-book, and peer evaluation guide-book) for the vocational and technical education are approved by order of the minister of education.

An inspection system has been in place since 2007 to verify vocational certification exams, for the purpose of ensuring that the examination procedures are objective, and that the certificates so obtained are a true reflection of the graduates' skills.

Based on the Recommendations of the European Network for Quality Assurance in Vocational and Technical Education (ENQA-VET), the National Group for Quality Assurance (Grupul Național pentru Asigurarea Calității – GNAC) was founded in Romania, in 2006, as a technical structure for partnership and inter-institutional coordination (MECTS, Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection, MMFPS, ARACIP, The National Council for Adult Training (Consiliul Național de Formare Profesională a Adulților – CNFPA), The National Centre for Pre- university Personnel Training (Centrul Național de Formare a Personalului din Învățământul Profesional și Tehnic, CNFPIPT), and CNDIPT).

CNDIPT assists educational establishment in improving their activities by developing quality assurance procedures, and monitoring of compliance therewith, collection and dissemination of good practices.

The PHARE TVET RO2006 Project permitted the development, in 2009, of a 'Guidebook of Good Practices in Quality Assurance and Training in Vocational and Technical Education'.

The guidebook describes good practices for the cooperation between schools and businesses in the organisation of the practical training.

Is considered to be good practice if it, for example:

- Helps reduce the number of absences from the practice classes, and eliminates late coming to daily practical programme; lack of complaints and accidents; improves students' scoring; increases the rate of employability of the fresh graduates; involves businesses in contributions to the technical endowment of schools (Tehnofrig Industrial Vocational School in Cluj Napoca, and the Tehnofrig company – manufacturer of refrigerating and food processing equipment).
- Capacitates students for their integration in a real working environment; reduces absence from practical training classes; motivates students through scholarships provided by the training partner; secures a job (Environmental Protection Technical School in Cluj Napoca, in partnership with Ecolor IKEA).
- Supplies the trainees with the textiles and accessories enabling them to tailor their own garments, during or outside the practical training classes; creates employment opportunities for the graduates (The School of Crafts and Trades in Cleja, Bacău County, and M&M Fashion).
- Generates mobility for 16 trainees to take part in a practical course in Germany for automotive mechanics and automotive electricians, together with two of their teachers (The Alexandru Pop Industrial Vocational School in Reșita, and companies in Germany, through project finance under the Leonardo da Vinci Programme).
- Enables the practical training, for seven consecutive years (2001/2002 – 2007/2008), of 980 trainees, of whom 463 were granted scholarships by the company; provides free working outfit; contributes to the drafting of the syllabus, of the locally developed

curriculum, based on the proposals made by the training partner ; provides the funding for the school's magazine, and for the graduation examinations; permits joint actions by school and company for vocational guidance to students during and after school , towards acquiring the necessary skills to work in the company, etc. (The Anghel Saligny Vocational School in Tulcea, and STX Europe Tulcea).

- Leads to a 100 per cent absorption of graduates by the labour market; provides refresher courses to the specialised teaching staff; enriches the technical endowment of the schools where it is applied; induces confidence in the training opportunities; generates satisfaction among students, employers, and parents; contributes to the endowment of the school's workshops; provides the working outfit; covers travelling and meal costs for the students; creates scholarships (3 vocational schools and a comprehensive high school in Constanța County, in partnership with Daewoo Heavy Industries S.A. Mangalia, Constanța County).

The Life-long Learning Programme provides a mechanism that ensures quality both for the mobility of tertiary students (Erasmus), and for secondary students (Leonardo da Vinci): the Working/Training Agreement, which is a three-party document, signed by the sending institution, the host institution, and the trainee. The agreement stipulates: the duties of all parties during the training session; the skills that the trainee is supposed to acquire; the evaluation and certification procedures.

All secondary students doing training under the Leonardo da Vinci Programme are issued, upon completion, a Europass Mobility Certificate, which is part of the Europass portfolio.

7. Overall Assessment as regards Traineeships

7.1 Effectiveness of traineeships

The students involved in traineeships and interviewed by the authors of the *Study on 'Student Practice. Survey of 2009 Traineeships by Automation and Computer Section Students of the Bucharest Polytechnical University'* (conducted as part of a SOP HRD project initiated by the PACT Foundation – the PACT Survey), pointed out both the strong points and the weak points of practical training sessions.

As already shown herein above, 49 per cent of the students considered the practical activities as very good, and 38 per cent of them as good, because the practical contact with the profession enables them to find a job during the summer holidays and after graduation; they also ranked traineeship as the number one eligibility criterion when seeking employment; they also maintained that traineeship gave them the chance to put in practice the theory learned in school, and some went as far as stating that during training they learned more than in one semester of theoretical studies.

Among the most important reasons to do training, in the order of their importance, are: the need to gain experience and the prospect of working in a big company (70 per cent of the respondents). As to the criteria by which they chose from the traineeship options available to them, the same interviewees indicated the following: opportunity to learn; technologies used by the companies; company's reputation.

Among the training partners, 48 per cent of the companies that answered the questionnaire were very pleased with the students' work during practice, 36 per cent of them described it as good, and only 4 per cent as just satisfactory; 84 per cent of the companies termed their relationships with the universities as very good, and 92 per cent of the training partners expressed their readiness to host training in the future years, because they said they were

impressed by the trainees' level of knowledge, creativeness, and contribution to the practical projects to which they were assigned.

A sociological study on 'Students' Traineeships in 2010', coordinated by senior researcher degree I Anca Tomescu, Project ID 20143, (financed from European Social Funds, under SOP HRD, and commissioned by EDU-TIM European Consultancy, January 2011) (EDU-TIM Study) writes that: 'the great majority of secondary students say that vocational practice makes it easier for them to find a job' (78 per cent of a batch of 423 students); it is also noteworthy that a large number of the questioned tertiary students said they did traineeship outside their educational establishment (77 per cent of the 400 respondents), and most of them said they had already signed a traineeship contract/agreement (75 per cent).

Approximately 21 per cent of the tertiary students said they were remunerated for their practical work.

The PACT study also reveals some of the weak points:

- In respect of the importance attached to the practical sessions by their curricula, only 24 per cent of the tertiary students said that the practical hours were used entirely or to a large extent as allocated to the various years of study, and 51 per cent of them said that the time for practical training was used to a much lesser degree than planned or not at all.
- Although the national curriculum makes practical training mandatory, only 43 per cent of the students admitted they actually did practical training during their studies outside the university, 31 per cent said they did not take part in traineeships provided by their universities, and 26 per cent did not answer the question.
- The low number of traineeships offered by training partners adequate to the students' specialisations compel the students to look for alternative ways of filling the time allotted to practical training.
- Many of the graduates who were asked to indicate the strong and the weak points of the course of studies they attended pointed to traineeship as a weak point, and advised that the partner companies should offer accessible traineeships, and that courses of lectures should be adapted to the current demands of the labour market. They recommended that adequate stress should be laid in the future on the practical training ('more practical work', 'better communication with potential employer, and more numerous practical sessions'; 'similarly compulsory practical stage for all the tertiary students').

Some conclusions arising from the EDU-TIM Study, with regard to secondary students:

- 65 per cent of the respondents did their practical training outside the school, and 35 per cent of them within the school
- 70 per cent of them said that the gains of the practical work were never put to good use
- the system of incentives for secondary students doing training seems to be inadequate: only 12 per cent of the respondents said they were rewarded for their work (incentives being: marks, ratings, pay, the chance to get a job, congratulations, praise, encouragement, a meal, etc.)
- of all 420 respondents, only 44 per cent of them said they took an end-of-practice exam.

With regard to tertiary students, the EDU-TIM Study showed that:

- 77 per cent of them said they did practical training outside the university, and of these, only 75 per cent signed a contract/agreement, while 51 per cent of them said that the results of the practice were not put to good use
- only 21 per cent of the students were rewarded for their work during the practical training; 73 per cent of them said they were not rewarded

- 35 per cent of the students said they did not know what the curriculum stipulated in respect of traineeship
- some 15 per cent of the students said that they did not take any end-of-practice exam.

The students also made proposals for the improvement of practical training, from which we selected a few:

- uniform traineeship guides
- uniform instruments to monitor and measure the results of students' practical work, including the format of the training report that the tutor makes at the end of practice
- diversification of the means to reward the students, and assistance for the secondary and tertiary students to bring to fruition the results of their work
- better information for the students with regard to the local, national, regional and European conditions on the labour market.

Annex

Table A 1: Number and structure of population aged 15 to 34 by social and professional criteria

	15 – 24 years				25 – 34 years			
	1996		2010		1996		2010	
	Thousand persons	%						
Total population, of which:	3,788.2	100.0	2,989.5	100.0	3,194.5	100.0	3,393.5	100.0
-school population	1,325.4	35.0	1,514.6	50.7	61.7	1.9	117.9	3.5
-employed population	1,401.1	37.0	720.4	24.1	2,480.7	77.7	2,457.3	72.4
-unempl'd population	382.5	10.1	204.1	6.8	196.1	6.1	208.8	6.2
-others	679.2	17.9	550.4	18.4	456.0	14.3	609.5	17.9

Source: Based on Romanian Statistical Yearbook, National Institute of Statistics (Institutul Național de Statistică, INS), Bucharest, 2010.

Table A 2: Secondary (high school) students, by specialisation (thousand persons, and %)

	2004/2005		2009/2010	
	Thousand persons	%	Thousand persons	%
Total secondary education students enrolled, of whom:	773.8	100.0	837.7	100.0
- female students	422.0	54.5	419.5	50.0
- comprehensive high schools and colleges	369.5	47.8	344.4	41.1
- technical high schools	292.2	29.6	297.9	35.6
- agricultural, forestry, mountain farming, and veterinary schools	30.4	3.9	22.8	2.7
- business and administration schools	88.4	11.4	126.2	15.1
- pedagogical schools	10.6	1.4	4.7	0.6
- art schools	14.3	1.8	13.8	1.6
- sports schools	15.3	2.0	14.3	1.7
- other high schools	16.1	2.1	13.6	1.6

Source: Authors' own compilation based on data from the Romanian Statistical Yearbook, National Institute of Statistics, Bucharest, 2010.

Table A 3: Students attending trade/vocational schools, by branches of the national economy (thousand persons, and %)

	2004/2005		2009/2010	
	Thousand persons	%	Thousand persons	%
Total students enrolled, of whom:	289.1	100.0	115.4	100.0
- female students	109.7	37.9	42.5	36.8
- manufacturing industry	144.5	50.0	57.8	50.0
- energy, water supply	34.2	11.8	0.3	0.3
- mining industries	2.1	0.7	0.7	0.6
- constructions	18.2	6.3	9.8	8.5
- transport and communications	19.9	6.9	10.0	8.7
- agriculture, forestry	27.0	9.3	9.8	8.5
- tourism, retail, and catering	33.5	11.6	22.1	19.2
- other branches	9.7	3.4	4.9	4.2

Source: Authors' own compilation based on data from the Romanian Statistical Yearbook, National Institute of Statistics, Bucharest, 2010.

Table A 4: Students enrolled in post-secondary non-tertiary schools, and foremen schools, by branches of the national economy (thousand persons, %)

	2004/2005		2009/2010	
	Thousand persons	%	Thousand persons	%
Total students enrolled, of whom:	48.7	100.0	62.6	100.0
- female students	30.7	63.0	45.2	72.2
- manufacturing industry	3.6	7.4	4.3	6.9
- energy, water supply	0.7	1.4	1.0	1.6
- mining industries	0.5	1.0	0.4	0.6
- constructions	0.6	1.2	2.5	4.0
- transport and communications	2.1	4.3	2.8	4.5
- agriculture, forestry	1.5	3.1	1.5	2.4
- tourism, retail, and catering	3.1	6.4	2.4	3.8
- finance, accounting, administration	4.0	8.2	0.4	0.6
- health	27.1	55.6	43.2	69.0
- other branches	5.5	11.3	4.1	6.5

Source: Authors' own compilation based on data from the Romanian Statistical Yearbook, National Institute of Statistics, Bucharest, 2010.

Table A 5: Students enrolled in tertiary education, by specialisations (thousand persons, and %)

	2004/2005		2009/2010	
	Thousand persons	%	Thousand persons	%
Total students enrolled, of whom:	650.3	100.0	775.3	100.0
- female students	356.7	54.9	428.6	55.3
Technical	161.9	24.9	168.9	21.8
Economic sciences	188.5	29.0	224.0	28.9
Legal sciences	59.6	9.2	112.6	14.5
Academic pedagogical studies (training future teachers)	195.2	30.0	210.1	27.1
Medicine and Pharmacy	35.0	5.4	50.0	6.4
Arts	10.1	1.6	9.7	1.3

Source: Authors' own compilation based on data from the Romanian Statistical Yearbook, National Institute of Statistics, Bucharest, 2010.

Table A 6: Tertiary education graduates, by specialisations (thousand persons, and %)

	2004/2005		2008/2009	
	Thousand persons	%	Thousand persons	%
Total graduates, of whom:	108.5	100.0	214.8	100.0
- female students	63.0	58.1	128.0	59.6
Technical	24.1	22.2	49.3	23.0
Economic sciences	30.4	28.0	67.4	31.4
Legal sciences	10.9	10.0	21.4	10.0
Academic pedagogical studies	35.2	32.4	66.1	30.8
Medicine and Pharmacy	6.4	5.9	8.1	3.8
Arts	1.6	1.5	2.4	1.1

Source: Authors' own compilation based on data from the Romanian Statistical Yearbook, National Institute of Statistics, Bucharest, 2010.

Table A 7: Romania - Annual number of participants at Leonardo da Vinci Programme mobility projects

Call	Target group	2007*	2008*	2009*	2010	2011*
Participants	Initial vocational training	0	636	922	1076	1046
(*planned)	People on the labour market	391	165	249	128	192
Participants	Initial vocational training	919	799	1105	n/a	n/a
Realised till 01.01.2011	People on the labour market	187	95	227	n/a	n/a

Source: Detailed statistics for Mobility, Transfer of Innovation, Partnership projects and Preparatory visits by country in the years 2007 - 2011, European Commission, http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/doc/stat/romania_en.pdf

Table A 8: Annual number of tuition hours for the 10th form in crafts and trades schools

Field of study/ number of qualifications/trades	Total hours	Din care:		
		Theoretical instruction and technical laboratory work	Practical training	Condensed practice (6 hrs/day, 5 days/wk, for 6 wks)
Mechanics/11	630	270	180	180
Electromechanical Engineering/3	630	270	180	180
Electronics and Automation /1	630	270	180	180
Industrial Chemistry/1	630	360	90	180
Building materials/3	630	270/90	180/360	180
Electrical engineering/1	630	270	180	180
Construction, installation, and public works /5	630	180	270	180
Agriculture and forestry/4	630	270	180	180
Trade /1	630	300	150	180
Tourism /2	630	270	180	180
Food industry/4	630	270	180	180
Wood working /3	630	270	180	180
Textiles, leatherwear/4	630	90	360	180
Printing technologies/1	630	270	180	180
Human body aesthetics and hygiene /1	630	180	270	180

National Report on Traineeships Sweden

Henna Harju and Matti Tuusa, Rehabilitaton Foundation

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1. Traineeships as part of Member State's Youth Policy Measures

1.1 Overview of current situation of young people and traineeships as part of youth policy measures

Young people are oriented towards higher education in Sweden; after the completion of upper secondary school; 40–45 per cent of pupils continue to higher education. Unfortunately, early entry into the labour market is being delayed by a slow transition from upper secondary school to tertiary institutions, and prolonged duration of studies in higher education adds to the problem. As a consequence, students are being encouraged to begin and complete their higher education sooner, in consideration that early graduation and entry into the work life are seen beneficial for both the individual and the society.

The employers' organisations prefer diversification of wages and flexibility on the job market, but the trade unions call for the utilisation of traineeships and active labour market employment measures (ALMPs).¹ In the future, young people will have earlier access to the measures and more support in finding employment. Unemployed young people without upper secondary or compulsory education will temporarily receive a higher study grant in order to complete their studies. In addition, an apprentice initiative with new forms of fixed-term employment will be introduced for pupils enrolled on apprenticeship programmes and apprentice probationary employment is going to be available for people up to 23 years of age.²

Informal learning is considered an important element of lifelong learning in Sweden, and non-formal education, which by definition is structured but takes place outside formal educational institutions, is recognised alongside with formal education. For example, knowledge and skill gained via free adult education and clubs can be important when making life choices. Voluntary activities, international project work and international exchange programmes are significant non-formal and informal learning channels for young people.³

According to the Budget Bill of 2011, young people are one of the most disadvantaged groups in the labour market (Prop 2010/11:1). According to Nordström Skans (IFAU 2009), the Employment Protection Act favours the older part of the labour force, because employers have to lay off the most recently hired employees first. Often these are young people, and that makes the young workforce more vulnerable.⁴

As a result of the global economic crisis, the situation of young people in the Swedish labour market has deteriorated rapidly and youth unemployment reached its highest post-war level in 2009. The youth unemployment rate in Sweden is among the highest in Europe. In the second quarter of 2010 the unemployment rate for individuals aged 15–24 rose up to 29.7 per cent from a 2008 unemployment rate that was about 10 per cent. According to Statistics Sweden 15 per cent of the unemployed in the age group 15–24 had been 'long-term unemployed' (unemployment for more than 27 weeks) in 2009.^{5 6}

¹ European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2009. Sweden – A country profile

² Statement of Government Policy 5 October 2010

³ Regeringskansliet – Government Offices of Sweden, Youth Policy

⁴ Sweden: EIRO CAR on 'Helping young workers during the crisis: contributions by social partners and public authorities.'

⁵ Sweden: EIRO CAR on 'Helping young workers during the crisis: contributions by social partners and public authorities.'

⁶ EEO Review: Youth Employment Measures, 2010, Sweden

Several factors decrease the frequency and duration of the unemployment among young people, such as work experience, higher educational attainment and improved labour market conditions. A successful transition from the educational system to the labour market is clearly dependent upon educational attainment. Therefore, early drop-out from the compulsory educational system or secondary educational attainment is associated with more erratic employment patterns and higher unemployment rates.⁷

The duration of unemployment differs between age groups. For young people, the average duration of periods of unemployment (including ALMP) is shorter than for other groups, and also less for the highly educated and for females. The unemployment rate decreases with the level of education for all age groups.^{8 9}

There is an on-going debate on the situation of young workers in Sweden. The debate noted that after a methodological change made by Statistics Sweden (SCB) from 2005 students seeking work were also included in unemployment statistics. Several social partners have argued that this makes figures misleading. In the second quarter of 2010 51 per cent of all the unemployed people in the age group of 15–24 were full-time students seeking work. The facts concerning youth unemployment seem to imply that although youth unemployment rates are almost double compared to those of adult population, youth unemployment may not be such a serious social problem.¹⁰

The minimum rates of pay are not regulated by law in Sweden, but collective bargaining agreements determine the wage level. The parties in the collective bargaining agreement are responsible for drafting its content and are under obligation to comply with the agreement. The government is not involved in the supervision of the terms of pay in Sweden.¹¹

The Ministry of Education and Research has been responsible for coordinating the government's youth policy and issues concerning youth organisations and international cooperation on youth issues since January 2011. Coordinating the governments youth policy presupposes active cross-sectoral efforts within the government Offices and other agencies. The actions consist of a great deal of contact with actors including youth organisations and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions. Also the central government agency, the National Board for Youth Affairs, is an important actor in implementing youth policy.¹²

The two main objectives of Swedish youth policy are: 1) all young people are to have genuine access to influence, and 2) all young people are to have genuine access to welfare. In relevant policy areas, a youth perspective is mainstreamed on the basis of these overarching objectives. The follow up of youth policy focuses on how the overarching objectives are achieved within each of the following prioritised areas of activity: education, employment, culture and leisure, participation and health and security.¹³

The Swedish government works actively to improve the conditions of life of young people through a wide range of measures such as strengthening the empowerment of young people through education and training; through a three-year initiative to address gender differences within the school system; through extensive programme reforms within the educational field aimed at making it easier for all students to achieve the knowledge requirement; and through investing in apprenticeship training and strengthening the links between education and the labour market. The government assists young people in

⁷ EEO Review: Youth Employment Measures, 2010, Sweden

⁸ Youth Unemployment Task Force, Statements and comments, Sweden

⁹ Sweden: EIRO CAR on 'Helping young workers during the crisis: contributions by social partners and public authorities.'

¹⁰ Sweden: EIRO CAR on 'Helping young workers during the crisis: contributions by social partners and public authorities.'

¹¹ Eurofound

¹² Regeringskansliet – Government Offices of Sweden, Youth Policy

¹³ Regeringskansliet – Government Offices of Sweden, Youth Policy, Fact Sheet

becoming established in the labour market and prevents social exclusion through lowering employer's fees for the employment of youth; through granting additional tax-relief for the employment of young people who have been unemployed for six months; through providing young people with intensified support at an early stage of unemployment through a special labour-market policy programme; through initiating in-depth analyses of the situation for young people in the districts that are marked by social exclusion; and through a law that requires municipalities to follow up on young people who are not participating in education or in the labour market.¹⁴

The upper secondary school reform took place at autumn 2011 when the first pupils entered the new upper secondary school system. The new system involves two programmes: a preparatory programme for higher education and a vocational programme. To prepare pupils better for working life, there will be more emphasis on programme-specific and vocational subjects on vocational programmes. The preparatory programmes for higher education, which aim at preparing pupils better for studies in higher education establishments, are also being improved. Upper secondary apprenticeship training in cooperation with labour market actors is also being introduced. The government wants to invest a total of €85 million in creating 30,000 apprenticeship places in upper secondary school, over the period of 2011–2014.¹⁵

The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education was established to develop and oversee a new form of publicly funded vocational education at post-secondary level: higher vocational education. The programmes in higher vocational education cover a wide range of vocational areas. Their common objective is to provide advanced vocational education and training that is tailored to labour market needs. From the outset, companies and business sector partners participate in the development of these programmes, and each higher vocational programme has a steering group in which social partners and representatives from working life form a majority.¹⁶

Trade unions have called for greater use of active labour market policies such as traineeships to improve the employability of young people. Incomplete educational achievements are seen as part of the explanation for discrepancies between youth labour market supply and employer demands. Because of that, both sides of the collective bargaining emphasise the importance of improving the processes of matching competencies between employers and potential employees.¹⁷

Sweden participates in international youth policy cooperation within the EU, the UN, the Council of Europe, the Nordic Council of Ministers, the Barents Euro-Arctic Council and the Council of the Baltic Sea States. The objectives of the national youth policy also highlight international cooperation in the field of youth policy.¹⁸

Sweden also participates in a large number of international cooperation projects in the areas of responsibility covered by the Ministry of Education and Research. The aim of these projects is to exchange experience across national borders. Within the framework of the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP), students are given the opportunity to study in another European country.¹⁹ The Lifelong Learning Programme is a European Commission programme for cooperation within the field of education and training across Europe. LLP comprises of four sectoral programmes on school education (Comenius), higher education (Erasmus), vocational training (Leonardo da Vinci) and adult education (Grundtvig). It also includes the Study Visits programme (for all educational sectors). Among other things, the

¹⁴ Regeringskansliet – Government Offices of Sweden, Youth Policy, Fact Sheet

¹⁵ Regeringskansliet – Government Offices of Sweden, Youth Policy

¹⁶ Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency 'New Skills for New Jobs'

¹⁷ Sweden: EIRO CAR on 'Helping young workers during the crisis: contributions by social partners and public authorities.'

¹⁸ Regeringskansliet – Government Offices of Sweden, Youth Policy, Fact Sheet

¹⁹ Regeringskansliet – Government Offices of Sweden, International cooperation

programmes support project cooperation and mobility, and they are administrated in Sweden by the International Programme Office for Education and Training.²⁰

Table 1.1: Main traineeship programmes & initiatives

Main traineeship programmes & initiatives	Brief description	Web link (if available)
ALMP	<p>'Youth employment guarantee' is a scheme for young people aged 16–25 years old. The scheme aims at helping young people in finding a job more quickly, or entering into the regular education system. The job guarantee is restricted to unemployed young people who have been registered with the Public Employment Service continuously for three months. The focus in the scheme is on job-search activities which can then be combined with work experience placements and education. The guarantee covers a large variety of individually tailored active labour market measures. Participants in work experience schemes receive unemployment compensation. 42% of the expenditure on ALMPs is spent on training.</p>	<p>http://www.arbetsformedlingen.se/download/18.4b7cba481279b57bec180001142/uga_sok.pdf</p> <p>http://www.eu-employment-observatory.net/resources/reviews/NationalArticles/Sweden-YMRvw2010.pdf</p>
Higher vocational educational college	<p>Higher vocational education courses (HVEC, YH) last from 6 months and upwards. Qualified vocational courses (KY courses) last 1-3 years. About a third of the training is workplace experience known as Learning in Work (LIA - lärande i arbete). Courses are run by municipalities, private educational providers and university colleges in cooperation with employers. The courses are designed in consultation with employees and are tailored to meet the labour market needs. The remuneration varies between schools and employers, the student can be paid for the traineeship, or not. Students are eligible to apply financial aid that covers the traineeship period.</p>	<p>http://www.skolverket.se/2.3894/in_englisch/2.877/2.884/what-is-higher-vocational-education-1.109213</p> <p>http://www.yhmyndigheten.se/english</p>

²⁰ Regeringskansliet – Government Offices of Sweden, Education and Training 2020

Main traineeship programmes & initiatives	Brief description	Web (if available)	link
University	The traineeship policies vary between universities. Most programmes contain vocational elements/traineeship which can assist graduates in progressing to appropriate professional destinations, though these elements range in type and delivery from simple business, and professional study elements to specific subject-focused live projects. The traineeship is required for certification for the certain occupation and is compulsory for example in degrees of Master of Science in Medicine, Master of Science in Psychology, Master of Science in Pharmacy, Bachelor of Education in Careers Counselling and for a Graduate Diploma in Specialist Nursing. Also the remuneration of traineeships varies between faculties. Students are eligible to apply financial aid that covers the traineeship period.	http://www.mah.se/gps/internship	http://www.lunduniversity.lu.se/upload/staff/higher_education_ord.pdf
Upper secondary school (APU = Arbetsplatsförlagd utbildning)	Upper secondary school is divided into college preparatory programme and into vocational programme. Vocational programme includes 15 weeks of traineeship over 3 years. The vocational programmes education may be offered also as upper secondary apprenticeship training, with at least half of the teaching time being placed at one or more workplaces. The traineeships are usually not remunerated. Students are eligible to apply financial aid that covers the traineeship period.	http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/10485	http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/26/55/40755122.pdf

2. Legislative Framework for Traineeships

2.1 Legal framework for and governance of traineeships

In Sweden, the parliament (riksdag) and government have legislative responsibility for education. Respectively all public education comes under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education and Research (Utbildningsdepartementet). This is responsible for preschool education, childcare for school children, compulsory school, upper secondary school, independent schools, adult education, liberal adult education, post-secondary education, universities and university colleges, research and student financial assistance. Therefore also the vast majority of vocational education and training system in Sweden falls under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Research. There are a few exceptions; for example the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries (Jordbruksdepartementet) is responsible for University of Agricultural Sciences, Ministry of Employment

(Arbetsmarknadsdepartementet) is responsible for employment training, and the Ministries of Defence and Justice are responsible for training of officers and police.²¹

There is no specific legislation concerning traineeships, but at the college and university level traineeships are regulated as a part of the Upper Secondary School Ordinance (2010:2039), Higher Education Act (1992:1434) and Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100). Advanced vocational training comes under act 2001:239 and is regulated by two further regulations (2001:1131) and (2006:906) with other regulations defining such matters as state aid or the relevant authorities powers. Individual schools and universities regulate their own traineeships. The new Education Act was applied in Sweden from 1 July 2011 onwards and it covers education from pre-school to adult education. The Act is a coherent legislative act to provide a foundation for knowledge, choice and security in all forms of education and other activities covered by the Education Act. However, for adult education, it will enter into force from 1 July 2012. For underage trainees, the regulations issued by the Work Environment Authority on working hours for minors apply.^{22 23}

The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education is the central government agency that is responsible for matters concerning higher education. However universities and university colleges are separate government entities and they make their own decisions about the content of courses, admissions, grades and other related issues.²⁴ The Higher Education Act contains provisions about the higher education institutions that are accountable to the government, local authorities or county councils. These provisions are often supplemented by the regulations in the Higher Education Ordinance.²⁵ The Authority for qualified Training is responsible for Advanced Vocational Education.²⁶

According to the Swedish Work Environment Act all people (from the first grade to tertiary level) undergoing education are equated with employees (Chapter 1), which means that the Work Environment Act also applies to them. The act applies to all practical and theoretical work done by the pupils. Therefore also the trainees are equated with employees when they are at working place even if they are not recruits. However the rules concerning safety delegates and safety committees, as well as certain rules on age limits, working hours and registers related to medical examination do not apply. But there are special provisions concerning pupils' safety delegates.²⁷

In Higher Education Ordinance²⁸ regulates that for a degrees of Master of Science in Medicine, Master of Science in Psychology, Master of Science in Pharmacy, Bachelor of Education in Careers Counseling and for a Graduate Diploma in Specialist Nursing the student has to perform a mandatory traineeship. The traineeship is required for certification for the certain occupation. For a Graduate Diploma in Psychotherapy the student must have been engaged in part-time work with psychotherapeutic duties during their education. According to Upper Secondary School Ordinance (2010:2039) vocational programmes in upper secondary school shall include traineeship that lasts 15 weeks over the three-year period.²⁹

Students from EU countries as well as students outside the EU can apply equally for traineeships in Sweden. Only exception is that non EU -members has to apply for a work

²¹ CEDEFOP 'Vocational education and training in Sweden. Short description'

²² Regeringskansliet – Government Offices of Sweden, Youth Policy

²³ CEDEFOP 'Vocational education and training in Sweden. Short description'

²⁴ Sweden.se / Education

²⁵ Högskoleverket - Swedish National Agency for Higher Education, Laws and Regulations

²⁶ EQUAVET- Sweden

²⁷ Swedish Work Environment Authority. The Work Environment Act

²⁸ Higher Education Ordinance (SFS 1993:100)

²⁹ Sveriges Riksdag. Svensk författningssamling, Gymnasieförordning (SFS 2010:2039)

permit as well. This application should be prepared and the permit obtained before the student enters Sweden.³⁰

For foreign medicine students there is a possibility to go through traineeship in Sweden if he has received medical education in an EU country where practical service after graduation is a condition for full registration. If the student has a diploma from another Nordic country, he can contact an employer directly to undergo Swedish traineeship. If the trainee has received his education in Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal or United Kingdom he needs a formal decision from the National Board of Health and Welfare (Socialstyrelsen). If the student studied in an EU Member State where doctors of medicine can receive license to practice immediately after graduating, he is not eligible to undergo Swedish traineeship. In that case the student must directly apply for a Swedish license to practice. The traineeship follows the same rules as for students who received their medical education in Sweden.³¹

The most important laws on active labour market measures targeted at young people are the law on youth employment guarantee (Förordning (2007:813) om jobbgarantin för ungdomar), the activation benefit law (Förordning (1996:1100) om aktivitetsstöd) and the law on unemployment benefits (Lag (1997:238) om arbetslöshetsförsäkring).

2.2 Definition of traineeships and trainees

The concept of a traineeship appears in legislation and official documents and also in national language and common understanding.

According to the Swedish Work Environment Act all people undergoing education are equated with employees, this includes also the trainees. However the rules concerning safety delegates and safety committees, as well as certain rules on age limits, working hours and registers in connection with medical examination do not apply. But there are special provisions concerning pupils' safety delegates.³²

Upper secondary apprentice training is governed by a contract between the student, the school and the company, which does not represent employment, as the student is not paid for his services. If apprentices are employed, they are considered as an employee.^{33 34} If the traineeship (as in upper secondary school) is unpaid the trainee is considered as a student, not an employee. The rules concerning working time applies only for those who are employed.³⁵

2.3 Legal provisions about aspects of traineeships

Upper secondary schools are responsible for arranging traineeships (APU) for students and verifying the quality of training. Before a traineeship at upper secondary school (APU), the school is obliged to select suitable training environments in which the students are not exposed to any risks and to inform the employer about the student's knowledge, skills and maturity. Under the Work Environment Act § 2, the schools are responsible for formally notifying about serious injuries and incidents that might happen during the traineeship. The shared responsibility of the school and the workplace is to define the trainees' working hours, set tasks based on trainees' abilities, define the nature and extent of mentoring,

³⁰ CEMS Internship Guide 2011-12

³¹ Socialstyrelsen - The National Board of Health and Welfare / Medical internship

³² Swedish Work Environment Authority. The Work Environment Act

³³ UEAPME 'Quality in Apprenticeship in the European Union'

³⁴ Regeringskansliet - Government Offices of Sweden, Upper Secondary School.

³⁵ Arbetskyddsstyrelsens författningssamling, Mindreåriga, AFS 1996:1

decide who will provide proper equipment needed during the traineeship and notify the work safety delegate about the trainees work tasks and knowledge.³⁶

In APU-traineeship the employer is directly responsible for the trainee. The working hours at the workplace also apply to the student, unless the school principal decides otherwise. The rules of APU-traineeships are much like the rules concerning summer jobs in Sweden. The employers responsibility is to 1) ensure that the traineeship is carried out duly, 2) ensure that trainees receive proper orientation and guidance, 3) ensure that trainees are working under the direction and supervision of an appropriate person, 4) ensure that supervisors are adequately trained for their assignments, 5) ensure that the supervisor has enough time to fulfill the assignment and 6) ensure that incidents or accidents involving the trainees are reported to school.^{37 38} Concerning the upper secondary apprenticeships, the enterprises are responsible for all costs and charges associated with the apprentice. The theoretical and practical parts in school are publicly financed. The schools are responsible for insurance against accidents.^{39 40}

On the website of Umeå School of Business and Economics (USBE) there is a list of things that should be considered when doing traineeship. There should be a signed and approved traineeship plan showing; that there is a supervisor at work, a contracted training period, the agreed tasks during the traineeship period and how these tasks are to be followed up. The internship plan should be designed and signed by the employer, student and the Internship Coordinator at USBE. This would be irrespective of whether the company/organisation offering the traineeship was found via USBE or privately by the student.⁴¹

Higher vocational educational college students participating vocational training (YH, KY) have personal injury insurance, which is signed by the Agency for Advanced Vocational Training.⁴²

According to the Directives (1982:1077) on covering compensation of public funds for damage caused by students in state-administered higher education during traineeships at non-state workplaces, the student has certain immunity from responsibility in the case of traineeships, if the traineeship is described in the degree programme or course syllabus. If the traineeship has been described only in the syllabus, compensation is only provided if the traineeship has been given a certain amount of points within the course. Compensation will not be provided if the employer has an insurance scheme which covers the injury. Compensation is awarded for personal and material damage which has been inflicted on the employer. Compensation will also be awarded for pure property damage which has been inflicted on the employer through criminal actions.⁴³

3. Availability of and Access to Traineeships

3.1 Statistics/Quantitative Information about traineeships

In Sweden 98 per cent of those leaving compulsory schooling enters immediately upper secondary schools, and most complete their upper secondary education in three years

³⁶ Arbetsmiljöverket 'Arbetsmiljön för elever på praktik'

³⁷ Arbetsmiljöverket 'Arbetsmiljön för elever på praktik'

³⁸ Arbetsarkivstyrelsens författningssamling, Mindreåriga. AFS 1996:1

³⁹ UEAPME 'Quality in Apprenticeship in the European Union'

⁴⁰ Regeringskansliet - Government Offices of Sweden, Upper Secondary School.

⁴¹ Umeå University - Umeå School of Business and Economics - Internships for Master's Programmes

⁴² The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education

⁴³ Halmstad University / Education

(Skolverket, 2006a).⁴⁴ During the academic year 2010/2011 there were 385,712 young people attending upper secondary school.⁴⁵ Because about half of the students attending upper secondary school study on one of the 12 optional vocational programmes, where there is at least 15 weeks of mandatory traineeship,⁴⁶ it can be counted that about 50 per cent of all students in upper secondary school takes part in traineeship.

Statistics regarding traineeships in higher education seem to be very difficult to find and it is very difficult to estimate the number of traineeships which are part of university degrees, because the traineeship policies vary between higher educational institutions. However, the number of students in higher education institutions in Sweden rose by about 50 per cent between 1995 and 2005. In the autumn semester 2010, there were just over 369,000 students in first (undergraduate) and second (Master's) cycle programmes. The proportion of women was 59 per cent and men 41 per cent of all HEI students. About 10 per cent of all students were incoming students. Half of all students in the autumn semester 2010 were 24 years old or younger, about 25 per cent were between 25-30 and 25 per cent over 31 years old.^{47 48}

The transnational mobility across Swedish borders has increased continually when it concerns the number of incoming students, which has nearly tripled in ten years, whereas the number of outgoing students has almost remained in the same level at the same time as the number of HEI students has increased in Sweden. That means that the proportion of outgoing students has actually decreased over the past years.⁴⁹ In academic year 2009/2010 there were about 42,000 international students studying in first or second-cycle programmes in Swedish higher education and 26,500 Swedish students studying in higher education abroad.⁵⁰ The International Programme Office for Education and Training (Internationella Programkontoret) offers multiple choices of academic exchanges and cooperation across national border for Swedish students. In academic year 2009/2010 there was total 2,997⁵¹ outgoing Swedish students via Erasmus programme, of which 269 students were on transnational traineeship. Of the outgoing students in Erasmus programme 62.9 per cent were women, and 37.1 per cent were men. In the academic year 2009/2010 there were a total of 9,500 incoming trainees and exchange students via the Erasmus programme, of which 712 were completing transnational traineeships in Sweden. Of all the outgoing and incoming students 11.5 per cent belonged to the age group 21–23 , 60.4 per cent belonged to the age group 24–26, 21.6 per cent were 27 to 29 years old and 6.5 per cent of the students were over 30 years old.^{52 53} In 2011 via IAESTE programme there were 32 outgoing trainees, of which 9 were women and 23 men. Via IAESTE there were 26 incoming trainees, of which 6 were women and 20 men.⁵⁴ In 2009 there were 558 participating in initial vocational training and 87 people on the labour market via the Leonardo da Vinci programme (Table A 1 in annex).⁵⁵

In ALMP the new participants were to a great extent from the group aged 25–34. During 2007, 57 per cent of the new participants were younger than 35 years old. As was the case in earlier years, men dominate the younger age groups. Industry dominated programmes in

⁴⁴ OECD: 'Learning for Jobs'

⁴⁵ Skolverket Gymnasieskolan – Elevstatistik. Läsåret 2010/2011.

⁴⁶ Regeringskansliet - Government Offices of Sweden, Upper Secondary School

⁴⁷ Högskoleverket - Swedish National Agency for Higher Education - Higher education in Sweden

⁴⁸ Swedish National Agency for Higher Education. 'Swedish Universities & University Colleges. Short Version of Annual Report 2011'

⁴⁹ Arbetsgivarens syn på utlandserfarenhet

⁵⁰ Swedish National Agency for Higher Education. 'Swedish Universities & University Colleges. Short Version of Annual Report 2011'

⁵¹ This number includes both transnational traineeships and student exchange.

⁵² Internationella Programkontoret

⁵³ European Commission – Education & training – Erasmus statistics - Sweden

⁵⁴ IAESTE –utbytet 2011 - Statistik

⁵⁵ LLP 2007–2013 Leonardo da Vinci Subprogramme - Sweden

ALMPs have increased the most during the corresponding period. The highest share, 21 per cent, was within programmes for manufacturing and handicrafts.⁵⁶

3.2 Profile/Patterns of traineeships

In Sweden there is mandatory general practice (allmäntjänstgöring) in medicine, which is a requirement for obtaining a medical licence. Its duration is at least 18 months, but usually it lasts a bit longer, around two years in most cases. After general practice, the student can take a test to receive their medical licence. This is followed by specialisation practice (specialisttjänstgöring), the equivalent of residency.⁵⁷ The titles 'psychologist' and 'practiced psychologist' are restricted in law in Sweden. These titles can only be used after receiving a licence from the government. The basic requirements are a five year specialised course in psychology (equivalent of a Master's degree) and 12 months of supervised practice.⁵⁸ According to Higher Education Ordinance,⁵⁹ pharmacy students must have completed six months of work experience as a pharmacist for their degree.

According to IAESTE statistics there were differences in the length of traineeships depending if the traineeship was done in Sweden or outside the Swedish borders. The most common length for a traineeship completed abroad was 1–2 months (44 per cent of all traineeships abroad), whereas students who came to Sweden to accomplish their traineeship stayed 3–6 months (46 per cent of all traineeships).⁶⁰ The average duration of Erasmus traineeships was 4.6 months in the academic year 2009–2010.⁶¹

3.3 Recruitment process of and equity of access to traineeships

The trainee recruitment process should follow the rules of any other recruitment. Students in universities and university colleges are responsible for finding their own traineeship placements. The employer should recruit the person who is the most suitable for the job. Regarding upper secondary school traineeships, the school is responsible for choosing training places where the trainee will not get exposed to any risks.⁶²

In Sweden, individual schools and universities have relatively wide freedom to decide on their own organisation, allocation of resources and course offerings within the frames of Higher Education Ordinance and Upper Secondary School Ordinance. Schools and universities thereby also regulate traineeships.

There is an on-going debate on the situation of young workers in Sweden. According to Engblom (TCO 2010) young women and men show different behavioural tendencies in the labour market and therefore a gender perspective is of relevance when reviewing traineeships.⁶³

3.4 Evolution of traineeships over time and impact of recent economic crisis on traineeships

Several educational and training measures have been taken as the aftermath of the global economic crisis. In 2009, the government increased the number of places in post-secondary

⁵⁶ Statistics Sweden, Education in Sweden 2009.

⁵⁷ Wikipedia medicine internship Sweden

⁵⁸ Socialstyrelsen - The National Board of Health and Welfare

⁵⁹ Higher Education Ordinance (SFS 1993:100)

⁶⁰ IAESTE –utbytet 2011 - Statistik

⁶¹ European Commission – Education & training - Erasmus

⁶² Arbetsmiljöverket 'Arbetsmiljön för elever på praktik'

⁶³ Sweden: EIRO CAR on 'Helping young workers during the crisis: contributions by social partners and public authorities.'

vocational training (Yrkeshögskolan), in local authority upper secondary education for adults (Konvux). The government also increased the number of places in Universities and University Colleges. Aiming to encourage more people to apply to secondary adult vocational education programmes, also a temporary increase in opportunities for unemployed people over the age of 25 (regardless of previous education) was approved to obtain a higher level of post-secondary student aid in 2009 and 2010. Those who were dropped out from high school now were given an opportunity, within the framework of the *Job Guarantee*, to complete their studies. The number of places in traineeships and trainee schemes was also increased. Also the number of participants in labour market training within the framework of active labour market policy was enlarged.⁶⁴

3.5 Financing of traineeships

Usually the traineeships are unpaid in Sweden and totally free for the employer. However all Swedish citizens are eligible to apply for financial aid (studiestöd). The financial aid usually covers the traineeship period that are part of the study curriculum. Financial aid for studies refers to the various grants and loans for which students may be eligible when attending a college, university, adult secondary education programme (Komvux), folk high school or upper secondary school. The age of the applicant is one of the factors that determine the kind of aid that you may receive. The National Board of Student Aid, or (CSN), is a Swedish government agency under the Ministry of Education and Research. It is in charge of administration of all matters regarding study support in Sweden.⁶⁵

The International Programme Office for Education and Training (Internationella Programkontoret) is a government agency in Sweden that promotes academic exchanges and cooperation across national borders. They offer funding for Swedish organisations and in some cases for individuals. Their mission is to support different forms of international cooperation within education. They award all sorts of funding, ranging from grants for different cooperation and development projects to individual scholarships. The programmes are aimed at different levels and types of education: from preschool to university, vocational training and adult education.

Erasmus students may be awarded a grant to help cover travel and subsistence costs (including insurance and visa costs) incurred in connection with their placement period abroad. Students may also get financial support from the host organisation. The average monthly grant for an Erasmus trainee was €441 in 2009/2010. The total Erasmus budget for mobility actions⁶⁶ was €8,684,000 in 2009/2010.⁶⁷ The grants⁶⁸ assigned by the Leonardo da Vinci –programme totalled €3,114,615 in 2010.⁶⁹

In Sweden, participants in ALMPs receive training grants that are equivalent to unemployment compensation. Since the second half of the 1980s, it has been possible for the unemployed to requalify for unemployment compensation through participation in training programmes. However, the model was abolished from all labour market programmes in 2000. Participants in work experience schemes receive unemployment compensation.⁷⁰ Forty two per cent of the expenditure on ALMPs has been spent on training, compared to EU and OECD averages of 27 per cent and 29 per cent spent on training.⁷¹

In Sweden there are also projects that aim at creating new models of traineeships and workplace training, funded by ESF (European Social Fund). These projects aim to prevent

⁶⁴ EEO Review: Youth Employment Measures, 2010, Sweden

⁶⁵ Centrala studiestödsnämnden

⁶⁶ Including both transnational studies and traineeships

⁶⁷ European Commission – Education & training – Erasmus - Sweden

⁶⁸ Including grants for initial vocational training, people on the labour market and VET professionals

⁶⁹ European Commission – Education & training – Leonardo da Vinci - Sweden

⁷⁰ EEO Review: Youth Employment Measures, 2010, Sweden

⁷¹ IFAU: 'Does active labour market policy work?'

youth exclusion from labour market and enhance employment and creating matching labour force for employer's needs through practice periods in companies, developing new models for traineeships and developing new ways of supporting trainees during their traineeships. For example project called 'Nystart' will establish a training model, learning by doing at a workplace and a working method that will focus at the enterprise and the individual. According to the project description the method will replace exclusion with better self-esteem and contribute to a faster introduction into the labour market.⁷² The project called 'Unga Jobb' (Youth Employment) aims at improving the use of traineeship as an instrument to introducing young people to the labour market. According to the project description the project will develop methods for good traineeship and reinforce cooperation between local actors responsible for youth employment activities.⁷³

3.6 Public perceptions about traineeships

The majority of youth unemployment periods in Sweden are shorter than one month, which suggests that youth employment mainly consist of transition periods. A rise in the number of students in higher education in the last decade has also been seen as an explanation for youth unemployment figures. Many students work part time which thereby explains some of the recent rise in fixed-term and temporary employment contracts. However, it is unclear whether the rise in temporary employment contracts is a cause or an effect of youth unemployment figures.⁷⁴

The financing of traineeships in higher education varies quite a lot depending on the faculty and the subject, according to article 'Stora skillnader i praktklön' (Major differences in practice compensation), that was published on a website of Sweden's oldest student newspaper⁷⁵. For example students studying architecture can get paid up to €2,150 per month during their traineeship, whereas civil engineers do not get paid at all. Usually the amount of the wage is dependent on the amount of academic credits. In general, students closer to graduation receive better compensation for their traineeship. However, there are also exceptions to this. For example, a student music teacher does not get paid for a traineeship during fourth year of studies, whereas a student of journalism gets paid for the traineeship which takes place in the second year. In the case of a journalism student, the wage is regulated by the agreement between the Journalist Association (Journalistförbundet) and the employers. After two weeks as a trainee, the salary to which the journalism student is entitled is half of the minimum wage.⁷⁶

However, in some study fields, e.g. medicine and psychology, students who have already finished their studies have to train in practice in order to get their qualifications fulfilled. Prescribed practical service (PTP) psychologists earn between €2,300–2,450 during their practice and the medical students earn even more. When it comes to psychology students, their education includes also a traineeship period without a wage.⁷⁷

⁷² ESF Project description: 'Nystart'

⁷³ ESF Project description: 'Unga Jobb'

⁷⁴ Sweden: EIRO CAR on 'Helping young workers during the crisis: contributions by social partners and public authorities.'

⁷⁵ Lundagård.se.

⁷⁶ Lundagård.se. 'Stora skillnader i praktklön'

⁷⁷ Lundagård.se. 'Stora skillnader i praktklön'

4. Practices and Content of Traineeships

4.1 Traineeships as part of education and/or labour market entry and integration for young people

The upper secondary school system is divided into two instances where a student can either prepare for higher education or receive vocational education. As of autumn 2011, there are 18 national programmes – six college preparatory programmes and 12 vocational programmes. The preparatory programmes for higher education provide basic eligibility for further studies in higher education at undergraduate level. Students on vocational programmes can obtain eligibility for higher education by studying a few extra courses. Just over half of upper secondary students choose one of the 12 vocationally-oriented programs. The vocational programmes include 15 weeks of traineeship (Arbetsplatsförlagd utbildning – APU) over the three year program. Within the vocational programmes, education may be offered also as upper secondary apprenticeship training (which in the traditional sense of the term is not common in Sweden), with at least half of the teaching time being placed at one or more workplaces.⁷⁸ ⁷⁹ The introduction of a permanent upper secondary school apprenticeship programme is expected to ease the transition from educational system into labour market.⁸⁰

After upper secondary school, students can apply to a university in order to receive a tertiary education. General academic degrees are offered by public universities and university colleges that tend to attract students on a regional basis. Besides general academic degrees, the higher education system in Sweden also provides number of professional and vocational degrees in fields such as engineering, law, medicine, music, art and acting. The university system is divided into three levels: basic level (three years) (grundnivå), advanced level (two years) (avancerad nivå), and doctoral level (forskarnivå). Master's degree education continues to be an expanding sector. At present there are around 50 institutions of higher education in Sweden. Most higher education institutions are run by the state, some by regional government, and a few are private.⁸¹ Most programmes contain vocational elements/traineeship which can assist graduates in progressing to appropriate professional destinations, though these elements range in type and delivery from simple business and professional study elements, to specific subject-focused live projects. The traineeship must be clearly linked to student's major subject. At the Department of Global Political Studies in Malmö University the student needs to have taken the credits during the previous semesters to be able to undertake a traineeship within the programme. Formal entry requirements for a traineeship course are 60 credits in the major subject.⁸² The students apply for traineeship as an optional course⁸³.

The higher vocational college provides post-secondary school education. There are two types of courses: higher vocational education courses (HVEC, YH - yrkeshögskola) and qualified vocational courses (KY - kvalificerad yrkesutbildning). Courses are run by municipalities, private educational providers and university colleges in cooperation with employers. The courses are designed in consultation with employees and are tailored to meet the labour market needs. Therefore the content and direction of the courses may vary over time depending on the needs of the labour market. The National Agency for Higher Vocational Education approves the training courses that may start. The courses are government subsidised and are entitled to issue vocational qualifications. Most of the

⁷⁸ OECD: 'Learning for Jobs'

⁷⁹ Regeringskansliet - Government Offices of Sweden - Upper Secondary School

⁸⁰ EEO Review: Youth Employment Measures, 2010, Sweden

⁸¹ Website: International Graduate

⁸² Malmö University - Internship

⁸³ Umeå University – Umeå School of Business and Economics – Internships for Master's Programmes

programmes are in the areas of 'economics, management and sales', 'technology and manufacturing', 'health and medical care' and 'social work'. About a third of the training is workplace experience known as Learning in Work (LIA - lärande i arbete). The HVEC courses last from six months and upwards. After one year course a student can get a vocational university college diploma. After two years student can get a qualified vocational university college diploma. The education must in this case include a minimum of 25 per cent learning in work. Qualified vocational courses (KY) last between one and three years and lead to a qualified vocational examination. KY courses will be available until the year 2013.⁸⁴

There are programmes that give students the opportunity to go on traineeships to foreign countries, like Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci, IAESTE (the International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience) and Sida's travel grant for traineeships. IAESTE gives students in higher education, mainly in the fields of technology and natural science, the opportunity to go on traineeships to foreign countries. Sida's travel grant is aimed at increasing the number of Swedes holding international positions in development work, for example through the UN. The scholarship provides funding for unpaid traineeships in international organisations.⁸⁵

For foreign students there are several avenues to pursue to build upon education by working as a trainee or via a traineeship in Sweden. It is possible to contact individual companies directly and ask them if they have trainee positions available. AIESEC (the international student organisation) organises the traineeship placements in Sweden. In the fields of engineering, natural sciences or other technical fields, it is possible to apply for a traineeship placement through IAESTE. In that case the process begins in the trainee's home country. For law students and young lawyers there are trainee exchanges organised by the European Law Students Association, ELSA. For medical students, trainee exchanges are organised by IFMSA (the International Federation of Medical Students Associations).⁸⁶

In 2008, Sweden introduced the 'Youth employment guarantee' scheme for young people aged 16–25 years old in order to tackle with a broad policy programme the increasing unemployment problem of young people. The scheme aims to help young people find a job more quickly, or enter into the regular education system. The job guarantee is restricted to unemployed young people who have been registered with the Public Employment Service continuously for three months. The focus in this scheme is on job-search activities which can then be combined with work experience placements and education. The guarantee covers a large variety of individually tailored active labour market measures. In the first phase, the focus is put on intensified job seeking, coaching and study and career services. In the second phase, the focus is directed towards more labour market and entrepreneurial oriented measures, such as traineeships, education, entrepreneurial support or labour market oriented rehabilitation.⁸⁷ In 2010 nearly 120,000 young people participated in the Youth employment guarantee scheme.⁸⁸

In 2010, further measures within the framework were introduced. New initiatives include the new activation measure, 'Boost' (Lyft), support for starting a business, and also vocational rehabilitation. Participants also have an opportunity to participate in the guarantee scheme part-time, so that they can use the remaining time to study in the municipal adult education system. A further initiative has also been introduced to enable unemployed young people who have not completed compulsory or upper secondary school to complete their studies.⁸⁹

⁸⁴ Skolverket – Higher Vocational Education

⁸⁵ Internationella Programkontoret - International Programme Office for Education and Training, Fact Sheet

⁸⁶ Sweden.se / Study in Sweden

⁸⁷ Arbetsförmedlingen: 'Jobbgaranti för ungdomar'

⁸⁸ Arbetsförmedlingen: 'Kort om Arbetsförmedlingen 2010/2011'

⁸⁹ EEO Review: Youth Employment Measures, 2010, Sweden

If the Youth employment guarantee does not result in an individual finding work there are other Public Employment Services measures available.

4.2 Issues about employer practices as regards traineeships

According to the SYSDÉM experts there are no sectors with a reputation of questionable practices.⁹⁰ Neither did we find any evidence of questionable practices as regards to traineeships in Sweden.

5. Trainee's Rights and Terms and Conditions

In Sweden there is no national legislation about the conditions of traineeships and trainees. At upper secondary school, college and university level traineeships are regulated as a part of the Upper Secondary School Ordinance and Higher Education Ordinances. (See chapter 2.) Finally, the schools and universities are responsible for monitoring traineeships. Trainees should act actively and inform the school immediately if any questionable practices occur during their traineeship.

In Sweden, people under 18 years old are considered as underage. For underage trainees, the regulations issued by the Work Environment Authority on working hours for minors are applied.⁹¹

In all universities and colleges in Sweden there are Students Unions (Studentkåren), that support students in case of disagreement or abuse in any matters related to their studies and therefore including traineeships.

The interests of trainees are taken up by student associations and trade unions. Young people are continually educated by trade unions about rights and responsibilities in the labour market. Trade unions also organise awareness raising campaigns using social media to attract young people. The Swedish Trade Union Confederation (Landsorganisationen i Sverige) also has a website where young people can get knowledge about rights, job seeking and how to make active changes in the workplace. Trade unions also act politically in order to put the youth labour market situation at the top of the political agenda both nationally and internationally. Trade unions have also released several reports on measures to counteract youth unemployment and employment laws' effect on youth unemployment.⁹²

Financially the participants on the 'Youth employment guarantee' scheme receive diverse amounts of benefits. While those younger than 18 are not compensated financially, the benefit levels for those aged 18-25 depends on whether they have completed upper secondary school and if they are qualified for other unemployment benefits.⁹³

6. Quality Assurance of Traineeships

There are two central government agencies under the Ministry of Education and Research which are responsible for vocational education and training. The agencies are the Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket), and the Swedish School Inspectorate (Skolinspektionen). These agencies work independently from the Ministry of Education and

⁹⁰ Sysdem Experts network questionnaire summary

⁹¹ Sveriges Riksdag. Svensk författningssamling. Gymnasieförordning (SFS 2010:2039)

⁹² Sweden: EIRO CAR on 'Helping young workers during the crisis: contributions by social partners and public authorities.'

⁹³ Sweden: EIRO CAR on 'Helping young workers during the crisis: contributions by social partners and public authorities.'

Research and determine their priorities in accordance with guidelines established by the government. The National Agency for Education is responsible for a number of the national steering documents, such as course syllabi and the criteria for grading and for monitoring that the national goals for pre-, compulsory and upper secondary schools as well as adult education are achieved. The National Agency for Education is continually developing and revising syllabi, grading criteria and other steering documents to make sure that they help to improve equivalence and achievement of goals and reflect the needs motivated by developments in society and the workplace and the needs of individuals. The agency also follows up how the steering documents are helping to increase equivalence and meet the goals. The agency also evaluates the knowledge of responsible authorities or institutions regarding the content and purpose of steering documents. By regulation, municipalities and schools must submit quality reports for which content guidelines are provided. The National Agency for Education has also developed a tool 'BRUK' to support the assessment and development of quality that uses indicators. Furthermore an award for school quality has been developed to encourage quality improvement. The School Inspectorate's main task is to examine the quality and outcome of education in municipalities and independent schools and supervise their activities.^{94 95 96}

Swedish universities follow strict quality controls. Nationally certified degrees are defined by the National Agency for Higher Education which is responsible for an extensive quality assurance programme that aims to preserve and maintain high educational standards. In Sweden academic standards are world-class, and lecturers and professors are expected to remain committed to advanced research. According to figures from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Sweden spends more of its gross domestic product (GDP) on research than almost any other country.^{97 98}

At higher vocational educational college the Authority for Advanced Vocational Education has the task of securing the quality of the qualified training. The Agency supervises the courses and visits them to ensure that work is being done in accordance with contractual and statutory requirements. Advanced vocational education has published its approach to quality assurance in December 2007. It does not contain indicators, but rather offers advice on the different important aspects to be included in a quality assurance system.^{99 100}

Upper secondary schools are responsible for verifying the quality of training. Most upper secondary schools in Sweden are managed by the municipalities, which are required to establish objectives for its schools in a school plan. Most municipalities have advisory bodies: programme councils (programmråd) and vocational councils (yrkesråd) which are composed of employers' and employees' representatives from the locality. Schools get advice from the councils on matters such as provision of traineeships, equipment purchase and training of supervisors in APU. Every year the schools submit a quality review to the municipality and the municipality delivers its report on the quality review to the National Agency for Education (Skolverket). Yet the OECD report (2008) raised a concern about standards and qualification systems used in upper secondary education lacking labour market credibility.¹⁰¹ The upper secondary school reform includes a new structure for upper secondary vocational education with more emphasis on work-related subjects and skills. In order to ensure the quality of vocational programmes, there have been established councils for each vocational programme, at both national and local level. These councils identify

⁹⁴ Skolverket. About the Agency.

⁹⁵ EQAVET - Sweden

⁹⁶ CEDEFOP: 'Vocational education and training in Sweden'

⁹⁷ The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education, YH Myndighet

⁹⁸ Sweden.se / Work

⁹⁹ EQAVET - Sweden

¹⁰⁰ Skolverket - Higher Vocational Education

¹⁰¹ OECD: 'Learning for Jobs'

emerging skills needed, articulate the educational needs of business, and assist the National Agency for Education in its development of policy documents.¹⁰²

There are quality control commitments which concern both Erasmus- and Leonardo da Vinci traineeships. The commitments define the roles and responsibilities of all participants of traineeship (the sending organisation/higher education institution, the intermediary organisation, the host organisation and the student).^{103 104}

7. Overall Assessment as regards Traineeships

7.1 Benefits and drawbacks of traineeships

In Sweden, traineeships are seen extremely important both in upper secondary and in higher vocational education level. At HVEC the training is organised as a flexible form of education close to the workplace and it is adapted to the needs of working life. This means that the courses may be available for a shorter period or a longer period of time depending on the needs of the labour market.¹⁰⁵ However, there is a broad agreement among observers, students and their trainers that there is a need for a better match between education and training. For example in many occupational sectors technology is changing rapidly (such as car repair, electronics or even plumbing or tourism). Therefore teaching students about the most recent technologies and production methods is more cost-effective if it takes place in real workplaces. In addition, for example dealing with difficult customers cannot be simulated in a school environment. Traineeships also provide critical information to the student about the line of work they might or might not wish to pursue, and to employers about potential recruits. That is also the reason why the new upper secondary school system includes a new apprenticeship programme which will entail at least 50 per cent work based training.^{106 107}

In an OECD report (2008) it was recommended that Sweden needed a stronger mechanism through which the social partners could convey labour market requirements to vocational education and training providers. The report presented three arguments for this recommendation. First, stronger co-operation is a necessary support for reforms of VET, such as the development of an apprenticeship system. Second, qualifications delivered by the VET system are more valued by employers when employers are engaged in their design. Third, employers appear ready for fuller engagement. If the VET system is to meet labour market needs, it will require stronger involvement of the social partners. According to Ryan (2000) and Deissinger (2007), many research studies show that qualifications delivered by the VET system are more valued by employers if they have been consulted during the definition of standards and qualifications.¹⁰⁸

There has been public debate in Sweden on how effective the traineeships are in facilitating employment opportunities. According to statistics the difference between two unemployed groups, one whose members had a chance to undertake a traineeship and the other whose did not, was not significant when finding employment. Unpaid or moderately remunerated traineeships may also have unfavourable effect on a young person's personal or

¹⁰² EACEA: 'New Skills for New Jobs'

¹⁰³ Quality commitment for Erasmus student placements

¹⁰⁴ Leonardo da Vinci mobility quality commitment - training placements

¹⁰⁵ Skolverket - Higher Vocational Education

¹⁰⁶ OECD: 'Learning for Jobs'

¹⁰⁷ CEDEFOP: Refernet Sweden VET in Europe - Country report 2010

¹⁰⁸ OECD: 'Learning for Jobs'

occupational identity development.¹⁰⁹ It has also been criticised that youth unemployment benefits are often complemented with other forms of social assistance that include little or no work incentives.¹¹⁰

According to a Swedish study, new graduates with transnational traineeship and/or studies benefit from their experience in the labour market. For example the communicative skills, social competences, adaptability and initiative skills, which a student gains during the transnational placement, are valued high among employers. In the labour market the new graduates who have transnational experience are also a bit more likely to get employed and they have access to better career opportunities and wage than those without the international experience. There is also a difference between public and private sector. The transnational experience is more valued in the public sector than in private sector. Also bigger enterprises value the international traineeships and studies more than smaller enterprises.¹¹¹

7.2 Effectiveness of traineeships

The Swedish measure 'Youth employment guarantee' is expected to increase the focus on job seeking in the initial stage of unemployment and therefore also shorten the transition time towards work. The Swedish active labour market measures show considerable positive employment results, especially if the measures are started as early as possible and if they are targeted properly. The results tend to be more efficient among younger jobseekers and those who have vocational qualifications.^{112 113}

The goals of upper secondary traineeship (APU) are to prepare students for the labour market and for further education and training and to foster active citizenship and personal development.¹¹⁴

The trainees attending vocational and practical traineeships will gain good knowledge about the work environment within their professional fields. The practice is therefore an important part of their education and may affect their attitude towards the work environment in their future careers.¹¹⁵

7.3 Good practice examples and recommendations

Learning by doing is an internet portal where students and businesses can meet. Registered students and companies can use the service when seeking traineeship placements or trainees. Registration is free of charge and by logging in and uploading your individual or company profile people can browse the opportunities available and leave their own adverts. Portal is also a tool for students wanting suggestions on a thesis title. Students can either browse among these titles that different companies have set up or introduce an idea for a thesis and find a company who would be interested to finance the thesis.¹¹⁶

The upper secondary school reformation that has been implemented recently in Sweden emphasises the role of traineeships in upper secondary schooling. The results and impressiveness of this reform from the point of view of transition to work would be interesting to study.

¹⁰⁹ SvD Näringsliv: 'Praktik inte bästa vägen till ett job'

¹¹⁰ Sweden: EIRO CAR on 'Helping young workers during the crisis: contributions by social partners and public authorities.'

¹¹¹ 'Arbetsgivarens syn på utlandserfarenhet'

¹¹² Sweden: EIRO CAR on 'Helping young workers during the crisis: contributions by social partners and public authorities.'

¹¹³ Arbetsförmedlingen: 'Jobb- och utvecklingsgarantin - en studie av sannolikheten att få jobb under programtiden'

¹¹⁴ OECD: 'Learning For Jobs'

¹¹⁵ Arbetsmiljöverket: 'Arbetsmiljön för elever på praktik'

¹¹⁶ Learning by doing web portal

The VET system in Sweden is comprehensive. However, apprenticeship training could be more integrated with labour market. This development would mean that a trainee works as an employee on a fixed-term contract in a company and the apprenticeship training is organised as in-service training in co-operation with the employer and the training institution.

In higher education combining theoretical and practical training is very important. Traineeships should be introduced in all tertiary education curricula in Sweden, as well, related to theoretical fields of study. This would contribute to better employability of all graduates.

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Annex

Table A 1: Leonardo da Vinci – programme. Sweden - Mobility¹¹⁷

Call	Target group	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Participants	Initial vocational training	1,019	988	838	1,252	1,073
(planned)	People on the labour market	80	53	102	80	81
Participants	Initial vocational training	1019	977	558	n/a	n/a
Realised till 01.01.2011	People on the labour market	80	32	87	n/a	n/a

¹¹⁷ LLP 2007–2013 Leonardo da Vinci Subprogramme - Sweden

National Report on Traineeships Slovenia

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1. Traineeships as part of Member State's Youth Policy Measures

1.1 Overview of current situation of young people and traineeships as part of youth policy measures

In the last few years the Slovenian labour market has suffered from the unfavourable consequences of the global financial and economic crisis. In 2010 the employment rate (83.7 per cent), was about 6 per cent higher, whilst the unemployment rate (7.3 per cent) was 2 per cent lower than the EU-27 average, however, the employment dynamics are deteriorating. In 2010 employment growth in the EU-27 was -0.5 per cent, while in Slovenia it reached -2.5 per cent, which indicates increasing job losses. The employment rate of the cohort aged 15-24 is 34.1 per cent which is equal to the EU-27 average and is far above the employment rate of regional competitors (Bulgaria: 22.2 per cent, Czech Republic: 25.2 per cent, Hungary: 18.8 per cent, Poland: 26.2 per cent, Romania: 24.3 per cent and Slovakia: 20.6 per cent). The unemployment rate of this cohort shows a positive picture. It is 14.7 per cent which is below the EU-27 average by almost 7 per cent. In addition Slovenia is in a more favourable position than the other New Member States (NMS) in the region, as well (Bulgaria: 23.2 per cent, Czech Republic: 18.3 per cent, Hungary: 26.6 per cent, Poland: 23.7 per cent, Romania: 22.1 per cent and Slovakia: 33.6 per cent).

Contrary to the relatively good position of the country in terms of youth employment, the recent labour market changes have negatively affected younger employees. There is a clear tendency of 'labour market flexibilisation' which means a visible challenge for the young labour market entrants. One of the most important changes that influences the position of young employees in the labour market is the increasing share of short-term employment contracts. Temporary employment is a tool for employers to reduce their business risk by getting rid of their employees in a relatively easy way. According to Eurostat the percentage of Slovenian employees aged 15-24 with a fixed-term contract increased radically from 52.9 per cent to 80 per cent between 2002 and 2010. This proportion is the highest in Europe and indicates that, contrary to the relatively good employment prospects, the employment conditions for young employees have worsened in the last few years. This 'flexibilisation' resulted in the polarisation of the labour market where younger generations enjoy less security than their older counterparts. The minimum wage in Slovenia in 2011 is €572.27 net and is applicable for all employees regardless of their age.

In addition to the worsening employment conditions, in an analysis concerning youth employment in Slovenia the National Youth Council of Slovenia (MSS 2010) identified the following problems related to the formal education system:

- weak links between education and employment
- lack of career planning in education
- poor quality of education
- contradictory implementation of the Bologna reforms in higher education
- lack of scholarships,
- increasing numbers of students who give up their studies both in vocational education and tertiary education.

In order to overcome the shortcomings mentioned above, there are different types of measures in the Slovenian active labour market policies which aim to help young people adapt to labour market needs. In the 2000s four groups of active labour market measures were implemented in order to support young job seekers:

1. Counselling and job search assistance
2. Promoting employment and self-employment
3. Programmes to increase social inclusion
4. Education and Training initiatives.

Social groups prioritised by these initiatives are unemployed young people (up to the age of 25) and young people without any work experience. Counselling services include the provision of occupational and employment information and job search assistance. In order to promote self-employment and entrepreneurships among young unemployed people, the Slovenian government actively subsidises young self-employed. The training and education programmes include two types of activities:

1. **Institutional** (formal) training programmes that aim to help participants to achieve a vocational qualification.
2. **Programmes of practical training** are designed for job seekers to help them in learning basic transferable skills. In 2009 a new programme was introduced for supporting young graduates to increase their employability. The programme called 'Graduate – Activate yourself and get the job' has been supported by the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs and by the European Social Funds with €2.7 million between 2009 and 2011. Within the framework of the programme the Student Organisation of Slovenia keeps a record of both registered students and employers who are looking for new graduates and acts as a broker agency between the two parties. The employers participating in the programme should provide a six-month long traineeship with a mentor for the students. They are subsidised with a grant of €2,000 for financing the trainee's wage during the training period. The employers are obliged to cover the costs of the mentor and pay at least €3 per hour to the trainees. According to the Employment Service of Slovenia the programme is, however, not very successful. (ESS 2011)

In the Slovenian Vocational Education and Training (VET) system work practice is carried out in schools and not in workplaces. As a consequence, traineeship is not an integrated part of the vocational training system. Pupils and students, however, often take part-time jobs besides their studies (called 'student work'). These jobs provide them with the opportunity to develop their practical skills, but in many cases are not directly connected to their studies. Employers are interested in providing such work opportunities, since this kind of work is cheaper than internship, where labour costs are equal to those of regular workers.

Table 1.1: Summary of main traineeship programmes

Main traineeship programmes & initiatives, including, ALMPs, educational VET & university traineeships as well as mandatory professional training	Brief description
'Graduate – Activate yourself and get the job'	The programme called 'Graduate – Activate yourself and get the job' has been supported by the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs and by the European Social Funds with €2.7 million between 2009 and 2011. Within the framework of the programme the Student Organisation of Slovenia keeps a record of both registered students and employers who are looking for new graduates and acts as a broker agency between the two parties. The employers participating in the programme should provide a six-month long traineeship with a mentor for the students. They are

Main traineeship programmes & initiatives, including, ALMPs, educational VET & university traineeships as well as mandatory professional training

Brief description

	subsidised with a grant of €2,000 for financing the trainee's wage during the training period. The employers are obliged to cover the costs of the mentor and pay at least €3 per hour to the trainees.
Centres for Vocational Guidance (CIPS)	The CIPS play an important role in ensuring the quality of information on searching for jobs, further formal or informal education and career planning.
'After studies into employment'	Job fairs which are intended to help young graduates' transition to the labour market.
PUM – Project Learning for Young Adults (PLYA)	The programme is aimed at unemployed school drop-outs under the age of 26. The programme tries to encourage this target group to return to education or obtain employment. It was designed to help young people who have no qualifications, occupation or employment, to overcome social isolation and encourage them to continue schooling and, where this is not possible, to promote the acquisition of skills that make transition to work easier. With the help of mentors, young people solve the problems that contributed to their dropping-out of school. Participation in the programme usually takes about one year. In the meantime, young people learn about different occupations and educational programmes, while through the project they discover their interests.
'Zaposli.me' ('Employ.me')	The programme subsidises the employment of disadvantaged groups of unemployed people for one year. The programme aims to develop the skills, knowledge and social security of unemployed people by subsidising jobs.

Source: Ignjatovic 2010

2. Legislative Framework for Traineeships

2.1 Legal framework for and governance of traineeships

The main legal source regulating the area of traineeship is the Employment Relationship Act (abbr.: ERA – in Slovenian: Zakon o delovnih razmerjih – ZDR). The act was implemented in 2007 in order to regulate various aspects of employment relations such as general conditions of employment, employment contracts, termination, working time arrangements, protection of employees, etc. The 120-124 articles of the law are dedicated to the issue of traineeship. The ERA regulates the general conditions and the duration of traineeship, the formal criteria for monitoring and evaluating trainees and the forms of voluntary traineeship. The Act declares that employers have to conclude a traineeship contract with

their trainees. The duration of traineeship may not be longer than one year (except in public administration, medicine and law) and can be extended by six months if the trainee works part-time. The duration can be shortened based on a trainer's proposal but only to a limited extent. The rules on monitoring and evaluating trainees shall be fixed in law or in written contracts (e.g. collective agreements). The trainees have to pass a final exam at the end of their traineeship. The termination of the traineeship contract is allowed only in extraordinary cases. The term 'trainee' used in the Act is not limited to any level of education system; it contains the levels from ISCED 3 to ISCED 5.

Other legal sources that indirectly influence the traineeship issue are the Vocational Education Act (2006), the Higher Vocational Education Act (2004) and the Higher Education Act (2006). The formal requirements of qualifications are regulated by the National Vocational Qualification Act (2003).

According to the ERA probation is not compulsory any longer in Slovenia, except for three specific areas: public administration, law and medicine. (EC 2008) At the time the ERA was implemented (2007) it was expected by representatives of state and the social partners that exact details relating to the traineeship issue would be regulated by the sectoral collective agreements. There are 39 collective agreements in force almost in each economic sector, but traineeship issues are still negotiated and regulated mainly at company level. The sectoral-level collective agreements mainly focus on the further education of employees (adult education issues) regarding education as the employees' obligation towards the employer rather than the opportunity for workers to be promoted or to preserve their job. Only a few sectoral collective agreements (e.g. the cellulose and paper industry, post and telecommunication, research and education) declare employees' right to education and training and include benefits and incentives for various types of training activities. (Dekleva et al 2000)

In 2010 the Slovenian government introduced the so-called Mini Jobs Act as an alternative way for employing students. Mini Jobs were defined as occasional and temporary work up to a maximum of 14 hours per week, which could be performed by students and pupils, as well as unemployed and retired people and other inactive people. Student organisations protested against the adoption of this law, because of the reduction of the social security of students and the increased competition between students and the unemployed or pensioners for such jobs. The Student Organisation of Slovenia (SSU) and the Confederation of Free Trade Unions of Slovenia (KSS PERGAM) started gathering signatures calling for a legislative referendum to reverse the decision (Ignjatovic 2010). The referendum was held in 2011 and the Act was rejected.

2.2 Definition of traineeships and trainees

The ERA defines the term 'trainee' as follows: 'a person, who starts to carry out work appropriate to the type and level of his professional qualification for the first time, concludes an employment contract as a trainee in order to gain ability to carry out his job independently'.

2.3 Legal provisions about aspects of traineeships

According to the basic rules fixed in the ERA the duration of traineeship cannot be longer than one year, with the exception of those cases where the law stipulates otherwise. The duration of traineeship can be shortened but only up to the half of the originally defined period. It also can be prolonged in those cases when trainees do part-time work. The wage of the trainees may not be lower than the minimum wage and they are entitled to earn 70 per cent of the basic salary at the workplace.

The trainees and employers should conclude a written contract in which they fix the duties and opportunities of all parties (employer, trainee, mentor). The employer is obliged to pay social security contributions. At the end of the traineeship the trainee has to pass a final exam in order to get a formal qualification.

3. Availability of and Access to Traineeships

3.1 Statistics/Quantitative Information about traineeships

In order to understand the institutional framework of traineeship, in the following the structure of the Slovenian education system will be briefly presented:

- Pre-primary education (ages 1-5) provided by autonomous public pre-school institutions, organisational units of pre-school units at basic schools or private pre-school institutions;
- Basic education; single structure of primary and lower secondary education (ages 6-14) provided by basic schools;
- Upper secondary education (ages 15-18) consisting of:
 - short vocational education provided by upper secondary vocational schools (*poklicne šole*),
 - vocational education provided by upper secondary vocational and technical schools (*poklicne šole* and *srednje strokovne in tehniške šole*),
 - technical education provided by upper secondary technical schools (*srednje strokovne in tehniške šole*),
 - vocational and technical education provided by upper secondary vocational and technical schools (*poklicne šole* and *srednje strokovne in tehniške šole*),
 - general education (four years) provided by general upper secondary schools *Gimnazije*;
- Short tertiary (higher vocational) education provided by higher vocational colleges;
- Higher education provided by public and private universities, faculties, art academies and professional colleges. It consists of three cycles:
 - First-cycle professional or academic,
 - Second-cycle masters studies,
 - Third-cycle doctoral studies.
- Alongside, there are sub-systems:
 - Special needs education;
 - Music and dance education.

In the last two decades there has been a shift from vocational training to general education. In 2009 the distribution of the Slovenian student population between the different levels of education system was as follows: 10.5 per cent of students attended pre-primary education (ISCED 0), 25 per cent were in primary education (ISCED 1), 38 per cent were in lower and upper secondary education (ISCED 2,3), 0.5 per cent were completing post-secondary education (ISCED 4) and 26 per cent of them visited the various tertiary education institutions (ISCED 5,6). It is worth stressing here that 67 per cent of the tertiary education

participants attended academic-oriented, while 31.5 per cent of them occupational-oriented courses. The latter proportion is the highest in the region (Bulgaria: 10 per cent, Czech Republic: 7.8 per cent, Hungary: 8.12 per cent, Poland: 1.6 per cent, Romania: 0.52 per cent and Slovakia: 0.9 per cent) which indirectly indicates the practical orientation of the country's tertiary education system.

Unfortunately there are no available statistical data on measuring traineeship *per se*, but the problem can be solved in an indirect way. One proxy indicator that can help us to capture the incidence of training activities that support the transition from school to work is the prevalence of initial vocational training (IVT) provided by employers to their entrant employees¹. According to the latest wave of the Continuing Vocational Training Survey (CVTS -2005) 9 per cent of Slovenia enterprises employing at least ten people provided IVT courses to their entrants which is far below the European level (31 per cent) but represents a relatively good position compared to other NMS countries in the region (Bulgaria: 4 per cent, Czech Republic: 3 per cent, Hungary: 6 per cent, Slovakia: 1 per cent, Poland: 9 per cent and Romania: 2 per cent).

There are, however, remarkable differences within the country in terms of IVT incidence. Sectors where IVT is more prevalent than the average are: electricity, gas and water supply, hotels and restaurants, telecommunication and postal services, while in the area of business services and social and personal services the rate of firms providing IVT courses is below the country average. There is also a difference between the different firms' size categories: medium (between 50 and 249 employees) and large-sized firms (more than 250 employees) are more active in providing IVT courses than their small-sized (between 10 and 49 employees) counterparts.

The other way we can describe the situation can be based on the data on continuing education provided by the Slovenian Statistical Office. In the school year of 2009/2010 nearly 320,000 people participated in more than 28,000 vocational training, further vocational training, vocational training specialisation and general education programmes. As for the non-verified programmes, nearly 80 per cent of participants attended professional programmes targeted towards the requirements for performing an occupation, while only 1.4 per cent of them participated in courses aimed at obtaining national vocational qualifications. As for the verified programmes (attended by 13 per cent of the continuing education participants) the most popular courses were the training programmes for which no required prior education was needed (75 per cent), followed by the qualification programmes after basic education (13 per cent) and the specialisation programmes after short term vocational or vocational upper secondary education (6 per cent). (Eurostat 2011)

According to the Employers' Perception of Graduate Employability survey the most important skills and competences that are expected from Slovenian graduates are communication, teamwork, decision-making, planning and organisational skills and the ability to adapt to and act in new situations. Slovenian employers are the less satisfied with the two latter attributes: the adaptability and organisational skills of already employed graduates. (Flash Eurobarometer 2011)

3.2 International student mobility

As for international student mobility, according to the available statistics, 2.2 per cent of Slovenian students studied abroad in 2009, whilst 0.1 per cent of the students came from a foreign country. These data refer to an asymmetric relationship between the out and inflow

¹ It should be kept in mind, however, that those receiving initial training are not automatically young entrants, since elderly employees with existing work experience may also be trained this way when they join to a new firm. We also have to note that the structural differences of the (vocational) educational systems of the various European countries also cause deviations in the prevalence of IVT. This effect also should be taken into consideration if we carry out an international comparison.

of students: studying abroad seems to be more popular than Slovenia as a target country for other European students.

According to the Erasmus statistics, the number of Erasmus students slightly increased between 2000 and 2010. The number of Slovenian students participating in Erasmus programmes abroad increased by 400 per cent, whilst the number of incoming students increased by 1,700 per cent. The number of outgoing Erasmus students doing company placements abroad was 174 in 2007/08 and 250 in 2009/10, which represents an increase of 55 per cent within the period. The average duration of mobility placements was around 3 months. In 2009/2010 the most popular target countries for company placements were Spain (21.6 per cent of students), Germany (16.4 per cent), the UK (11.6 per cent), Austria (9.2 per cent), Portugal (8.8 per cent), Turkey (8.4 per cent) and France (5.2 per cent). In 2009/2010 1.2 per cent of the student population participated in Erasmus mobility programmes which is somewhat below the regional average (See Table A.1 in the Annex).

The Leonardo da Vinci mobility sub-programme supported 60 Slovenian projects in 2010 with €1,268,902. According to the latest data² 504 Slovenian students participated in Mobility programmes in 2011.

3.3 Sectors where traineeships are prevalent

As it has been mentioned before, traineeship is not compulsory any longer in Slovenia, except in three specific areas: public administration, law and medicine. There is only anecdotal information on the proportion of trainees between the different sectors. The sectors in which traineeship is of particular importance are public administration and health care. In the latter case graduates from medical universities (and clinical psychologists also) are obliged to carry out practical training before obtaining their final qualification. Their traineeship period is five years long on average but it varies between the different medical professions (in the case of the GPs for instance there is the possibility of getting a licence in three years). Lawyers are also obliged to participating in a traineeship period if they want to receive a licence to practice. The most typical sector for the prevalence of traineeship is public administration. In this area the typical career path starts with a traineeship period where young graduates have to become familiar with the legal regulations and working culture of public administration.

3.4 Profile/Patterns of traineeships

As mentioned in the previous sections there are two different patterns of traineeship in Slovenia. One is prevalent in sectors (medicine, law and public administration) where participating in traineeship is a legal prerequisite for obtaining a licence that allows the trainee to carry out professional activities independently. In this case the length and content of training is strictly regulated by law. As referred to earlier, the other form of traineeship is the initial vocational training that companies provide to their entrant employees. In case of the initial training the ERA regulates the duration of the traineeship period and the employment conditions, as well but it leaves the content regulation of training open. These rules, however, are applicable in those cases where the employer and the trainee conclude a formal traineeship contract, which is, at the moment, a very rare phenomenon.

3.5 Recruitment process of and equity of access to traineeships

No public information available.

² Source: http://ec.europa.eu/education/pub/pdf/vocational/leonardo15_en.pdf

3.6 Evolution of traineeships over time and impact of recent economic crisis on traineeships

As mentioned previously, the available statistical information on the prevalence of traineeship is quite scarce. According to the initial training activities of firms the latest CVTS provide a solid basis for analysis. Unfortunately the latest wave of the survey was carried out in 2005, so the effect of the crisis cannot be presented. The CVTS 1999 does not provide data on IVT courses which makes a longitudinal comparison impossible.

3.7 Financing of traineeships

There are no directly available data on financial issues of traineeship in Slovenia. However, the dominance of public sources in funding educational expenditure is observable: 88.4 per cent is the rate of public and 11.6 per cent of the private sources in educational expenditures which correspond to the EU-average and are comparable with the expenditure structure of other regional countries as well. As we have mentioned before, employers participating in the programme called 'Graduate – Activate yourself and get the job' are subsidised with a grant of €2,000 for financing the trainee's wage during the training period which should be six months long at least.

As for international student mobility, the Leonardo da Vinci mobility sub-programme supported 60 Slovenian projects in 2010 with €1,268,902. The Erasmus budget for Mobility actions was €3,505,000 in the academic year 2009/2010.

3.8 Public perceptions about traineeships

Traineeship is not among the issues that are recently part of public debates. (EC 2008)

4. Practices and Content of Traineeships

4.1 Traineeships as part of education and/or labour market entry and integration for young people

As referred to before, traineeship is compulsory in only three areas: public administration, law and medicine. Medical graduates are obliged to carry out a five-year long practice before obtaining a licence. Lawyers also have to carry out practical training before starting their professional career. In the case of public administration entrants have to pass through a traineeship period where young employees have to become familiar with the legal regulation and organisational and working culture of public administration.

As for student mobility, Slovenia is not very popular as a target country for other European students, while 2.2 per cent of Slovenian students go for a shorter or longer period to study abroad, which is equivalent to the European average.

The incidence of the initial vocational training activities of firms indirectly refers to their requirements for their entrants and to the effectiveness of the transition of graduates from school to the labour market. The latest wave of the Continuing Vocational Training Survey (CVTS -2005) indicates that 9 per cent of Slovenia enterprises employing at least ten people provided IVT courses to their entrants which is far below the European level (31 per cent) but represents a relatively good position compared to other post-socialist countries in the region.

5. Trainee's Rights and Terms and Conditions

As mentioned earlier, the 120-124 articles of the Employment Relationship Act regulate the general conditions of traineeship, including duration, monitoring and evaluation. The law declares that employers are obliged to conclude a traineeship contract with trainees but does not define any other criteria concerning the agreement. The duration of traineeship may not be longer than one year (except in the case where the law defines it differently, e.g. medical doctors). Traineeship may be extended proportionally, if the trainee works part-time, but not for more than six months. The duration of traineeship can be extended after a period of justifiable absence from work which lasts longer than 20 working days, except for a period of annual leave. It also can be shortened if trainer's proposes it but only by up to one half of the initially determined period.

As for the training content, the employer must ensure the trainee receives programme-based training for independent work. The method of monitoring and evaluating the traineeship is fixed by law, other regulation or branch collective agreement. The termination of the traineeship contract is allowed only in extraordinary cases. At the end of the traineeship, the trainee must pass an examination which is the constituent and concluding part of traineeship and shall be taken before the conclusion of the traineeship period.

6. Quality Assurance of Traineeships

As mentioned earlier the 120-124 articles of the Employment Relationship Act regulate the general conditions of traineeship, including duration, monitoring and evaluation. The method of monitoring and evaluating traineeship is fixed by law, other regulation or branch collective agreement.

The legal regulation and the practice of quality assurance in the Slovenian education system are rather fragmented. In the case of higher education for instance, the Higher Education Act in 2004 introduced a full evaluation system, covering all aspects of quality assurance, as well as the establishment of an independent national agency for quality assurance. The modification of the Higher Education Act in 2006, however, abolished most of this legislation. According to vocational education, major differences exist between formal education and training, publicly accredited non-formal training courses and non-formal training without public accreditation. In the case of *formal education and training* there are legislative guidelines based on self-evaluation models. *Publicly accredited programmes* also have to meet legislative requirements, as well as an accreditation process, agreed by the Ministry of Education and Sport. Regarding *non-formal training* quality assurance is linked to public funding and in most cases is based on public tenders.

In general, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of new educational programmes, new programme elements and their changes have to meet the quality standards and procedures laid down in the Modernisation of Educational Activity Rules. Three public institutions are responsible for the monitoring of educational practice, including quality assurance: the National Education Institute, the Institute for Vocational Education and Training (in the case of vocational education programmes) and the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education (responsible for adult learners).

The evaluation of the education system as a whole is conducted by a special advisory board called the Council for Quality and Evaluation. Both the Ministry of Education and Sport and the Ministry of Science and Technology are responsible for the evaluation of higher vocational colleges. The Council of Experts for Vocational Education and Training takes care of the accreditation of study programmes (ISCEB B, short cycle programmes). A representative of the higher education area is also a member of this body.

In the case of higher education, all institutions and study programmes have to pass a self-evaluation at least once a year based on common criteria specified by the Chancellor and the Senate. The results should be presented to the Management Board and the Council for Higher Education. Self-evaluation is accompanied by external evaluations as well. External quality assurance includes both an accreditation process and formal external evaluation. Both the accreditation and evaluation is the responsibility of the National Quality Assurance Agency in Higher Education. The Agency determines quality assurance criteria and the procedures for external evaluation, and promotes various self-evaluation methods.

7. Overall Assessment as regards Traineeships

7.1 Benefits and drawbacks of traineeships

The most important risk that young employees have to face in Slovenia is not *directly* related to traineeship. According to Eurostat the percentage of employees aged 15-24 with a fixed-term contract is 80 per cent which is the highest in Europe and indicates the polarisation of the labour market where younger generations enjoy less security than their older counterparts.

7.2 Effectiveness of traineeships

Despite the tendency that in the last two decades there has been a shift from vocational to general education, the relatively high participation rates of Slovenian students in occupational-oriented courses compared to the other countries in the region indicates that practical orientation is still part of the Slovenian education system. In its analysis, however, the National Youth Council of Slovenia calls attention to the weak links between education and employment. It has to be stressed here the importance of the combination of both experience-based and formal learning in order to improve both firms' competitive capabilities and the employability of (young) job entrants. The relatively low level of IVT activity of firms suggests that the country is in a weak position in terms of workplace-level, experience-based competence development, in other words regarding 'the capacity of an employee to use his or her qualifications in the job situation'. (Nielsen 2006:124)

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Annex

Table A.1: Share of outgoing Erasmus students as a percentage of the total student population between 2007 and 2010 in some New Member States

	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010
<i>Bulgaria</i>	0,44	0,54	0,62
<i>Czech Republic</i>	1,54	1,54	1,43
<i>Hungary</i>	0,87	0,98	1,04
<i>Poland</i>	2,41	2,40	2,44
<i>Romania</i>	1,64	1,20	1,28
<i>Slovenia</i>	1,03	1,13	1,20
<i>Slovakia</i>	0,78	0,88	0,92

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc920_en.htm

National Report on Traineeships Slovakia

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1. Traineeships as part of Member State's Youth Policy Measures

Between 2004 and 2009 Slovakia experienced impressive economic growth that was accompanied by an increase in both overall employment and youth employment (See Table A 3 in the Annex). The unemployment rate among the population under 25 decreased from 39.2 per cent to 19 per cent between 2001 and 2008. The economic crisis, however, resulted in unfavourable labour market consequences. The youth employment rate started to decrease from 2009 and parallel to this, the unemployment rate among young employees started to grow (See Table A 4 in the Annex). In 2010 the youth unemployment rate was 33.6 per cent which was more than 10 percentage points higher than the EU-27 average and also far above the regional average (Bulgaria: 23.2 per cent, Czech Republic: 18.3 per cent, Hungary: 26.6 per cent, Poland: 23.7 per cent, Romania: 22.1 per cent and Slovenia: 14.7 per cent).

In order to reduce youth unemployment, a variety of Active Labour Market Policies (ALMPs) have been implemented in Slovakia in the last decade.

The Act on Employment Services stipulates that young people below the age of 25, who completed initial education in full-time studies less than two years ago and have failed to acquire a first regularly paid job, are classified as disadvantaged job seekers and referred to as school leavers/graduates and may benefit from preferential access to most ALMPs.

Among the ALMP measures there is only the 'Work Experience for School Leavers' programme that is specifically designed to facilitate the labour market transitions of young job seekers. The core aim of the programme is to help young people in acquiring and improving professional skills and practical experience with a specific employer. Other ALMPs have a more universalistic focus:

- compensation for travel costs to job interview
- education and training for the labour market
- contribution for self-employment
- contribution to train a disadvantaged job seeker
- contribution for employing a disadvantaged job seeker
- contribution to support employment of low-wage earners
- support to social enterprises
- subsidy for new job creation
- contribution to an employee's wage
- graduate practice
- activation work for municipalities
- activation work as voluntary service
- contribution for commuting to work
- contribution for moving to work
- contribution for creation of protected workshop/workplace
- contribution for self-employment to a disabled person.

Table 1.1: Summary of main ALMP traineeship programmes in Slovakia

Main traineeship programmes & initiatives, including, ALMPs, educational VET & university traineeships as well as mandatory professional training	Brief description
Work Experience for School Leavers	The core aim of the programme is to help young people in acquiring and improving professional skills and practical experience with a specific employer.
National Action Plan for Employment	Facilitating the transition from school to work and vice versa, as well as encouraging individuals and enterprises to increase their commitment to continuing vocational training
START programme	The programme is created for young labour market entrants. It provides a subsidy to employers on social security contributions of young employees. If a young entrant becomes registered unemployed, after 90 day the state subsidises 50-100% of his or her wage depending on his/her educational level.

2. Legislative Framework for Traineeships

2.1 Legal framework for and governance of traineeships

The basic legal source regulating the position of youth on the labour market is the Labour Code (Act no. 311/2001). The law specifies the various employment conditions for both adolescents and students. The act defines the adolescent as an employee who is younger than 18, but older than 15 years (Articles 11 and 40) and states that adolescents shall have the right to vocational training (Article 7). Employment contracts with adolescents are allowed to be concluded only after medical examination and under the statement of the adolescent's legal representative.

The law stipulates the maximum amount of working hours adolescents are allowed to work. The maximum weekly working time of an adolescent employee less than 16 years of age is 30 hours per week, even when working for several employers. Maximum weekly working time of an adolescent employee over 16 years of age is 37.5 hours even when working for several employers. The working time of an adolescent employee may not exceed 8 hours in the course of 24 hours. The Labour Code also regulates the duration of breaks and continuous daily rest at work.

The law includes very general rules on the employers' duties in ensuring appropriate physical and psychical work environment for adolescents. An employer may only employ adolescent employees in work that is appropriate to their physical and mental development. This shall also apply commensurately to schools or citizens' associations pursuant to special regulation if within the scope of their participation in the education of young people, they organise work of adolescents (Articles 171-173). Adolescents are not allowed to do overtime or night work. In exceptional case, adolescent employees older than 16 years of age may perform night work not in excess of one hour, if such is necessary for their *vocational training* (Article 174).

The law details those workplaces where it is prohibited to employ adolescents. As a general rule adolescent employees should not be employed for work which, taking into account the

physical and mental development of individuals at this age, is inappropriate, dangerous or damaging to their health.

The Labour Code also stipulates the conditions of temporary student jobs in a detailed way (Articles 227-228). Employers are obliged to conclude a written contract with students employed in a temporary job. On the basis of the agreement students are not permitted to exceed their working hours by more than half the pre-arranged weekly working hours, on average. A temporary job is not allowed to exceed 12 months. The law determines the content of such employment contracts. It should define the agreed work, the agreed reward for the work performed, the agreed extent of working time and the period for which the agreement is concluded.

As for the *direct* legal regulation of traineeship there is now specific legislation on the issue. The Law on Higher Education (Act No. 131/2002) stipulates that a traineeship can be a part of an accredited study programme. In the Act on Education and Training (Act No. 29/1984) vocational training/practice is defined as an integral part of education in secondary vocational schools, apprenticeships, and higher secondary schools.

3. Availability of and Access to Traineeships

3.1 Statistics/Quantitative Information about traineeships

In order to understand the institutional framework of traineeship, in the following the structure of the Slovakian public education system will be briefly presented:

Kindergarten

Kindergarten (*MŠ, materská škola*) provides pre-school education for children aged 2-6 and prepares them for compulsory school attendance.

Basic school

Basic school (*ZŠ, základná škola*) is composed of primary and lower secondary level education. Children enter basic school aged 6. Technical education is provided one hour per week within the mainstream lower secondary level children and is the first specialised VET subject.

Upper secondary education

There are three streams of upper secondary education: general academic provided by grammar schools (*G, gymnázium*); and two vocational streams provided by secondary specialised schools (*SOŠ, stredná odborná škola*) and secondary vocational schools (*SOU, stredné odborné učilište*). After completion of basic school, students, typically at the age of 15, decide to attend secondary school. As the minimum length of compulsory education is fixed at 10 years, students participate in at least one year of upper secondary schooling. The end of compulsory education is not certified, it is expected that everyone, except for extremely low achievers, will finish at least a 3-year ISCED 3C level education to obtain a certificate of completion of secondary vocational education (*stredné odborné vzdelanie*). Those VET students who finish 4 or 5-year ISCED 3A courses with an upper secondary school leaving certificate (*maturitné vysvedčenie*) are considered to have achieved a 'complete secondary vocational education' (*úplné stredné odborné vzdelanie*). These terms often lead to confusion in international comparisons. Students who do not achieve a complete secondary vocational education (ISCED 3A) might still complete secondary vocational education (ISCED 3C).

Vocational (upper) secondary schools (i.e. secondary vocational schools (SOU) and secondary specialised schools (SOŠ))

Of the two vocational streams, *SOU* is predominantly aimed at blue-collar workers training. *SOŠ* represent a variety of schools preparing students for both higher education and/or the labour market in professions requiring a good quality general and professional education with a firm grounding in theory. Typically, they provide ISCED 3A level education corresponding to respective sectors of economy.

Academic upper secondary education

Grammar school is the alternative to VET schools. It is a very demanding general educational institution aimed at deepening the student's theoretical knowledge and academic skills, and considered the best preparatory programme for university studies. Standard courses of study last for 4 years.

Tertiary education

Short tertiary (higher vocational) education is provided by higher vocational colleges; and higher education is provided by public and private universities, faculties, art academies and professional colleges. It consists of three cycles: First-cycle professional or academic (BA), second-cycle Master's studies, third-cycle doctoral studies.

Although the socialist school system was very practice-oriented (Vantuch 2008) since the collapse of the state socialist regime and independence from the Czech Republic the country has witnessed a dramatic shift from vocational to general education. According to the EUROSTAT the distribution of the Slovakian student population between the various levels of the education system in 2009 was as follows. 12 per cent of student were in pre-primary educational institutions (ISCED 0), 18.5 per cent of them in primary education (ISCED 1), 25 per cent in lower, 24.2 per cent in upper secondary education (ISCED 2,3), 0.3 per cent in post-secondary education (ISCED 4) and 20 per cent of them participated in tertiary education (ISCED 5,6). Of those participating in tertiary education 99.7 per cent attended academic-oriented programmes, while 0.9 per cent attended occupational-oriented courses, which attests to the relatively modest practical orientation of the tertiary education system.

Unfortunately there are no available statistical data to assess the extent of traineeships directly; therefore we need to use proxy indicators. In doing so we tried to capture the incidence of training activities that support the transition from school to work by using the indicator of the prevalence of initial vocational training (IVT) provided by the employees to their entrants¹. According to the latest wave of the Continuing Vocational Training Survey (CVTS -2005) 1 per cent of the Slovakian enterprises provided IVT courses to their entrants which is far below both the European average (31 per cent) and the one of their regional counterparts (Bulgaria: 4 per cent, Czech Republic: 3 per cent, Hungary: 6 per cent, Slovenia: 9 per cent, Poland: 9 per cent and Romania: 2 per cent).

There are some differences between sectors, for example the prevalence of IVT courses is somewhat higher in manufacturing (3 per cent) than the country average. There are more remarkable differences between the various size categories. Large firms (with more than 250 employees) are more active in providing IVT courses to their employees than the small- and medium sized companies (1 and 2 per cent).

¹ It should be kept in mind, however, that those receiving initial training are not automatically mean young entrants, since elderly employees with existing work experiences may also be trained this way when they join to a new firm. We also have to note that the structural differences of the (vocational) educational systems of the various European countries also cause deviations in the prevalence of IVT. This effect also should be taken into consideration if we carry out an international comparison.

3.2 International student mobility

As for international student mobility, according to the available statistics², the number of Slovakian students studying abroad under the framework of the Erasmus programme has increased significantly in the last ten years. While in 2000/01 only 505 Erasmus students were registered, their number reached 2,151 in 2009/10. This represented a share 0.92 per cent of the total student population. The overwhelming majority of them (1,798) were studying, while 353 students completed company placements abroad. The average duration of student mobility was 5.2 months for studies, while the duration for company placements was 3.4 months. The average EU monthly grant was €335 for studies and €532 for company placements. In total €4,742,000 was spent on Erasmus mobility actions in 2009/10. For the most recent trends on the share of outgoing Erasmus students as a percentage of the total student population between 2007 and 2010, see Table A 5 in the Annex. Under the framework of the Leonardo da Vinci programme 44 projects were selected in 2010 receiving grants of €2,387,225. Although the amount of grant funding allocated to these projects remained at the same level compared to the previous years, the number of projects selected significantly decreased (104 projects were selected in 2009).

More generally in the last decade there has been an increase in the rate of students studying abroad (3 per cent in 2000 and 11.4 per cent in 2009). The ratio of foreign students in Slovakia was 2.2 per cent in 2009. These data refer to an asymmetric relationship between the out- and inflow of students: studying abroad seems to be more popular than Slovakia as a target country for other European students, although Slovakia belongs to the popular countries in the region. (The same data for Bulgaria: 2.7 per cent, Czech Republic: 5.6 per cent, Hungary: 2.7 per cent, Poland: 0.3 per cent, Romania: 0.3 per cent and Slovakia: 1.1 per cent). As a government document states:

'The basic problem and shortcoming are the missing concepts at a national level, defining the basic framework as well as the financial support, which are available for activities, focused on international or transnational co-operation of institutions and individuals.'

(Ministry of Education 2005: 24)

3.3 Sectors where traineeships are prevalent

According to the statistics IVT courses are more prevalent in larger companies, especially in the manufacturing sector (e.g. car industry and electronics manufacturers). With respect to higher education, recruitment of trainees is pursued also by smaller companies, NGOs and public institutions.

3.4 Profile/Patterns of traineeships

Traineeship is compulsory in some specific areas in tertiary education. It is the case in professions where practitioners are obliged to be licensed if they want to carry out professional activities independently. Typical examples are health care-related professions (medical doctors, veterinarians, dentists, pharmacists, etc.), law and public administration and some technical professions, like architects.

² For this analysis we used the official statistics of Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci student mobility programmes: http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc920_en.htm and http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/doc/stat/slovenia_en.pdf

3.5 Recruitment process of and equity of access to traineeships

No information available.

3.6 Evolution of traineeships over time and impact of recent economic crisis on traineeships

As mentioned previously, the available statistical information on the prevalence of traineeship is quite scarce. According to the initial training activities of firms the latest CVTS provide a solid basis for analysis. Unfortunately the latest wave of the survey was carried out in 2005, so the effect of the crisis cannot be presented. The CVTS 1999 does not provide data on IVT courses which makes a longitudinal comparison impossible.

3.7 Financing of traineeships

There is limited data on the financing of traineeships in Slovakia. However, public sources play a dominant role in funding educational expenditures: 82.5 per cent is the rate of public and 17.5 per cent of the private source in educational expenditures. This former is somewhat lower, while the latter is somewhat higher than the EU-27 average (86.2 per cent and 13.8 per cent), but comparable with the expenditure structure of the other regional countries, as well.

As for the remuneration of trainees, the Act on Education stipulates that secondary pupils/students shall be remunerated for productive activities carried out within vocational training/practice with a monthly sum amounting 50 per cent-100 per cent of the minimum wage. The law also declares that the financial conditions of traineeship shall be fixed on a contractual basis between schools and traineeship providers.

As noted earlier, €4,742,000 was spent for international student mobility projects under the framework of the Erasmus programme, and further €2,387,225 under the framework of the Leonardo da Vinci programme.

3.8 Public perceptions about traineeships

Traineeship is not among the issues that are recently part of public debates. The public discourse on the issue is mainly restricted to problems related to traineeship practiced by young people abroad (temporary/summer jobs, language courses, au pairs, etc.).

4. Practices and Content of Traineeships

4.1 Traineeships as part of education and/or labour market entry and integration for young people

Until 1989 internship/practical training was an integrated part of the Slovak VET system. Like in most state-socialist countries the basic function of VET institutions was to supply skilled labour to the state-owned large companies. Pupils and students were employed by enterprises during their traineeship period and they were offered financial bonuses in several cases. Secondary vocational schools (*stredné odborné učilištia* - SOU) were financially supported by enterprises. The system was based on a combination of theoretical education and enterprise-based practical training.

After the collapse of the state-socialist system the vital connections between the VET schools and the business sector dramatically weakened. The SOU lost their social and political status, along with their economic base and as a consequence both apprenticeship and traineeship disappeared from the Slovak education system. According Vantuch (Vantuch 2008) only a small number of students carry out practical training in enterprises. SOU lost almost all contact with the business sector. Although SOU pupils/students are still referred as apprentices, their education is no longer enterprise-based but takes place within schools. To prevent the SOU network from collapse, the state took over the responsibility for financing students.

These tendencies can be traced back partly to the radical restructuring of Slovak enterprises, where large state-owned companies were replaced by small- and medium sized private enterprises that have no resources to employ trainees. Recently, however, links to enterprises are starting to be revitalised in some sectors (e.g. in the automotive industry). This occasional cooperation is often based on traditional contacts or personal relations between the schools and the firms. (Vantuch 2008)

There are, however, several examples of VET schools that are making permanent efforts to adapt their activities to real labour market demands in order to increase the labour market value of their pupils/students and to attract employers. Although cooperation between firms and VET schools are becoming more convenient again in sectors that have to face a large labour shortage (e.g. some areas of manufacturing, construction), the situation is still far from a functional dual VET system.

5. Trainee's Rights and Terms and Conditions

There is no direct legislation relating to the rights, terms and conditions of trainees but the Labour Code regulates the employment conditions of both adolescents (employees between 15 and 18) and students. The law declares that adolescent and students are allowed to be employed only on the basis of a regular employment contract. In case of adolescents the employer is obliged to request a statement from the employee's legal representative, as well. Rules regarding the termination of the employment contract follow the general rules for all employees. The only exception is if an adolescent is incapable of performing work without jeopardising their psychological wellbeing. In such cases the employee may immediately terminate the contract. In any cases of termination of the employment contract employers are obliged to inform the adolescent's legal representative.

According to the law the maximum working time of an adolescent employee less than 16 years of age is 30 hours per week. Maximum weekly working time of an adolescent employee over 16 years of age is 37.5 hours even when working for several employers. The working time of an adolescent employee may not exceed 8 hours in the course of 24 hours. Employers have to provide adolescent employees whose work shift is longer than 4.5 hours a 30 minute break. Adolescent employees doing shift work must have an at least 14 hours consecutive period between two shifts.

According to the Labour Code, employers are obliged to create favourable conditions for the overall development of the physical and mental aptitudes of adolescent employees. Upon resolving significant matters pursuant to adolescents, an employer shall closely co-operate with the legal representatives of the adolescents. Employers also have to keep records of adolescent employees who they employ. Records must include the dates of birth of adolescent employees.

Adolescents are not allowed to be employed for overtime work, night work, or be required to work on stand-by. Exceptionally, adolescent employees older than 16 years of age may

perform night work not in excess of one hour, if this is necessary for their vocational training.

Employers may not use such a method of remuneration for work that would lead, through increases in work performance, to endangering the safety and health of adolescent employees.

Adolescents are not allowed to be employed for work that is inappropriate or dangerous to their health. Adolescents are prohibited from working underground in the extraction of minerals or drilling of tunnels and passages.

As mentioned before, employers are obliged to conclude a written contract with students employed for a temporary job. The contract should fix the agreed work, the reward for the work performed, the working hours and the period for which the agreement is concluded. On the basis of the agreement students are not permitted to exceed their working hours by more than half the pre-arranged weekly working hours, on average. A temporary is not allowed to continue for longer than 12 months.

6. Quality Assurance of Traineeships

The Slovak government launched a document called 'National Program of Quality Tasks in the Area of Education for Years 2004 – 2005'. The programme declares the need for introduction of the system of accreditation, certification and monitoring of results. In focusing on quality issues, the document mentions two distinctive changes of the Slovakian VET system:

- introduction of the flexible vocational education and training system, that reflects on the changes of the labour market and employment and anticipates the needs of further education of people during their productive age
- decentralisation of the management of vocational education, in terms of both decision-making and distribution of resources.

The decentralisation also includes the self-evaluation system of VET institutions where the results of the monitoring process shall be reported to the founder and the school council.

In the case of international student mobility programmes such as Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci, the responsibilities are clearly defined.³ According to the quality assurance policy of these programmes, the sending organisation is responsible for the definition placement objectives (skills and competencies to be developed), choice of the host organisation, the duration of the project and content of the placement. It is also the responsibility of the sending organisation to select the participants, to establish a contract, to manage transport, accommodation, visa/work permit arrangements, social security cover and insurance and to evaluate the personal and professional achievements of the participants. The host organisation is responsible for assigning tasks and responsibilities to participants, identifying a tutor to monitor the training progress of the participants, and for providing practical support if required. The sending and hosting organisations are jointly responsible for negotiating a tailor-made training programme together with an appropriate mentoring and monitoring arrangements. They also jointly establishing validation procedures to ensure recognition of skills and competencies acquired as well as for establishing communication channels and evaluation of the progress of the project on an on-going basis. The participant is required to do their best to make the placement a success, to abide the rules and regulations of the host organisation, to inform the sending organisation on any problems changes occurring in relation to the placement and to submit a report in the specified

³ http://ec.europa.eu/education/leonardo-da-vinci/doc/quality_en.pdf

format, together with requested supporting documentation in respect of costs, at the end of the placement.

7. Overall Assessment as regards Traineeships

After the collapse of the state-socialist system the vital connections between the VET schools and the business sector dramatically weakened. The secondary vocational schools (*stredné odborné učilištia* - SOU) lost their social and political status, along with their economic base and as a consequence both apprenticeship and traineeship disappeared from the Slovak education system.

Taking into consideration that, according to the latest wave of the Continuing Vocational Training Survey (CVTS -2005), only 1 per cent of the Slovakian enterprises provided IVT courses to their entrants which is far below both the European average (31 per cent) and the country's regional counterparts (Bulgaria: 4 per cent, Czech Republic: 3 per cent, Hungary: 6 per cent, Slovenia: 9 per cent, Poland: 9 per cent and Romania: 2 per cent), the main risk young employees face is that they cannot participate in the various forms of workplace-level, experience-based competence development on one hand, and may have difficulties in the transition process from school to work, on the other.

In addition there are remarkable differences in terms of access to initial company training. Access to IVT courses is somewhat more prevalent in manufacturing than for the country average, and large firms (with more than 250 employees) are more active in providing IVT courses to their employees than the small and medium sized companies. Although there are attempts to revitalise the links between the VET system and companies, these have remained incidental so far. These tendencies may lead to social inequalities in terms of access to practical knowledge which is a prerequisite both for increasing and preserving the labour market value of young employees.

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Annex

Table A 1: Students (ISCED 5-6) studying in another EU-27, EEA or Candidate country - as % of all students in some New Member States

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
<i>EU-27</i>	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.7
<i>Bulgaria</i>	3.2	4.3	6.0	7.4	8.6	8.7	8.9	8.3	7.9	7.8
<i>Czech Republic</i>	1.3	1.5	1.6	1.8	1.8	1.8	2.0	2.1	2.6	2.7
<i>Hungary</i>	1.7	1.8	1.7	1.7	1.5	1.5	1.7	1.8	1.8	2.1
<i>Poland</i>	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.6	1.8	1.8	2.0
<i>Romania</i>	1.5	2.0	2.1	2.2	2.4	2.3	2.2	2.2	2.0	2.3
<i>Slovenia</i>	2.2	1.8	1.7	2.4	2.1	2.0	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.2
<i>Slovakia</i>	3.0	5.5	6.4	7.9	8.2	8.6	10.2	10.2	10.7	11.4

Source: EUROSTAT

Table A 2: Inflow of students (ISCED 5-6) from EU-27, EEA and Candidate countries - as % of all students in the country in some New Members States

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
<i>EU-27</i>	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.6	2.9	3.0	2.9	3.1
<i>Bulgaria</i>	2.3	2.5	2.2	2.5	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.7
<i>Czech Republic</i>	1.2	1.9	2.1	2.8	2.8	3.6	5.0	5.3	5.4	5.6
<i>Hungary</i>	:	2.2	2.1	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.7
<i>Poland</i>	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.3
<i>Romania</i>	1.0	0.7	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3
<i>Slovenia</i>	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.9	1.0	1.1
<i>Slovakia</i>	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	1.8	2.2

Source: EUROSTAT

Table A 3: Employment rate in some New Member States (15 to 24 years old)

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
<i>EU-27</i>	40.9	40.6	40.1	40.1	37.0	37.5	37.3	37.4	35.0	34.0
<i>Bulgaria</i>	19.8	19.4	20.7	21.5	21.6	23.2	24.5	26.3	24.8	22.2
<i>Czech Republic</i>	34.2	32.2	30.0	27.8	27.5	27.7	28.5	28.1	26.5	25.2
<i>Hungary</i>	30.7	28.5	26.8	23.6	21.8	21.7	21.0	20.0	18.1	18.3
<i>Poland</i>	24.0	21.7	21.2	21.7	22.5	24.0	25.8	27.3	26.8	26.3
<i>Romania</i>	32.6	28.7	26.4	27.9	24.9	24.0	24.4	24.8	24.5	24.3
<i>Slovenia</i>	30.5	30.6	29.1	33.8	34.1	35.0	37.6	38.4	35.3	34.1
<i>Slovakia</i>	27.7	27.0	27.4	26.3	25.6	25.9	27.6	26.2	22.8	20.6

Source: EUROSTAT

Table A 4: Unemployment rate of population aged under 25 in some New Member States

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
<i>EU-27</i>	17.3	18.0	18.3	18.6	18.8	17.5	15.7	15.8	20.1	21.1
<i>Bulgaria</i>	38.8	37.0	28.2	25.8	22.3	19.5	15.1	12.7	16.2	23.2
<i>Czech Republic</i>	17.3	16.9	18.6	21.0	19.2	17.5	10.7	9.9	16.6	18.3
<i>Hungary</i>	11.3	12.7	13.4	15.5	19.4	19.1	18.0	19.9	26.5	26.6
<i>Poland</i>	39.5	42.5	41.9	39.6	36.9	29.8	21.7	17.3	20.6	23.7
<i>Romania</i>	17.6	21.0	19.5	21.0	19.7	21.0	20.1	18.6	20.8	22.1
<i>Slovenia</i>	17.8	16.5	17.3	16.1	15.9	13.9	10.1	10.4	13.6	14.7
<i>Slovakia</i>	39.2	37.7	33.4	33.1	30.1	26.6	20.3	19.0	27.3	33.6

Source: EUROSTAT

Table A 5: Share of outgoing Erasmus students as a percentage of the total student population between 2007 and 2010 in some New Member States

	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010
<i>Bulgaria</i>	0.44	0.54	0.62
<i>Czech Republic</i>	1.54	1.54	1.43
<i>Hungary</i>	0.87	0.98	1.04
<i>Poland</i>	2.41	2.40	2.44
<i>Romania</i>	1.64	1.20	1.28
<i>Slovenia</i>	1.03	1.13	1.20
<i>Slovakia</i>	0.78	0.88	0.92

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc920_en.htm

National Report on Traineeships UK

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1. Traineeships as part of Member State's Youth Policy Measures

1.1 Overview of current situation of young people and traineeships as part of youth policy measures

Young people are facing particular challenges in the UK labour market in 2011. Figures released by the Department for Education (DfE, 2011) show that 16.2 per cent young people aged between 16 and 24 are classified as not in education, employment or training (NEET). The figure for those aged 19-24 is worse with 19.1 per cent categorised as NEET. These statistics represent the position for the second quarter year of 2011 and both shown an increase from the position in the second quarter of 2010 – a 1.7 percentage point rise in the proportion of 16-24s NEET and a 2.6 percentage point rise for those in the 19-24 category. What is known about the group that is NEET or unemployed is that it is highly heterogeneous spanning a range of qualification levels as well as ages. At the start of 2011, it was reported that graduate unemployment is at its highest level for 17 years – preparing for employment through gaining higher education qualifications is no longer sufficient to guarantee young people a job in the UK labour market. At the heart of the matter may be that they are facing increased competition from those who are older with similar qualification levels and work experience.

'Young adults who can't find an apprenticeship or a college place are finding it particularly hard to compete for jobs against older, more experienced, job-seekers not just from this country but also from the rest of Europe.'

Hillage J (2011)

The UK parliament (House of Commons, 2010) recognises the challenges facing young people resulting from the recession resulting from a lack of supply of work. Employers freeze recruitment, reducing job opportunities for young people. Those young people in work may be prioritised for redundancy since employers seek to retain their most experienced staff. In the current recession, there has been a propensity among employers to retain existing staff (although reduce their hours) which longer term may continue to limit the supply of work.

There is no typical age for young people to enter the labour market in the UK although the first entry point, the completion of compulsory education, is currently at the age of 16 although a new policy has been established (confirmed by the education bill 2010) emphasises the need to remain in education and training until the age of 18 as a minimum. More generally, the rate of training and education participation among 16 to 17 year olds has been rising. The form of participation may vary between training (i.e. Apprenticeships) and full-time education. Policy ambition remains a 50 per cent participation rate in higher education (typically studied at the age of 18 and over) and most recent statistics (BIS, 2011) indicates that 47 per cent of 17 to 30 years are engaged in higher education.

For those entering work, National Minimum Wage rates apply although vary by age and Apprenticeship training. Policy indicates (Directgov, 2011) that from 1 October 2011: the main rate for workers aged 21 and over will increase to £6.08 from £5.93; the 18-20 rate will increase to £4.98 from £4.92; the 16-17 rate for workers above school leaving age but under 18 will increase to £3.68 from £3.64; and, the apprentice rate, for apprentices under 19 or 19 or over and in the first year of their apprenticeship will increase to £2.60 from £2.50.

Despite the rising rates of unemployment among young people there have been few sustained policy interventions. A policy of expanding Apprenticeships has been retained

across the change of Government in 2010 and by summer 2011, BIS reported a surge in Apprenticeship places on offer in the economy. As well as expanding the number of Apprenticeships, higher level qualifications have been introduced into the framework such that higher education level qualifications can now be achieved. While this may benefit lower skilled young people who are unemployed, it is unlikely to deliver benefits to graduates. For this group, the Graduate Talent Pool is the key policy measure which aims to provide e-brokerage between employers and graduates seeking to develop through traineeship. Other actions to address youth unemployment have been few and in any case have been disbanded. The Young Person's Guarantee and with it the Future Jobs Fund initiative (which provided six month employment opportunities in public and charitable sectors to young unemployed people) were dismantled when the Government changed in 2010 and have not been replaced.

To compete in the labour market, young people need to be able to demonstrate vocationally relevant skills along with employability (soft) skills and attributes (Newton et al. 2006) hence interventions and measures which allow them the opportunity to gain work experience are likely to greatly assist. Side benefits, such as increased social capital and particularly the building of networks, also accrue which may assist in future transitions. Work experience opportunities (and volunteering) are a valuable source of support since young people have the opportunity to develop industry specific skills and attributes and develop networks among industry staff which would be likely to ease their transitions (Newton et al. 2011).

Since there are varied traineeship models encompassed by UK provision (including those embedded in higher education courses and those available following graduation or completion of other studies) it is difficult to draw comparison of effect with other schemes such as Apprenticeships. The CIPD (2010) notes similarities between Apprenticeships and traineeships such that:

'...both offer young people the opportunity to develop their skills in a wide range of vocations, they both act as a 'talent pipeline' for organisations and industry sectors and they both focus on preparing young people to either begin work or to take their next step in terms of qualifications or workplace responsibility.'

CIPD (2010)

The Government (HM Government, 2011) also places close to equal value on Apprenticeships and traineeships in terms of work place preparation and notes the crucial role of traineeships particularly in terms of accessing work in the professions (where Apprenticeships traditionally have less traction). However again, no statistical assessment of their comparative success in supporting labour market entry is included.

The major forms of domestic traineeship are briefly described in Table 1.1 below. There are few specific schemes aimed at encouraging traineeship mobility at a national level in the UK. Students on Erasmus placements are subject to a tuition fee waiver provided the placement lasts an entire academic year. This makes Erasmus potentially a financially attractive option, although the waiver is subject to an annual review by the UK government. For the Leonardo programme, the priority for UK placements is those schemes which are aimed at those with significant difficulties entering the labour market (for example, those facing socio-economic disadvantage) and apprentices.

Additionally, the practices in schools in the UK do not meet the requirements for a traineeship as defined by this study. Most pupils (aged between 14 and 16) will undertake a short-term (two week) work experience in the upper secondary phase of learning. This comprises a 'taste' of the world of work but not the structured experience of a traineeship.

Between 2004 and 2011, a small programme in the final phase of secondary education (known as Key Stage 4) which might have met the conditions of a traineeship was operated in England. This was known as the Young Apprenticeship (although it was not part of the UK

Apprenticeship System which is targeted at post-16 learners). The Young Apprenticeship programme embedded a significant volume of work experience with an employer (up to 50 days across two academic years) combined with school-based study towards qualifications at Level 2 (ISCED 3). This was targeted at young people judged to be able to benefit from a more vocational experience although capable of juggling school-based study and work. The new Government is placing a greater emphasis on academic qualifications during secondary school and consequently has withdrawn the Young Apprenticeship programme.

Table 1.1: Types of traineeship in the UK

Traineeship type	Description
Internships	<p>'Internship' is the commonly used term for open market traineeships in the UK. These tend to be 3-6 month placements agreed between a trainee (typically a graduate) and employer</p> <p>It is important to note that the term 'internship' does not exist in UK law; interns do not have a specially defined legal status. The exact legal position of interns is contested and depends on the nature of the work undertaken as part of the internship. This means that the term can be used to describe placements which vary considerably in terms of content, quality and remuneration.</p>
Sandwich courses	<p>A degree programme including a work placement. Placements can be either 'thick' (a single placement lasting a year) or 'thin' (typically two six month placements). For students on sandwich courses taking the placement is usually optional. At some HE institutions certain degree courses may also include shorter compulsory placements of around six weeks, however these are not strictly speaking sandwich courses.</p>
Work Experience programme	<p>An ALMP aimed at providing the unemployed with up to eight weeks of work experience in companies while still receiving unemployment benefits.</p>
Mandatory professional training	<p>Relevant in a number of fields including law, architecture and medicine. Largely regulated by professional bodies within that field.</p>

2. Legislative Framework for Traineeships

2.1 Legal framework for and governance of traineeships

There is no specific national legal framework regulating traineeships in the UK. The extent of regulation varies across the different types of traineeships. Traineeships outside of formal education are only regulated inasmuch as they constitute 'work' (as opposed to volunteering) under employment law. Traineeships as part of an FE or HE course are predominantly regulated by the students' institution, while rules regarding mandatory professional training tend to be the preserve of specific professional bodies.

2.1.1 Traineeships outside of formal education

The legal position of traineeships outside of formal education is currently a highly contentious issue. The core of the debate is whether these traineeships, or internships as they have increasingly become known, are subject to National Minimum Wage laws. Internship is a conventional term which has no status in employment law, therefore the

debate hinges on whether the traineeship constitutes 'work' or whether it is in some way voluntary. Under the NMW the defining characteristics of a worker are where:

- There is a contract or other arrangement which entitles the individual to a reward. The contract may be written, implied or oral.
- The reward is a monetary payment or a benefit in kind and the reward is not simply the reimbursement of genuine out-of-pocket expenses. The promise of a contract or future work could be considered a benefit in kind.
- The individual has to turn up for work even if they don't want to – for example whether there are sanctions for not coming to work or whether there is a contract notice period.
- The employer must provide work for the duration of the contract or arrangement.
- The individual has to perform the work or services personally.
- The employer is not the individual's client or customer.

(Businesslink 2011)

Legal issues around traineeship pay and rights are dealt with in more detail in the national case study. For current purposes it is worth noting that where trainees are considered workers they should also be protected from unlawful discrimination by the Employment Act 2010 and entitled to paid annual leave, breaks and maximum working hours Working Time Regulations 1998 entitling them to (XpertHR n.d.).

The government department responsible for the NMW is the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS), while enforcement is undertaken by Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs (HMRC). Until recently there has been little organised enforcement activity relating to traineeships. However, towards the end of 2011 HMRC announced it would be targeting sectors with a reputation for using young workers in unpaid traineeships, notably the fashion industry (HMRC 2011). Additionally a small number of tribunal cases have been brought by individuals (typically with the assistance of trade unions) who have successfully claimed that their unpaid placements breached NMW legislation. These cases are dealt with in more detail in the case study but include *Keri Hudson vs TGP Publishing Web Publishing Ltd* in 2011 (assisted by the National Union of Journalists) and *N Vetta vs London Dreams Motion Pictures* in 2009 (assisted by BECTU).

2.1.2 Traineeships as part of an education course

The legal position of traineeships as part of a formal education course is somewhat clearer. In particular, those undertaking work placements which are a *requirement* of an educational course are exempted from the NMW, provided the placement lasts no more than a year. Though in general it is relatively easy to establish whether the placement is a course requirement, stakeholders suggested there is still some potential for ambiguity in specific cases. For example, a student on a sandwich course (a degree course which includes a work placement, typically for a year) would clearly be exempt, while a student working part-time on a supermarket check out would not be. However, in some cases a placement may be related to a course but not necessarily a requirement. In general it would be expected that where a placement is required as part of a course the university would produce a document which stated as such. However, the absence of such a document does not inevitably mean the placement is not a requirement and therefore not exempt, any exemption needs to be established on a case by case basis.

Regulation of the quality of work placements and welfare of students is largely the responsibility of individual universities, however employers are responsible for the trainee under Health & Safety legislation. The quality of university work placements is assessed at national level by the Quality Assurance Agency as part of an overall assessment of the quality of educational provision at a university. The QAA provides guidelines for work based

learning as part of a university course that Universities should consider when developing their own guidelines (QAA 2007).

2.1.3 Mandatory professional training

A number of professions require members undergo practical work experience as part of their qualifications, in particular legal professionals, doctors, teachers and architects are all required to undertake a period of work experience to obtain a qualification which allows them to practice. Other professions have less strict rules on licence to practice but there are optional additional qualifications which require a period of practical work experience to obtain. For example anyone can describe themselves as an accountant (which is not the case for architects, solicitors doctors etc.), but chartered accountants are required to take a further qualification which includes a trainee period.

Regulation of professional traineeships is largely undertaken by professional bodies. Legislation in this area generally empowers bodies (for example the Architects Registration Board (Architects Act 1997), the General Medical Council (Medical Act 1983) or the Solicitors Regulation Authority (Legal Services Act 2007)) to set criteria and standards for professional qualification rather than referring directly to qualification requirements itself.

The extent of regulation of traineeships by professional bodies can vary. For example, the Solicitors Regulation Authority regulates both the content of training and working conditions for trainee Solicitors and only establishments approved by the SRA can take on trainee solicitors. For example the SRA requires training establishments to provide trainees the opportunity to develop practical skills in a number of areas (for example dispute resolution, legal research and advocacy and oral presentation), to experience at least three areas of law and details standards for the supervision of trainees. Training establishments are directly monitored by the SRA on the quality of training they provide. Additionally the SRA sets out requirements on pay and working conditions, including a minimum annual leave and a minimum wage substantially above the National Minimum Wage.

By contrast in architecture the onus appears to be much more on the trainee to find a good quality practical experience placement which will provide them with sufficient knowledge to pass their exams. The Architects Registration Board does not lay down general mandatory rules on the content of training or the working conditions of trainee architects on placement, placements can, broadly speaking, be taken under the supervision of any registered architect. However, schools of architecture and validating bodies such as the Royal Institute of British Architects may set down more specific criteria. In most cases students will have the assistance of a Personal Studies Advisor who will monitor their progress and ensure the experience they receive meets the requirements of the school of architecture, validating body and ARB. All students are required to have their work signed off by a PSA. The role of the PSA mainly focuses on the quality of the work experience, but schools of architecture and validating bodies may also have additional standards on working conditions and pay. For example, from this year RIBA require all their chartered practices to pay those on practical experience placements at least the minimum wage. For non-chartered practices, however, there are only non-mandatory guidelines on the NMW with evidence that a considerable number of architects circumvent NMW legislation, in particular on the grounds that practical experience is a required element of an educational course (Fulcher 2011).

2.1.4 Transnational placements

One stakeholder discussed UK trainees taking traineeships in other EU nations. They had found the process relatively easy with few barriers but additionally felt that it was generally the responsibility of the receiving firm to deal with local employment laws and regulations.

Bodies regulating mandatory professional training sometimes place requirements that limit the extent to which traineeships can be taken outside the UK. For example the ARB requires that at least 12 months practical experience is taken in the EEA (including the UK), Channel

Islands or Switzerland but further recommends that the placement should involve at least 12 months in the UK as a knowledge of UK law is required to pass the final part 3 exam (ARB n.d.).

Students from EEA nations and Switzerland have no restrictions on working in the UK. Bulgarian and Romanian students are required to apply for the right to work during their course, assuming this is approved it allows students from these countries to undertake work placements as well as work up to 20 hours during term time and an unlimited period during holidays. This latter allowance would presumably permit these students to undertake traineeships during university holidays. However, for Bulgarian and Romanian nationals outside of education are required to apply for an accession worker card which allow the holder to work in specific jobs. Typically these are awarded to skilled workers who would qualify under normal work permit rules, which would be likely to present a considerable barrier to those seeking to participate in a traineeship. (UKBA 2007)

Erasmus and Leonardo placements are both available in the UK. Erasmus students on year long placements receive a tuition fee waiver, although those on shorter placements are still required to pay fees. Leonardo mobility placements are primarily aimed at disadvantaged groups and apprentices.

2.1.5 Traineeships as part of active labour market programmes

The main form of ALMP traineeship in the UK is the Department for Work and Pension's Work Experience scheme, through which those aged 16-24 who have been claiming Jobseeker's Allowance for 13 weeks take voluntary work placements with employers. There are few legal structures around Work Experience placements, placements are expected to be around 8-12 weeks, with 25-30 working hours a week. Employers have to show that the Work Experience placement will not displace paid employees or be used instead of recruiting full time employees and allow those on placements to undertake 'reasonable' job search activity and attend fortnightly meetings at Jobcentre Plus. Employers wishing to offer Work Experience placements are required to sign an agreement with Jobcentre Plus.

2.2 Definition of traineeships and trainees

There is no uniform legal definition of traineeship or trainee in the UK. Traineeships outside of formal education are conventionally referred to as 'internships' but it is important to note that there is no legal status of 'intern'. Traineeships as part of higher education courses are often referred to as 'sandwich placements' or 'work placements', as noted above there is a specific provision within NMW legislation to exempt these placements from NMW. Terms for traineeships for mandatory professional training vary by profession.

3. Availability of and Access to Traineeships

3.1 Statistics/Quantitative Information about traineeships

To a very large extent, there is a lack of data on traineeships in the UK. This is particularly true of traineeships outside of formal education.

3.1.1 Traineeships outside of formal education

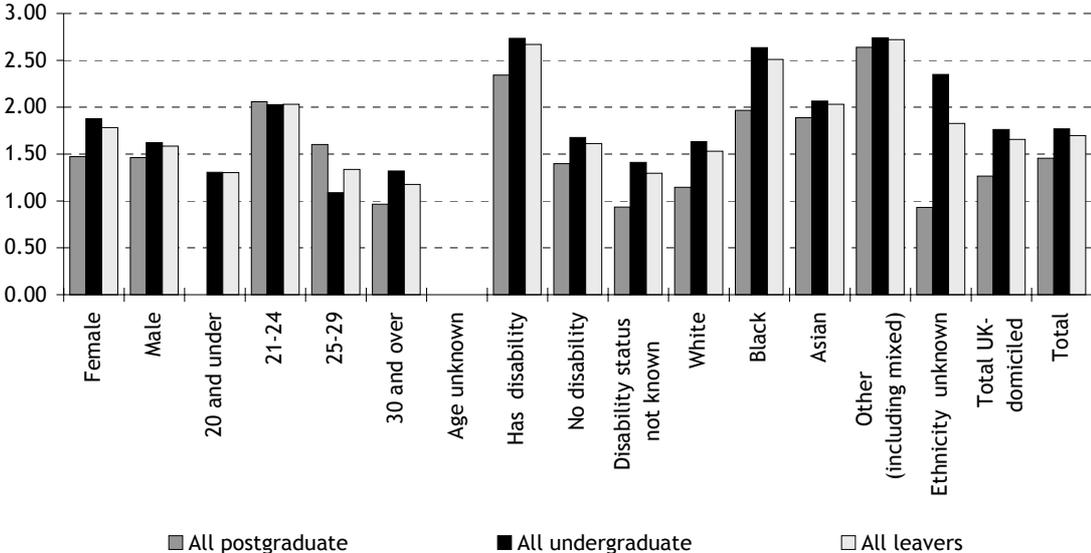
Among the most complicated traineeships to measure are open market traineeships outside of formal education. As noted above the lack of formal definition means they are largely absent from official statistics. Additionally the traineeship population is likely to be highly

seasonal and unstable – the general consensus is that traineeships generally last 3-6 months or less and therefore individuals are likely to move rapidly between traineeship employment and other labour market statuses. Furthermore there are likely to be spikes in traineeship activity during university holidays and immediately following graduation.

We can begin by looking at the HESA Destinations of Learners in Higher Education survey which provides us with information on HE learners' activity six months after leaving higher education. The HESA data is only likely to give us a partial picture of the extent of traineeships outside of formal education. The DLHE provides information on leavers in voluntary or unpaid work. While anecdotal evidence would suggest many of these will be in traineeships of some form we cannot be certain about the nature of the work. In particular, although we have noted that traineeships blur the line between volunteering and work, some of the individuals counted as being in voluntary/unpaid positions may be 'genuine' volunteers. Additionally the data may undercount the number of traineeships in particular the data misses paid trainees, students doing traineeships in summer holidays, HE leavers combining paid and unpaid work and covers only a single cohort of HE leavers. Additionally, there is no information on outcomes for 24.3 per cent of eligible leavers due to either refusal or non-response. Overall 1.7 per cent (6,450) of those surveyed were in voluntary or unpaid work, extrapolating from this would suggest a figure of 8,520 of those leaving HE in 2010 being in unpaid or voluntary work six months after graduating.

Looking the HESA data on graduates in unpaid or voluntary work broken down by demographic characteristics we find higher proportions in voluntary or unpaid work among females, 21-24 year olds, those with disabilities and non-white ethnic groups, particularly black and other ethnic groups. The level of qualification makes some difference, a slightly lower proportion of postgraduate leavers are in voluntary or unpaid work (1.5 per cent). Additionally roughly equal proportions of male and female post graduates are in voluntary or unpaid work (1.5 per cent). Additionally amongst 25-29 year olds a lower proportion of undergraduate leavers are in voluntary or unpaid work (1.1 - 1.6 per cent), postgraduates in this age bracket are likely to be new labour market entrants whereas undergraduate leavers aged 25-29 are likely to have had some work experience before getting their qualification.

Figure 3.1: Proportion of HE leavers in voluntary or unpaid work by characteristics



Source: HESA 2010a

The literature on traineeships also gives some indication of the scale of traineeships outside formal education. Evidence from the evaluation of the Graduate Talent Pool indicates that

around 1,440 traineeships were undertaken in the first six months of the scheme (Mellors-Bourne & Day 2011). The evaluation finds that graduates who successfully secured traineeships through the programme were primarily high achievers – those with higher degree classes from Russell Group universities and some evidence that ethnic minority candidates were less likely to be successful in applying for traineeships through the scheme. CRAC & Oakleigh Consulting (2011) use the Graduate Talent Pool vacancy numbers and HEFCE internship scheme figures to estimate numbers of 'structured' graduate traineeships, they suggest around 35,000 in 2010 falling to 15-20,000 in 2011 following the end of the HEFCE internship funding and a reduction in the number of vacancies on the Talent Pool.

Surveys of businesses by organisations such as the CBI and CIPD provide some additional data, however given that these surveys are unlikely to be representative of the economy as a whole they are perhaps better used to get a sense of general trends rather than absolute numbers. For example in 2011 the CBI (2011) found that 45 per cent of respondents to their survey offered traineeship opportunities while the CIPD's 2010 survey found that only 21 per cent were likely to recruit a trainee in the next six months (CIPD 2010c). Although the questions asked of businesses were slightly different, this is still a substantial gap. A recent IPPR report estimated 280,800 traineeships in the UK, extrapolating from the Labour Market Outlook reports produced by the CIPD (Lawton & Potter 2011). This figure, however, seems excessive – the CIPD reports are based on surveys of CIPD members, who are generally larger organisations.

Information on the sectors in which traineeships are prevalent is largely anecdotal. Stakeholders suggested that industries such as journalism, fashion, entertainment, and politics are particularly associated with traineeships. Additionally interviewees reported that traineeships appear to be spreading into sectors and occupations where they had not previously been present.

It is difficult to establish the extent of change in traineeships over the last five years due to the lack of data. However there was a general consensus amongst stakeholders that informal traineeships had expanded in recent years, both in absolute terms and in terms of the economic sectors in which traineeships could be found. Traineeships appear to be spreading beyond the 'traditional' sectors such as politics, creative industries and media. To a large extent it was felt this has been driven by the recession and, in particular, a drop in the availability of traditional graduate recruitment routes such as graduate recruitment schemes as well as a desire among some employers to benefit from low-cost labour. There is some quantitative evidence to support the anecdotal evidence of traineeship expansion. The CIPD's Labour Market Outlook found an increase in the proportion of firms intending to recruit trainees from 13 per cent in Summer 2009 to 21 per cent in Spring 2010 (CIPD 2010c). However in summer 2011 the figure was again 21 per cent, suggesting recruitment of trainees may have stabilised. It should also be noted that a number of government run schemes (discussed in financial section below) to support graduates in finding traineeships that were available in 2009-10 have come to an end, which might effect the number of traineeships available – as noted above CRAC & Oakleigh Consulting (2011) make this assumption.

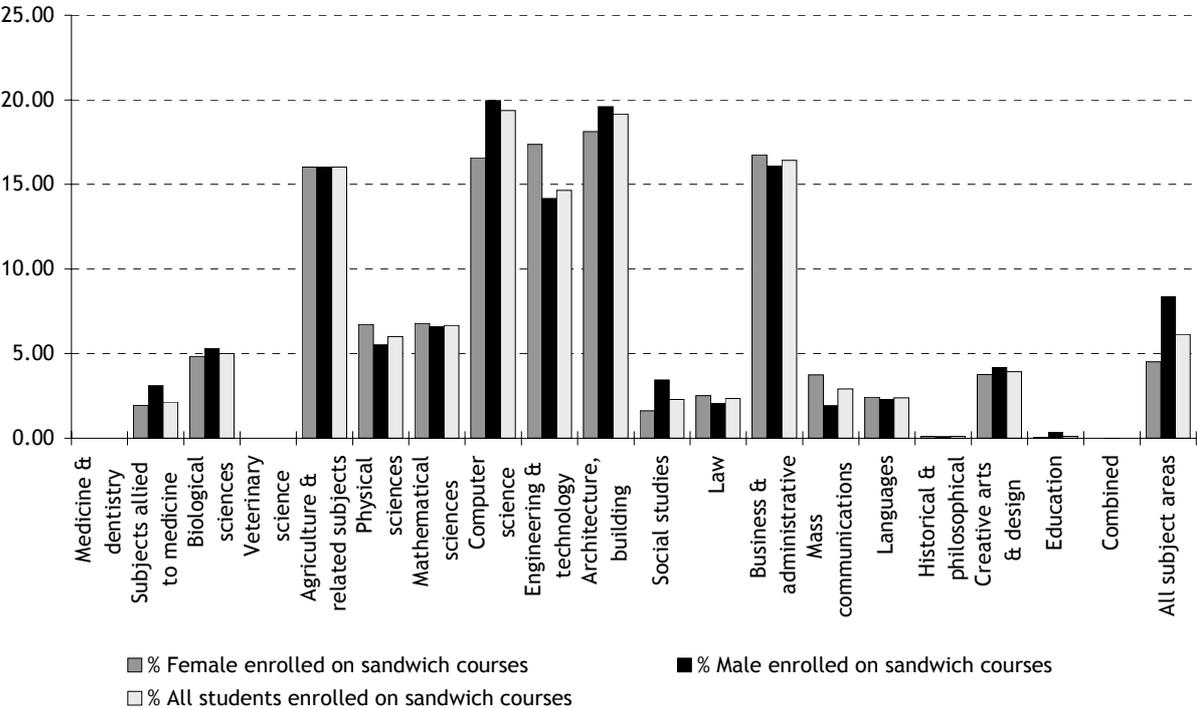
3.1.2 Traineeships as part of education courses

The best data comes from traineeships as part of a higher education courses. The Higher Education Statistics Authority (HESA) provides data on the number of undergraduate students enrolled on sandwich courses – that is courses which mix work experience with learning. It should be noted that the HESA data only counts students enrolled on sandwich courses rather than students actually taking sandwich placements – over the last 10-15 years there has been evidence that a growing minority do not take up the option of a sandwich year, despite being enrolled on a course that offers the option.

Overall just over six per cent of all students at university in 2009/10 were on sandwich courses. The highest proportion of these were in business and administration related

subjects which accounted for around 33 per cent of students on sandwich courses. The data suggests some degree of difference by gender, with just over eight per cent of male and four per cent of female students enrolled on sandwich courses. Looking at percentages of students within subject areas we find the overall figures mask some differences by subject area, in particular considerably higher proportions of students in agricultural subjects, computer science, engineering and technology, architecture and building, and business and administrative subjects are enrolled on sandwich courses. Additionally there is no clear gender pattern within subject areas. In total for 2009/10 the data suggests that 117,685 students were enrolled on sandwich courses. There are two complications, however, that mean this is unlikely to be the total number of students who will undergo traineeship type activity through their university course. Firstly, there is evidence that a substantial minority of students on sandwich courses do not take up the option to complete a sandwich year and secondly this data does not cover students engaged in other forms of work related learning through their course (CRAC and Oakleigh Consulting 2011).

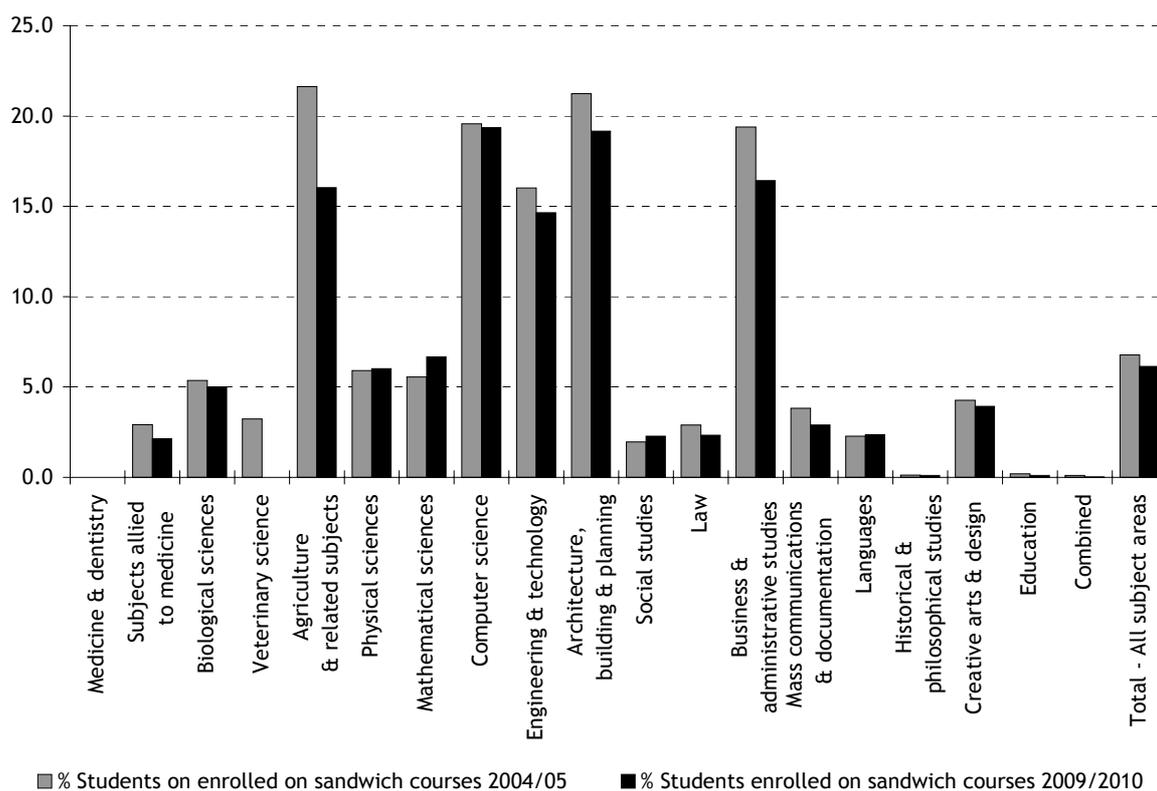
Figure 3.2: Students enrolled on sandwich courses 2009/10



Source: HESA 2010b

Looking at change over the last five years we see a very slight overall fall in the absolute numbers of students enrolled on sandwich courses, from 119,010 to 117,685 with some growth in certain subject areas. Sandwich courses appear to have slightly lagged behind expanding student numbers – there has been a fall in the percentage of students on sandwich courses overall from 6.8 per cent to 6.1 per cent and larger falls in some of the main sandwich course subject areas, for example in agriculture & related subjects the proportion of sandwich course enrolments fell from 21.6 per cent to 16 per cent, in business & administration from 19.4 per cent to 16.4 per cent and in architecture, building & planning from 21.2 per cent to 19.2 per cent.

Figure 3.3: Students enrolled on sandwich courses 04/05-09/10



Source: HESA 2010b & 2005

The literature on work placements at university makes some attempt to take account for students on sandwich courses opting not to take their sandwich year and also for other kinds of workplace learning within Higher Education. CRAC & Oakleigh Consulting (2011) use previous research to estimate that around a third of students on sandwich courses do not take up their placement to estimate that around 25,000 to 30,000 placements are undertaken each year. In addition they estimate another 30,000 non-sandwich integrated placements per year.

3.1.3 Traineeships as part of ALMPs

The most recent data available from the DWP (2011) indicate that 16,360 Jobseeker's Allowance claimants have taken up Work Experience placements between January and August 2011. The intention is that 250,000 Work Experience placements will take place between 2012 and 2015 (DWP 2012). The full break down of these results is shown in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: Work Experience starts Jan 2011-August 2011 by demographic group

	Group	Work experience starts
Gender	Male	9,750
	Female	6,610
Age	18-24	15,630
	25+	730
	Unknown	10

	Group	Work experience starts
Disability	Disability	2,230
	No Disability	14,140
Ethnicity	White	12,960
	Black/Black British	800
	Asian/Asian British	960
	Mixed	370
	Other/Chinese	190
	Unknown	1,080
	Total	16,360

3.1.4 Transnational placements

Data from the Erasmus scheme indicates an increasing number of transnational placements. Both UK students going on placements elsewhere and students from other Member States coming to the UK have increased over the last three years. In 2009/10 3,670 UK students went on placements through Erasmus and 5,827 students came to the UK. The main destinations for UK students in 2009/10 were France (1,501) and Spain (824), while the largest contingents of students from other Member States came from France (1,695) and Germany (1,033).

Table 3.2: Incoming and outgoing Erasmus placement student

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Outgoing students	2,755	3,387	3,670
Incoming students	3,145	4,785	5,827

Due to the focus of UK Leonardo Da Vinci funding on schemes for apprentices and the disadvantaged, many of the mobility placements currently being run do not fall under the definition of traineeships in this report. However some placement schemes are relevant, for example among the currently funded projects a number involve sending FE college tourism students on placements overseas. Between 2007-2009 there were 13,682 Leonardo Da Vinci beneficiaries from the UK, additionally the UK was one of the most popular destinations up to 2006 with over five per cent of all participants coming to the country.

More broadly young people from the UK appear to be less likely to go abroad for training or education than their counterparts in other European nations. A recent Flash Eurobarometer (2011) survey shows that just ten per cent young adults from the UK had been abroad for education or training, the joint third lowest of all countries surveyed and some way below the average of 14 per cent. Of those that had been abroad 29 per cent had taken a traineeship as part of a HE course and 29 per cent had taken a traineeship as part of vocational education or training.

3.2 Recruitment process of and equity of access to traineeships

Issues with recruitment and equity of access to traineeships in the UK mainly relate to traineeships outside of formal education. There is a widely held view that the current

system of traineeships can exclude certain groups, particularly those from lower socio-economic backgrounds and those living outside of London and the South East. The Milburn report on *Fair Access to the Professions* (Milburn 2009) though largely positive about the potential benefits of traineeships identified three ways in which individuals could find themselves excluded from traineeship opportunities: socio economic factors (unable to work for free), geographical factors (live away from areas where traineeships are available) and information factors (lack access to social networks where information about traineeships is available) (Milburn 2009). Similar concerns were raised by stakeholders who discussed the practice of organisations offering traineeships to children of their family and friends and also the high concentration of traineeships in and around London to the detriment of those living elsewhere.

These themes have also been taken up in the current government's social mobility strategy, which raised concerns about the importance of personal networks in securing traineeship opportunities and the negative effect this might have on young people without access to these networks (HM Government 2011).

Anecdotal evidence from stakeholders suggests that those in traineeships do tend to be from wealthier backgrounds, whose parents are able to provide them with support while they work for low or no pay, and are more typically white, although there does not appear to be a significant gender gap. However, some stakeholders were keen to point out that this is not exclusively the case and that ethnic minorities and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds were also able to benefit from traineeships. In particular it was noted that many larger firms were consciously using traineeship schemes to encourage a broader range of people to enter professional occupations.

As ever, it is difficult to test these anecdotal claims due to a lack of data, however there is some evidence available from the Graduate Talent Pool evaluation. In particular, although a disproportionate number of ethnic minority candidates applied for traineeships through the GTP they appeared to be more likely to be unsuccessful. Additionally GTP participants tended to be higher achieving graduates with 2:1 or 1st degrees often from Russell Group universities, these graduates were also more likely to be successful. This latter point is supported by evidence to the Low Pay Commission from the Interns Anonymous campaign group that Members of Parliament were increasingly asking for traineeship candidates with very strong academic background and often previous work or trainee experience in the area (LPC 2011).

The government has made some effort to widen access. The Graduate Talent Pool, created under the last government, was aimed at providing an easy access point to traineeship vacancies (Mellors-Bourne & Day 2011). Firms with traineeship vacancies can advertise these on the GTP meaning that graduates have a better idea of the kind of opportunities available, essentially the GTP acts as a matching service between graduates and firms with traineeship vacancies. Additionally, under the last government the HEFCE undergraduate traineeship scheme which provided funding to finance short traineeship placements was aimed at encouraging social mobility and therefore targeted at groups who may not typically have access to traineeships (CRAC & Oakleigh Consulting 2011). However, due to time constraints it appears this targeting was not always especially effective (CRAC & Oakleigh Consulting 2011). More recently as part of the current government's social mobility strategy businesses have been asked to sign up to the 'business compact' in which they voluntarily commit to a range of activities to widen access to professional occupations to groups who may have previously been excluded. One of the suggested actions is to offer traineeship placements in a rigorous and open way rather than offering them to those with access to personal networks.

The government is also keen to expand access to sandwich courses (traineeships as part of higher education) as part of a general effort to improve links between HE and industry. As part of the HE White Paper *Students at the Heart of the System* (BIS 2011b) a review was commissioned looking at how sandwich placements could be 'revived'.

3.3 Evolution of traineeships over time and impact of recent economic crisis on traineeships

3.3.1 Traineeships outside of formal education

Despite the lack of reliable data, there is a general consensus supported by anecdotal evidence that traineeships outside of formal education or traineeships have grown in number over the last five years. Most interviewees confirmed this view, however there was not unanimous agreement. Certainly, the intensity of media and political attention on traineeships has increased. Additionally, as noted above there is some survey evidence to suggest that employers have increased their recruitment of trainees during the recession (eg CIPD 2010c).

Stakeholders made a number of comments regarding the spread of traineeships. Firstly, in addition to expanding numerically they are becoming increasingly common in sectors where they were previously not prevalent. 'Traditional' internship sectors were characterised by one stakeholder as 'glamour' sectors with a high level of competition for graduate entry level jobs – fashion, media and journalism and politics. However, while traineeships remain in these sectors, employers elsewhere in the economy have also begun to offer traineeships.

Secondly the expansion in traineeships has been driven extensively by the recession, in particular the reduction in large employers' graduate schemes appears to have made traineeships an attractive alternative option for both employers and graduates. Additionally some stakeholders raised concerns that in a weak labour market employers were using traineeships as a way of getting access to cheap skilled labour.

3.3.2 Traineeships as part of an education course

As noted above the overall numbers of students on sandwich courses appear to have fallen slightly in the last five years and there has been a more substantial fall in sandwich courses as proportion of students. However, a more significant issue has been the trend towards sandwich course students not taking up the option of a sandwich placement. Estimates suggest a decline from 95 per cent taking a placement in 1998/99 to 88 per cent in 2004/05 to around two thirds in the present day (CRAC & Oakleigh Consulting). A number of researchers have attempted to understand why students opt not to take up their placement year (Morgan 2006, Aggett & Busby 2011). Among the key reasons students opt out a desire to finish the degree as quickly as possible, concerns about taking a break from academia, inability to find the right placement (either due to unsuccessful applications or lack of appropriate vacancies), lack of support from the university, concerns about costs, uncertainty about career aims, high employer entry requirements and a belief that they already had adequate experience of industry contacts.

3.3.3 Mandatory professional training

Changes in mandatory professional training obviously vary considerably across professions, however there is some evidence that certain professions have been affected by the economic crisis. In particular training opportunities for solicitors appear to have reduced, with the industry feeling the effects of the collapse of the UK financial sector. The number of new training contracts for solicitors fell by 16.1 per cent between 2008/09 and 2009/10 (Fletcher & Muratova 2010). A shortage of training contracts has been widely reported in the press (Rose 2010). An undersupply of training contracts relative to the numbers of students taking Legal Practice Courses has been a long run trend that was exacerbated by the crisis (Rose 2010) The costs of taking on trainees has been cited as a major factor in the lack of contracts available given that law firms often pay over the minimum wage laid

down by the SRA. Recent responses have included the launch of Acculaw a firm which takes trainees on at a lower rate and the loans them out to firms (Aldridge 2011)

3.4 Financing of traineeships

Financing of traineeships across all forms of traineeships is largely split between firms and the trainees and their parents. The balance is obviously dependent on the extent to which traineeships are paid or unpaid, even unpaid traineeships tend to include expenses such as lunch and some travel. However, a number of stakeholders noted that trainees did tend to rely on at least being able to stay with their parents while they were undertaking their traineeship – particularly graduate traineeships outside of formal education.

Public financing of traineeships has largely been confined to specific schemes which have either been small scale, short term or both. The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) has provided funding to universities to run traineeship schemes for both graduates and undergraduates (these schemes are covered in more detail in the case study). The HEFCE internship schemes have both ended and there are currently no plans to run similar schemes in the future (Tims 2011). Other smaller schemes exist, for example in Northern Ireland the Graduate Internship Programme provided subsidies for 60 graduates to undertake internships in voluntary and community sector organisations (Bailie 2011).

Student finance arrangements for those on placement years vary somewhat, students tend pay a lower level of tuition fees but are also entitled to a lower level of loan to cover tuition fees and maintenance costs.

Finally the ALMP Work Experience programme can be regarded as publicly funded given that participants continue to receive Jobseeker's Allowance through their placement. However employers may still incur costs related to the induction and supervision of the participant.

With regards to transnational placements, the UK received €35,357,000 for decentralised actions under the Erasmus programme in 2009-10 while in 2010 total Leonardo Da Vinci grants were €12,393,019.

3.5 Public perceptions about traineeships

In the UK the majority of the debate around traineeships has focussed on traineeships or traineeships outside of formal education. Two key themes emerge, firstly the concerns about the quality of traineeships particularly regarding whether or not trainees should be paid and secondly over the role of traineeships in hampering or fostering social mobility.

The social mobility angle on traineeships has been raised in policy documents under both the last Labour government and the current Coalition government. The Milburn Report on Fair Access to the Professions (Milburn 2009) emphasised that traineeships were often a key entry route into professional occupations but raised concerns about the exclusion of certain groups from traineeship opportunities. The report cited three issues – socio economic factors (unable to work for free), geographical factors (live away from areas where traineeships are available, mainly London and the south east) and information factors (lack access to social networks where information about traineeships is available) (Milburn 2009). More recently the Coalition government's social mobility strategy *Opening doors, breaking barriers* (HM Government 2011) discussed traineeships in relation to social mobility. The document focussed on problems of financial barriers to traineeships and the role of personal networks in accessing traineeship positions (HM Government 2011). The strategy promised clearer guidance on trainee pay (discussed elsewhere in this report) and unspecified action to encourage employers to open up their recruitment processes. Much of the media coverage of the strategy focussed on those in elite circles securing traineeships for family and friends, specifically the supposed hypocrisy of members of the government having benefitted from traineeships secured by family friends.

A considerable amount of media coverage on traineeships has focussed on the negative aspects particularly low or no pay and poor treatment of trainees. Stakeholders from all sides of the debate expressed concern about the negative image of traineeships and emphasised that the majority of traineeships are of reasonable quality, offer at least minimum wage and good quality work experience. However a significant minority (rough estimates from stakeholders were around 30-40 per cent) of traineeships were of poor quality offering insufficient remuneration to trainees. Media coverage of apparently 'exploitative' traineeships has been central in defining traineeships as a particular problem that needs to be dealt with.

More broadly, there appears to be some public support for trainees to be paid. Polling carried out by Ipsos Mori on behalf of the Internocracy campaign group found that only 9 per cent of the public disagreed that interns should be paid (Heath & Potter 2010).

A number of organisations campaigning specifically on behalf of interns exist including Internocracy, Interns Anonymous and Interns Aware. Broadly speaking these organisations have similar objectives particularly advocating for trainees to receive at least minimum wage while raising concerns about both the quality of work experience offered to trainees and hours worked by trainees. Generally they are positive about the benefits of good traineeships for both trainees and firms. The TUC as well as unions in sectors such as journalism (NUJ) and media and entertainment (BECTU) which are associated with both a high level of traineeships and abuses of traineeships by employers have been involved in campaigning on behalf of trainees. In particular unions have been active in helping take unscrupulous employers of trainees to tribunal.

Unions are particularly concerned about a lack of enforcement on NMW laws by HMRC in relation to traineeships. Additionally while acknowledging the potential benefits of good quality work experience placements to young people, unions have raised concerns about the spread of the concept of traineeship as a category of low paid work for graduates and are opposed to introducing the concept into employment law to create a new tier of employment. Concerns have been raised by trainee groups that employers are using the label 'internship' as a way of filling entry level or routine occupations with graduates on low or no pay (LPC 2010)

The Confederation of British Industry's position on traineeships is that the current system should largely be left as it is. They support enforcement of current legislation where trainees are considered workers but argue that many work experience placements would not be offered if they had to be paid. Additionally the CBI advocate better guidance on recruitment would help firms tackle concerns about the exclusion of some groups from traineeships (CBI 2010). Individual employers have made similar contributions to the CBI, for example the Low Pay Commission reports evidence from an employer in the film industry who stopped offering work placements over concerns that they may be prosecuted under NMW legislation, the roles formerly occupied by trainees were not replaced by paid staff (LPC 2011). In the employers view traineeships were not work but a bridge between study and employment (LPC 2011).

It should be noted that despite widespread concerns regarding traineeships, all stakeholders interviewed agreed that good quality traineeships could play an important part in helping young people make the transition from education to work. This is a view widely supported more generally in the policy literature (Milburn 2009, HM Government 2011, UKCES 2011). There is little appetite, therefore, to abolish traineeships entirely. The question is rather how traineeships can be made of a sufficiently high quality.

In recent months there have also been serious concerns raised regarding the Work Experience programme, in particular following reports that a major supermarket chain had been advertising unpaid/benefits only Work Experience placements as permanent positions (BBC 2012a). This led to the scheme receiving a high level of media attention with accusations that Work Experience placements constitute 'forced labour'. Following the press attention a number of major national retailers have stopped offering Work Experience

placements (BBC 2012b). Questions have also been raised regarding the quality of Work Experience placements, with suggestions that they are too short to be effective and with participants receiving a low level of input or guidance from their employer (ACEVO 2012).

4. Practices and Content of Traineeships

4.1 Traineeships as part of education and/or labour market entry and integration for young people

4.1.1 Traineeships outside of formal education

As is noted elsewhere, there is huge variability in what trainees do in traineeships and how they are organised. The practice and content of these types of traineeship are covered in more detail in the national case study. Evidence suggests that the majority of traineeships last around either three months or six months (Mellors Bourne & Day 2011). Interviewees reported that the best traineeships offer pay, support to trainees and are structured to ensure trainees have a genuine opportunity to learn and develop new skills. By contrast lower quality traineeships tend to involve primarily mundane work for little or no pay.

4.1.2 HE Placements

Little and Harvey (2006) identify three main types of HE placements:

- 'Thick' sandwich placements, these involve placements of a year, and may be either compulsory or optional.
- 'Thin' sandwich placements which tend to involve two blocks of six months and are typically compulsory.
- Compulsory short placements of around six weeks.

As noted above none of these forms of placement are the norm for UK students, only six per cent of undergraduates are enrolled on sandwich courses and around a third of these will not take the option of their placement year.

What placement students do in the workplace varies considerably. To a large extent it is up to universities, employers and students at the local level to determine the organisation of work placements. Research on student activities on work placements finds that placements can vary from ones in which the job gradually evolves and the student is given a range of activities of some complexity to undertake to others where the student is mostly tasked with simple, mundane activities (Little & Harvey 2006, McConnell 2010). Similarly the training and supervision available to students varied from structured placements with a high level of training to others where students were left to their own devices (Little & Harvey 2006). There is evidence of students in larger companies being given their own training budget to finance the course but in most cases training is provided on the job in either an ad-hoc or structured manner (Little & Harvey 2006).

4.1.3 Mandatory professional training

As discussed above, there is a considerable amount of variation in the practices and content of traineeships as part of mandatory professional training, with some professional bodies (such as the SRA) laying down quite strict guidance on the content of placements and others, such as in architecture, leaving content more open.

4.1.4 Traineeships as part of ALMPs

The government is explicit in not seeking to define the content of Work Experience placements, indeed this is regarded as a virtue of the scheme, in guidance for employers the DWP state that:

'We want you [the employer] to be innovative and offer placements that provide a real insight into a working environment. We won't be prescriptive about the structure of placements or make you fill out unnecessary forms and paperwork.'

(DWP 2011b)

Length of placements are defined as 8-12 weeks with a 25-30 hour working week, there is the possibility of extending the placement by four weeks if the employer offers to take the trainee on as an apprentice (DWP 2011b).

4.2 Issues about employer practices as regards traineeships

As noted elsewhere in this report there is considerable concern about the practices of employers particularly regarding traineeships outside of formal education. Concerns particularly relate to the lack of pay for trainees, the quality of work experience, for example, whether trainees are given the opportunity to take on varied tasks or used for mundane and routine jobs, and recruitment practices which are not fair or open. The extent of poor quality traineeships is difficult to judge, stakeholders suggested that the majority of traineeships were of reasonable quality but that there may be a substantial minority (around 30-40 per cent) that are of poor quality. Sectors highlighted as particularly problematic include the 'traditional' traineeship industries which have a history of unpaid work such as the entertainment (BIS 2011) and politics. Pay is probably the easiest element of quality to measure with existing data. Responses to the Graduate Talent Pool evaluation indicated that 64 per cent on traineeships secured by respondents were paid, 31 per cent expenses only and five per cent entirely unpaid. Additionally 60 per cent received role specific training, 48 per cent received generic training and 17 per cent received no training. There was no substantial difference in the levels of training between paid and unpaid vacancies (Mellors-Borne & Day 2011). The CIPD (2010) found that 18 per cent of employers pay trainees expenses only, while the CBI found 13 per cent of firms paying only expenses. As has already been discussed, these figures need to be treated cautiously.

The government appears to be moving towards some stricter enforcement of NMW laws, following the publication of guidelines on the NMW and traineeships (Businesslink 2011). Additionally the Graduate Talent Pool and business compact aim to reduce questionable recruitment practices, the first by providing a matching service between trainees and firms and the second by asking firms to voluntarily commit to ensuring fair and open recruitment practices that encourage diversity.

There appear to be few concerns regarding practices in placements as part of university courses. Complaints regarding mandatory professional training placements vary across different professions, with architecture trainees being particularly vocal in raising concerns about placements (Fulcher 2011). The main issue in architecture has been unpaid placements although the extent of unpaid placements in architecture is unclear. Some concerns have been raised regarding the use of Work Experience placements as a source of cheap labour with little benefit to the trainee, but so far this is largely based on a small amount of anecdotal evidence (Malik 2011).

5. Trainee's Rights and Terms and Conditions

Much of the evidence for this section is covered above on the legal aspects of traineeships, this section recaps these details and adds other relevant information.

5.1.1 Traineeships outside of formal education

If trainees are defined as 'worker' they are covered by NMW with similar rights to any other employee, for example being covered by Working Time Regulation. Unpaid trainees are essentially volunteers and can freely leave or be deemed surplus to requirements, they should also be free to work whichever hours they choose.

In terms of benefits, unpaid trainees would lose their right to Jobseeker's Allowance if their traineeship involved more than 16 hours a week. Under the last government a 'Training Allowance' was introduced to allow 2009 graduates who had been receiving Jobseeker's Allowance for six months to continue receiving JSA while doing an unpaid or expenses only traineeship for up to 13 weeks, provided the traineeship offered more than 16 hours work a week and was advertised through the Graduate Talent Pool. However, this scheme does not appear to have been extended to other graduate cohorts.

5.1.2 Traineeships as part of formal education

Students on sandwich placements have a specific exemption from the NMW. Other working terms and conditions largely a matter for University and employer, for example QAA recommends Universities have policies in place to manage situations where either party wish to terminate placement.

5.1.3 Traineeships as part of mandatory professional training

The rights, terms and conditions of those on mandatory professional placements is largely the concern of professional bodies and subsequently varies between professions, as noted above in legal section.

6. Quality Assurance of Traineeships

6.1.1 Traineeships outside of formal education

The most serious concerns about the quality of traineeships relate to traineeships outside of formal education (internships), the quality of traineeships has been raised as a concern by a wide variety of stakeholders. Overall the key areas of concern are pay, access and the quality of training and work experience trainees receive. The Low Pay Commission reported in 2010 that there was evidence of 'systematic abuse' of traineeships by employers as a way of circumventing NMW legislation (LPC 2010).

Given the absence of regulation of traineeships, there has been a proliferation of voluntary quality frameworks produced by government and non-governmental bodies. In general policy makers in the UK have expressed a preference for voluntary schemes over any compulsory regulation of traineeships (Milburn 2009). These include the Chartered Institute for Personnel Development (2009a, 2009b), BIS & The Gateways to the Professions Collaborative Forum (2011), The Mayor of London & Renaissance London (for museums and the cultural sector) (2010), Skillset (for creative and cultural sectors (2010) and the National Council for Work Experience. Of these the most highly regarded amongst

stakeholders was the CIPD framework. The CIPD covers six areas for employers to monitor to ensure traineeship quality:

- Recruitment – Recruitment process for trainees should be the same as for 'normal' employees and should be open and rigorous. Additionally job adverts should clearly state the length, duties expected, pay, requirements and prospects of further employment at the end of the traineeship.
- Payment and duration – At a minimum employers should pay expenses but should also be aware of NMW legislation and that if the trainee has fixed hours, specific duties etc. they should be paid NMW.
- Induction – Trainees should have a full induction, particularly bearing in mind that the individual may be entering the world of work for the first time.
- Treatment – Trainees should be treated like other employees rather than 'visitors', they should not automatically be assigned routine tasks. Within reason organisations should also allow trainees time to attend job interviews or for study if applicable.
- Supervision – Trainees should have a dedicated supervisor who is given time to supervise and review trainee performance, providing feedback, mentoring and advocacy on the trainee's behalf. There should be a formal performance review between the trainee and the supervisor.
- Reference and feedback – At the end of the traineeship the trainees should receive a reference detailing work undertaken and skills and experience acquired along with the content of the formal performance review. Trainees themselves should be given the opportunity to provide feedback.

To a large extent, these are essentially guides for employers, stakeholders noted that there is no way of judging to what extent employers are meeting these standards although some stakeholders felt that employers were responding positively in some areas. Other voluntary quality schemes for traineeships include an element of monitoring employer behaviour. For example, Internocracy, a trainees' campaign group, run a 'kitemark' quality scheme in which employers can become accredited with an I.SIP Mark (Internocracy Star Internship Programme). The National Council for Work Experience also offers a work experience quality mark under which employers pay £3,000 for assessment. Take-up of these quality marks appears to be fairly small scale at the current time, for example in 2010 14 companies had received the NCWE Quality Mark in total (Inspiring Interns 2010).

Other private sector organisations provide mechanisms for traineeship quality assurance. Step Enterprises Limited, which grew out of the Shell Step programme, helps organise work experience placements for undergraduates and graduates as well as placements as part of sandwich courses. The placements are based around specific projects which the trainee takes charge of, both the trainee and the firm have access to advice and support from Step throughout the traineeship. A similar scheme, Unlocking Cornish Potential, exists on a regional basis in Cornwall. Aimed specifically at graduates, those on placements work on projects specially designed for them within firms, receive a salary equivalent to at least £16,000 p.a. and have a named mentor to assist them. A business development manager from UCP helps firms develop placement projects, monitors their progress and is available to provide advice and support to both parties. UCP also provide help in financing and organising relevant training for the graduate.

Some traineeship matching/recruitment sites also make efforts to monitor the quality of the traineeships they facilitate. Some quality assurance has now been built into the government's Graduate Talent Pool. Following criticisms that some of the vacancies advertised through GTP were poor quality, from October 2011 all vacancies submitted to the site are checked to ensure they can be considered 'graduate' placements. Inspiring Interns, an internship recruitment agency, facilitates the matching of trainees to placements while also making efforts to ensure traineeships are of sufficient quality, for example drawing up a traineeship specification and facilitating a traineeship agreement between the trainee and

the company and assists when either party feels there has been a deviation from the agreement. Similar services are offered by Graduate Advantage in the West Midlands who also provide financial support with travel costs for those on unpaid traineeships and set limits to the length of both paid and unpaid traineeships. However, it should be noted that there is a limited amount of evaluation evidence to tell us the extent to which this kind of quality assurance mechanism improves the quality of traineeships relative to 'pure' open market traineeships.

As noted above, the government has not been especially proactive with regards to the quality of traineeships. Some voluntary schemes and guidance have been sponsored by government such as the BIS & The Gateways to the Professions Collaborative Forum (2011) and the social mobility business compact under which firms can voluntarily commit to widening the opportunities for young people to access professional occupations in a range of ways including making recruitment to traineeships fairer and more accessible. However, there has been some activity specifically regarding payment of trainees. The government has recently issued more detailed guidance on when the NMW applies to traineeships and it was the opinion of stakeholders that more active enforcement of NMW by HMRC in relation to traineeships was now likely.

A final source of quality control is trainees themselves along with representatives such as Unions and campaigning bodies working on behalf of trainees. Some stakeholders felt that trainees could play a proactive role in ensuring that their traineeships were of decent quality, for example by being more aware of what to look for in an traineeship and having a greater understanding of what kind of traineeship would benefit them most. Additionally, as noted above, trainees and Unions have played a role in bringing employers offering poor quality traineeships to tribunal, particularly in relation to pay. Interns sites such as Interns Anonymous have played a role in highlighting cases of poor quality traineeships. However other stakeholders felt that it would be unhelpful to place too much onus on trainees who may feel they are in too weak a position to make complaints.

6.1.2 Traineeships as part of formal education

In general there appears to be less concern regarding the quality of traineeships as part of formal education. Evidence suggests that the majority of students on work placements enjoy and benefit from their placements (Little & Harvey 2006). Where students opt out of sandwich placements, this does not appear to be driven by concerns about the quality of the placement (Aggett & Busby 2011). However there is inevitably some evidence of variability in quality of placements, for example that students sometimes complain that they are given mundane and routine tasks that do not help their development (Morgan 2006) or that there was a lack of mentoring within the workplace (Little & Harvey 2006). However, the conclusion of Little & Harvey's (2006) study of 80 students who had undertaken work placement was that 'For all [students in the study] the positive aspects outweighed the negative ones and none now regretted having undertaken a placement'. There is certainly not the same concern over student work placements that there is over informal traineeships.

Individual HEIs have the responsibility of ensuring quality in work placements and have their own quality assurance guidelines and procedures. At a national level the Quality Assurance Agency produces its own Code of Practice which is not binding but which HEIs should take into account when developing their own guidelines. The QAA is responsible for monitoring the quality of education within universities and the placements offered by HEIs would be evaluated under this remit. The QAA's review of institutional audit reports relating to work based and placement learning found that HEIs generally had effective systems in place for supporting students on placements and that in most cases HEIs made efforts to align their own guidance with the QAA recommendations (QAA 2008). This was a view shared by stakeholders.

6.1.3 Traineeships as part of mandatory professional training

As noted above, the regulation of professional training varies considerably across professions. For trainee solicitors a fairly strict set of guidelines promulgated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority governs most aspects of their placement. On the other hand trainee architect placements are subject to less stringent regulation and codes of best practice are more relevant. For example RIBA and Archaos the representative body for student architects set out guidelines on the minimum terms of employment for trainee architects on placements, including a recommended wage above the minimum wage (Archaos 2009).

6.1.4 Traineeships as part of ALMPs

Quality assurance of Work Experience placements mirrors that for open market traineeships. The government and the CIPD have produced good practice guidelines for employers offering placements (DWP 2011b, CIPD 2012). These guides include recommendations to have appropriate selection procedures in place, to offer an induction, support in the workplace, appropriate supervision and references and feedback. It was noted by interviewees that the key difference between trainees and Work Experience trainees is likely to be that those on Work Experience placements will need greater levels of support and may be a greater risk of exploitation than trainees.

6.1.5 Transnational Traineeships

A number of quality documents govern Erasmus placements. HE institutions are required to sign a University Charter which commits them to ensure the quality of placements and to accredit the trainees' accomplishments on their placements. In addition for each individual placement, the trainee receives:

- a placement agreement signed by the student and the higher education institution
- a 'Training Agreement' setting out the programme for the placement period; agreed by the higher education institution and the host organisation
- a 'Quality Commitment' setting out the rights and obligations of all the parties
- the Erasmus Student Charter which details the student's rights and obligations with respect to his/her period abroad.

(DG EAC 2011)

Similarly the Leonardo Da Vinci Quality Commitment for Training Placements (DG EAC n.d.) outlines the rights and responsibilities of all parties in LdV placements

7. Overall Assessment as regards Traineeships

7.1 Benefits and drawbacks of traineeships

7.1.1 Benefits

Firms

Perhaps the most obvious benefit for a firm is the opportunity to have an additional staff member available, generally at a lower cost. A YouGov poll for Internocracy found that 17 per cent of managers felt that companies use trainees to get work done more cheaply

(Heath & Potter 2010). However it should also be noted that employing trainees can bring additional costs, for example requiring permanent staff to act as mentors. In relation to traineeships 52 per cent of employer respondents to a CIPD survey regarded trainees as a cost effective resource while 33 per cent felt trainees could improve productivity (CIPD 2010b). Of 64 respondents to a recent Xpert HR survey 39 felt that trainees provide helpful input to the work of the organisation and 36 felt trainees bring in new insight. However, only 13 believed they improve productivity or profitability and 12 felt trainees help reduce employment costs (Wolf 2011).

The same survey found a majority of employers (76 per cent) felt that trainees could be useful for recruitment purposes while 69 per cent felt traineeships could help develop talent within their industry (CIPD 2010). That said other surveys of organisations employing trainees have found less enthusiasm about traineeships as a recruitment tool (Wolff 2011). Additionally appointing permanent staff as mentors to trainees is seen as creating an opportunity for internal staff development, 50 per cent of respondents to the CIPD survey felt their business could benefit in this way (CIPD 2010b) along with 39 out of 64 respondents in the Xpert HR survey (Wolff 2011)

Stakeholders also felt there could be reputational benefits for firms providing traineeships – given the widespread links between traineeships and social mobility; firms could offer good quality traineeships to youths from disadvantaged background as a part of their CSR policies. Improvements to the image of the company were the most cited factor (55 out of 64 respondents) in a recent survey of organisations employing trainees (Wolff 2011)

Finally, traineeships connected to an educational course or institution can help employers build better links with educational institutions. A number of

Trainees

The main benefits for trainees were identified as general employability skills (particularly in open market traineeships and also many university sandwich placements), sector specific skills (more typical in mandatory professional training), getting a 'taste' of an industry to see whether it is what they want and the possibility of a job with the firm. Additionally in open market traineeships in particular getting a reference from the traineeship employer was regarded as extremely beneficial in future job searches.

Educational institutions

Ball et al. (2006) note a number of benefits for educational institutions whose students participate in work placements. These benefits can be broadly divided into two categories, firstly placements can help the institution improve the quality and relevance of the education on offer and secondly placements help students engage better with their subject area. Examples of the former include using links with employers to develop fresh approaches to higher education, ensuring that industry-related learning is up to date and direct participation of employers for example as guest lecturers or on course validation panels. In the latter case, work placements can help students engage better with their subject area in a number of ways. For example Little & Harvey (2006) note that when students return to the university after a period of work experience, they are often able to bring back learning from their placement and apply it to their academic work. This includes different approaches to learning, enhanced understanding and the ability to use examples from their work placements in seminars and assignments.

7.1.2 Drawbacks

Employer

The main drawbacks from an employer perspective appear to be resource constraints related to mentoring and managing trainees as well as costs associated with organising placements. This was an issue raised during stakeholder interviews and supported by some

surveys of employers, for example an Xpert HR survey of 64 organisations employing trainees the most commonly cited issues were the costs of supervising trainees (41 out of 64) and difficulties co-ordinating and organising work experience placements (37 out of 64). At the other end of the scale only 6 out of 64 felt the financial cost amounted to a burden on the firm and only three felt that individuals coming to the company as trainees were rarely of good enough quality to make providing such placements worthwhile (Wolff 2011).

There is an open question over the extent to which greater enforcement of NMW laws might create an additional drawback for employers.

Trainees

From the point of view of the trainee the main drawbacks of traineeships appear to be those noted above regarding poor quality open market traineeships, namely a risk of exploitation in poor quality traineeships with low or no pay. Stakeholders also noted anecdotal evidence of 'cycles' of traineeships, where young people get stuck in a series of traineeships, unable to find a permanent position. Some stakeholders also noted diminishing returns for young people taking a series of traineeships.

7.2 Effectiveness of traineeships

There was a general consensus amongst stakeholders that if a trainee could access a good quality traineeship or work placement it could significantly improve their employability.

A lack of relevant work experience has been identified as a key barrier to labour market entry (UKCES 2011). Specifically for graduates (Arthur & Little 2010) tend to be less prepared for work and undergo longer transitions into the labour market. UK model of Higher Education has a 'loose fit' with the labour market, meaning professional formation tends to happen after the completion of a degree (Arthur & Little 2010). Stakeholders generally felt that some kind of practical work experience can help young people in making labour market transitions.

Some degree of evaluation has been carried out of traineeships schemes sponsored by government. Table 7.1 shows some of the employment related impacts of various government sponsored traineeship schemes.

Table 7.1: Outcomes of traineeship schemes

	L/t employment with same company	L/t employment other company	Total I/t employment	Temporary employment	Total employment	Unemployed	Voluntary/ traineeship	Further study
Completed Hefce graduate traineeship	28%	18%	46%	14%	60%	15%	5%	8%
Unsuccessful Hefce graduate traineeship	n/a	25%	25%	25%	50%	27%	12%	9%
Completed GTP traineeship	22%	18%	40%	22%	62%	22%	7%	No figure given
Unsuccessful or non applicant GTP traineeship	n/a	26%	26%	Slightly higher than those completing traineeship (no figure given)	n/a	21%	Slightly higher than those completing traineeship (no figure given)	Slightly higher than those completing traineeship (no figure given)
Completed GIP NI	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	62%	30%	3%	5%

The results from the HEFCE and GTP traineeship evaluations indicate those who applied and were successful found were more likely to find long term work following their traineeship than those who were either unsuccessful or did not apply. In particular a significant minority in both cases got jobs with their traineeship employer. Obviously these figures need to be treated with caution – it may be that those who successfully completed a traineeship were generally better candidates than those who were unsuccessful. Additionally it may be the case that these traineeships were not representative of traineeships more generally, particularly in the case of the HEFCE programme where HE institutions were also involved in the organisation of the traineeships. Nonetheless, these results do indicate some benefit from participating in traineeships.

There have also been positive employment effects found for placements as part of higher education courses, where the available research is somewhat more robust than that for open market traineeships. Mason, Williams & Cranmer (2006) found structured work experience placements have a positive effect on the probability of graduates being employed and, furthermore, being employed in work appropriate to their skill level. Bennett et al. (2008) found that 67 per cent of respondents to their survey of graduate recruiters preferred candidates who had taken a placement year as part of their degree. In general placements were regarded as more important than degree class or type of institution.

There is very limited evidence on the impact of Work Experience placements. One early analysis found evidence that participation in Work Experience has had no impact on the speed at which claimants leave benefits and to some extent participants may actually spend longer on benefits (Bivand et al. 2011). However the report urges caution in interpreting these results given that Work Experience was initially intended to be aimed at jobseekers with particular difficulty entering the labour market who would be expected to require a longer time to find work. Currently we do not have data available to assess whether Work Experience participants are from particularly 'hard to help' groups.

There is limited UK evidence on the impact of traineeships on job mobility. However it was noted by interviewees that where open market traineeships are unpaid or low paid, trainees often rely on living with parents implying a certain restriction on mobility. Some open market traineeships offer travel expenses but this often only covers relatively local travel – for example travel on public transport within London for traineeships based in the capital.

With regard to the effectiveness of the current financing arrangements for traineeships, there has been the concern that unpaid traineeships, in which trainees tend to be reliant on support from parents, will exclude those from lower socio-economic backgrounds. This was a concern raised by most stakeholders in addition to policy makers (Milburn 2009). Additionally there are concerns that some firms, particularly smaller firms, may be put off offering traineeships due to the costs involved. As a consequence a number of the local traineeship schemes discussed above, such as Graduate Advantage in the West Midlands, are particularly aimed at SMEs. This latter problem has also been noted in some professions with mandatory traineeships, for example for solicitors particularly since the recession.

The evaluation of the HEFCE internship scheme found funding to be critical to getting employers involved, however it was felt that this did not need to be funding for the full cost of either the placement or the trainee wage. Instead it might be possible to use 'seed funding' to get an initial commitment from employers (CRAC & Oakleigh Consulting 2011)

With regards to issues that require immediate action, the issue of pay in open market traineeships was cited as a concern by many stakeholders. To a large extent the legal position of open market traineeships appears to have been clarified and it is mainly a matter of combining dissemination of government guidance on NMW and traineeships with some form of enforcement activity. Additionally, it would appear to be beneficial to investigate ways to expand the number of HE students taking work placements as part of their course, given the fact that these kinds of placement appear to be less problematic than open market traineeships.

7.3 Good practice examples and recommendations

Traineeships as part of university courses appear to be the least problematic of the traineeship forms considered here. There may be a number of reasons for this. Firstly the fact that the position of these traineeships in relation to NMW legislation is very clear removes one of the points of contention related to open market traineeships in particular. Secondly, there is a general sense that most university placements are of a decent quality. This may be due to the presence of the university as a 'third party' overseeing the placement. Some of the more interesting traineeship schemes employ a similar system, for example, the model followed by Unlocking Cornish Potential. It is also notable that for mandatory professional traineeships, professional bodies also often play a third party regulatory role.

Obviously third party regulation of traineeships across the economy as a whole would be difficult to achieve and require substantial resources. As a result one possible approach to ensuring a greater degree of quality control over the more unregulated forms of traineeship might be to expand the quality assurance roles of traineeship matching services, most obviously the Graduate Talent Pool. The government is now beginning to apply quality assurance filters to opportunities advertised on the GTP, though there is perhaps scope to provide a clearer explanation of the standards by which traineeships can be judged. This would be a model that could relatively easily be exported to other countries which have a substantial numbers of largely unregulated open market traineeships.

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UK Case Study Report

Traineeship in focus for this case study

For the purposes of the UK case study we are focussing on open market traineeships, often referred to as internships

Policy Framework

There is no legal definition of traineeship in the UK. The term has come into conventional use over the last ten years to describe periods of work experience typically taken by young graduates or current HE students during vacations (in the latter case where the placement does not form part of the student's course). Legally traineeships are covered by standard employment laws including the National Minimum Wage Act, Working Time Regulations and equality laws. The extent to which trainees are covered by these laws has been considered as something of a grey area and depends on the specific organisation of individual traineeships. The key issue is whether trainees are considered 'workers' or 'volunteers'. If trainees are considered to be workers, they would be entitled to the standard National Minimum Wage.

- There is a contract or other arrangement which entitles the individual to a reward. The contract may be written, implied or oral.
- The reward is a monetary payment or a benefit in kind and the reward is not simply the reimbursement of genuine out-of-pocket expenses. The promise of a contract or future work could be considered a benefit in kind.
- The individual has to turn up for work even if they don't want to – for example whether there are sanctions for not coming to work or whether there is a contract notice period.
- The employer must provide work for the duration of the contract or arrangement.
- The individual has to perform the work or services personally.
- The employer is not the individual's client or customer.

(Businesslink 2011)

So for example if a trainee is free to come and go at any time, they would be classed as a volunteer and exempt. Similarly if the traineeship purely involved work shadowing it would be exempt because the employee would not be carrying out work or services personally. However if the traineeship was undertaken with the prospect of further work or a permanent contract in the future, the employer would be required to pay NMW. It is also worth noting that a trainee cannot waive their right to the minimum wage.

Aside from pay, where a trainee is classed as a worker they would have similar rights to a normal worker. For example they would be protected by the Employment Act 2010 from unlawful discrimination as well as the Working Time Regulations 1998 entitling them to paid annual leave, breaks and maximum working hours (XperthR n.d.). Additionally unpaid trainees receiving relevant training could also be protected under the Working Time Regulations (Nadel 2009).

The government department responsible for the NMW is the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS), while enforcement is undertaken by Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs (HMRC). Interviewees have noted that thus far there has not been a great deal of enforcement of National Minimum Wage law in relation to traineeships by HMRC or BIS, the government departments responsible for the NMW. However, it is anticipated that this will change. Recently the government published updated guidance on the NMW and traineeships

(Businesslink 2011). In the mean time individuals and trade unions have been testing the law and there are a number of cases where trainees have successfully secured damages for unpaid work at tribunal. This year for example in *Keri Hudson vs TGP Publishing Web Publishing Ltd* the tribunal ruled that Keri Hudson, a trainee whose position had been advertised as unpaid, was entitled to pay and holiday because although no formal contract existed the extent of her tasks (including managing and hiring other trainees) implied a contractual relationship (Harbottle.com 2011). Additionally there had been discussions with the company over the potential for her role to become paid which the company later went back on. A similar verdict was reached in *N Vetta vs London Dreams Motion Pictures* (BECTU 2009). In this case Nicola Vetta had been employed by London Dreams Motion Pictures to work on a film on an expenses only basis, the tribunal ruled that despite the job advert specifying the position was expenses only, Vetta was still entitled to the NMW.

As an open market arrangement it is difficult to say anything definitive about the 'objective' of traineeships. The motivations of the different parties in a traineeship may vary. From the point of view of the trainee aims mainly relate to increasing their employability and improving their CV. Firm motivations are more complex, to an extent there may be a business benefit for example from having a skilled individual available to work for less than a 'normal' member of staff. Additionally interviewees suggested that traineeships may fit into the corporate social responsibility agenda at firms, particularly in relation to promoting social mobility.

Policy makers have generally endorsed traineeships as an effective method for helping to prepare young people for the world of work. Particularly under the last government the expansion of traineeships was framed as part of the response to rising youth unemployment. More recently, policy makers have begun to view traineeships as a means to support greater social mobility. For example the Milburn Report (2010) on access to the professions highlighted traineeships as key entry point to professional jobs for those from lower socio-economic backgrounds, but also as a potential barrier if traineeship opportunities were the preserve of wealthier individuals.

As traineeships are primarily on the open market, there is no specific target group for this form of traineeship. Interviewees reported instances of individuals in their 30s being offered traineeships. However, for the most part traineeships appear to be taken up by younger people with degree level education (typically recent graduates) or HE students during their summer vacation. Additionally, traineeship opportunities appear to be inaccessible for young people who do not hold (or are not studying towards) a degree (Margo et al. 2010). Interviewees involved in traineeship recruitment suggested that although those with secondary level education occasionally enquired about traineeship placements, but they had never found an appropriate placement for these individuals.

Organisation of Traineeship under Study, Relevant Stakeholders and their Role

There is no overarching formal operational framework for traineeships. In many cases the only parties involved are the trainee and the employer. Traineeship arrangements will be determined between these two parties, although predominantly by the employer who will generally set out details such as the length, content and scope for remuneration in the traineeship advert.

In some specific circumstances other parties may be involved, for example where a third part helps to facilitate the traineeship. The government's Graduate Talent Pool website provides a traineeship advertising service and, more recently, some degree of quality control over advertised placements. Similar services are offered by Graduate Advantage in the West Midlands area, Inspiring Interns, a private intern recruitment company and Unlocking Cornish Potential which places Cornish graduates in local businesses to work on specific projects.

Certain NGOs have also become involved in seeking to shape traineeship provision. In particular the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, which has produced guidance for employers on good quality traineeships (CIPD 2009a, 2009b), and Professions For Good, an consortium of professional associations seeking to promote raise the profile of and encourage good practices within professional occupations. There is also a sizeable 'intern lobby' made up of campaigning organisations run by current or former interns, including Interns Aware, Internocracy and Interns Anonymous. These organisations are particularly focussed on issues of pay and poor practice within internships. Trade unions have also run campaigns on traineeships, especially related to the minimum wage. However, although these NGOs appear to have had some influence in public debate it should be noted that they have no formal role.

Funding & Resource Allocation

For the most part the costs of traineeships are split between the firm and the trainee (or the trainee's family depending on the situation – interviewees told us that in many cases trainees tended to often be reliant on parental support)

Public financing of traineeships has largely been confined to specific schemes which have either been small scale, short term or both. The Higher Education Funding Council for England has funded a number of projects aimed at increasing the supply of traineeships. For example the Undergraduate Scheme provided funding for 852 traineeships for current undergraduates at £1,000 a place, generally for 4-8 weeks. Additionally the Graduate Internships scheme funded 8,500 traineeship placements for recent graduates at £1,600 per place for 8-12 week placements. The money was provided to HE institutions who then had used the money to fund placements, the way the money was used varied. For example in the undergraduate scheme funds were either paid directly to the student or to the firm who then reimbursed the student. In most cases firms were also asked to make a financial contribution but where this was optional, the majority of firms declined. In the graduate scheme the funding was generally used as a subsidy towards trainee remuneration, with companies being asked to make an additional contribution although some institutions used the majority of the money to fund employer engagement, offering lower or no subsidy. Both these programmes were begun under the previous Labour government as part of a package of measures to deal with youth unemployment in the recession and have both now been ended. There are no plans to run similar schemes in the future (Tims 2011).

Other smaller schemes exist, for example in Northern Ireland the Graduate Internship Programme provided subsidies for 60 graduates to undertake traineeships in voluntary and community sector organisations. The subsidy took the form of a £185 per week grant for each trainee (covering minimum wage for a 30 hour week plus national insurance contributions) and an additional £250 grant per trainee for training (Bailie 2011). Graduate Advantage in the West Midlands, though primarily a traineeship search service offers those taking unpaid placements travel expenses (up to £25 a week) and also offers a payroll service to employers offering paid traineeships. This latter service means the payroll administration is handled by Graduate Advantage (or more specifically Aston University one of the main funders of the scheme) and the employer is invoiced for the trainee's salary. Effectively this means the employer does not pay National Insurance contributions and administration costs are reduced, organisations can make use of this service for 12 weeks per trainee.

As government is not particularly involved in funding traineeships, for the most part ESF funding is not relevant. However there are some examples of small scale projects in specific locations involving open market traineeships which make use of European funds. For example, the Graduate Advantage website which provides traineeship search facilities graduates in the West Midlands along with support to both trainees and those employing trainees is part funded by the European Regional Development Fund. Similarly Unlocking Cornish Potential helps place graduates in Cornwall in local businesses to work on specific projects (although these are not described as traineeships).

Description Of Traineeship Under Study

Content and Practices related to the Traineeship under Study

There is very little formal definition of content in UK open market traineeships. For the most part practices and content are determined by the employer offering the traineeship – there are no formal requirements regarding training plans, learning content, mentoring or duration. As such there appears to be a considerable degree of variation in the content of traineeships. The most reliable area we have information on is the duration of traineeships – surveys of employers indicate that traineeships tend to last around 3-6 months, although both shorter and longer traineeships are available (Mellors-Bourne & Day 2011, CRAC & Oakleigh Consulting 2011). Interviewees reported examples of ‘good practice’ traineeships where trainees were properly supervised, given opportunities to develop skills and had their tasks clearly set out at the start of the traineeship. At the same time there is a consensus that there is, at the very least, a significant minority of employers offering poor quality traineeships with little or no pay and mundane or low skilled work.

Formal definition of practices may be more common in some of the local schemes involving third parties. For example, Unlocking Cornish Potential requires placements to be structured around a specific project and helps identify training and development opportunities for the individual on placement.

Traineeship Contract and Trainee’s Terms and Conditions

Due to the absence of a legal status for trainees, there is no formal traineeship contract distinct from any other form of employment contract. Having a written agreement at the outset of a traineeship detailing the rights and responsibilities of both the employer and trainee is often regarded as ‘best practice’ but these are not always present.

In the UK access to healthcare is free at the point of use and funded out of general taxation so there are no general issues with the ability of trainees to access healthcare. Unemployment benefits are only available if the trainee is working less than 16 hours a week, even if the placement is unpaid due to the requirement that jobseekers be available for work. Under the previous government 2009 graduates taking placements through the Graduate Talent Pool were able to claim Jobseeker’s Allowance during their traineeship for 13 weeks even if the placement took up more than 16 hours a week. This scheme has not been extended to 2010 or 2011 graduates.

As discussed in the legal section the remuneration of trainees remains a subject of debate in the UK. The legal situation is detailed above, but in broad terms there is no general requirement to pay trainees rather the position of trainees in relation to NMW law depends on the specific traineeship arrangements and the kind of tasks undertaken by the trainee.

Quality Assurance Mechanisms

As noted above, traineeships do not have a specific legal status and, as a consequence, are unregulated beyond standard employment law. Instead quality assurance of traineeships has largely been pursued through voluntary quality charters and standards. Two particular quality charters have been particularly prominent, the CIPD’s *Internship Charter* (and accompanying guide *Internships that Work*) and *The Code of Best Practice for Quality Internships*¹ produced by the Gateways to the Professions Collaborative Forum and promoted by the Department for Business Innovation & Skills. The CIPD charter focuses on six main areas:

¹ <http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/BISCore/higher-education/docs/C/11-1068-common-best-practice-code-for-quality-internships.pdf>

- **Recruitment** – Recruitment process for trainees should be the same as for ‘normal’ employees and should be open and rigorous. Additionally job adverts should clearly state the length, duties expected, pay, requirements & prospects of further employment at the end of the traineeship.
- **Payment and duration** – At a minimum employers should pay expenses but should also be aware of NMW legislation and that if the trainee has fixed hours, specific duties etc. they should be paid NMW.
- **Induction** – Trainees should have a full induction, particularly bearing in mind that the individual may be entering the world of work for the first time.
- **Treatment** – Trainees should be treated like other employees rather than ‘visitors’, they should not automatically be assigned routine tasks. Within reason organisations should also allow trainees time to attend job interviews or for study if applicable.
- **Supervision** – Trainees should have a dedicated supervisor who is given time to supervise and review trainee performance, providing feedback, mentoring and advocacy on the trainee’s behalf. There should be a formal performance review between the trainee and the supervisor.
- **Reference and feedback** – At the end of the traineeship the trainees should receive a reference detailing work undertaken and skills and experience acquired along with the content of the formal performance review. Trainees themselves should be given the opportunity to provide feedback.

The Code of Best Practice for Quality Internships covers areas similar to those addresses by the *CIPD Internship Charter*. Indeed, the CIPD were involved in helping draft the document. In this Code six areas are also covered:

- **Preparation** – Firms need to think beforehand about how they will make effective use of the trainee.
- **Recruitment** – Recruitment practices for trainees should be the same as those for regular employees. Job adverts should clearly state the trainee’s roles and responsibilities as well as pay, duration and working hours.
- **Induction** – All trainees should have a formal induction to the company.
- **Treatment** – Trainees should be treated the same as regular employees, integrated into the organisation and given meaningful work. The Code also recommends that trainees be allowed to attend job interviews and suggests consideration of part-time traineeships for those with caring responsibilities.
- **Supervision and mentoring** – There should be a supervisor with ring-fenced time in their schedule to work with the trainee. The supervisor should establish performance and learning objectives, conduct performance reviews and provide feedback.
- **Certification, reference and feedback** – Trainees should receive a certificate/reference letter and have opportunity to feedback to the organisation on their experience.

The Code of Best Practice for Quality Internships does also touch on remuneration but does not include this as part of the principles of best practice. The discussion involves an exhortation to employers to comply with the law and mentions that higher pay might attract higher calibre candidates to traineeships.

Interviewees suggested that, in the UK context, quality frameworks are better thought of as ‘toolkits’ or advice and guidance than soft regulation. As such some consideration needs to be given to the target audience. Interviewees suggest that quality frameworks are more effective at helping organisations who ‘want’ to provide quality traineeships (but are, perhaps, unsure about what factors they need to consider) than they are in stimulating good practice in organisations where bad practices are more entrenched. For example, quality frameworks are unlikely to have much impact on organisations deliberately using

trainees as a source of cheap labour. Additionally consideration needs to be given to the audience within an organisation, interviewees suggested that quality frameworks tended to be best aimed at individuals responsible for HR rather than managing directors or CEOs. Obviously in smaller organisations this distinction may be less significant. Interviewees felt that those at the top of an organisation would not be particularly concerned with the mechanics of providing a good traineeship.

There is only anecdotal evidence on whether these charters have had any impact on the quality of traineeships available; there is no hard evidence on how many employers have adopted these principles. Interviewees noted there had been interest from some firms providing traineeships and there was evidence of firms incorporating elements of the frameworks into their HR practices. However, as noted above these seem to be firms that are predisposed to offer high quality traineeships and simply require information on how to do so. As such, quality frameworks seem unlikely to have much impact on the minority of organisations, identified by a number of interviewees, offering very low quality traineeships.

Another form of voluntary quality assurance are 'kitemark' schemes where employers allow an independent organisation to evaluate their traineeship scheme and are awarded a 'badge' if their schemes meets the required standards indicating to potential applicants that the traineeship is of a good quality. Two such schemes have been highlighted – the National Council for Work Experience's work experience quality mark, which charges firms £3000 for evaluation and Internocracy's I.SIP (Internocracy Star Internship Programme). However, although these schemes have received praise from policy makers (Milburn 2009) they currently appear to have been taken up by relatively small numbers of employers (Inspiring Interns 2010).

Additionally, quality assurance is beginning to be built into other schemes. For example from October 2011 new vacancies on the Graduate Talent Pool website will be checked to ensure they are appropriate as graduate placements. Graduate Advantage for the West Midlands offer a similar service and also provide each trainee with a member of staff who will monitor the traineeship and deal with any concerns the trainee has. UCP similarly provide graduates and firms with a contact person who monitors and provides guidance during the placement. Inspiring Interns, a private internship advertising service ensure employers are adequately prepared for an intern, help facilitate traineeship agreements at the start of the placement and monitor traineeships as they progress. Additionally, participating HE institutions in the HEFCE Graduate and Undergraduate Internship programmes offered a range of support to interns and, in some cases, employers usually in the form of a mentor that the trainee could discuss their traineeship with.

Finally there has been some effort to encourage organisations to offer traineeships in a manner that supports social mobility. The Deputy Prime Minister has promoted a 'social mobility business compact' through which firms can voluntarily commit to (among other things) 'offer internships openly and transparently and provide financial support to ensure fair access'.

Current Debate

There is a considerable amount of public debate about traineeships in the UK; traineeships do not enjoy a particularly good public image. The debate can be broadly split into concerns regarding the quality of traineeships (including pay) and concerns around traineeships and their effect on social mobility.

Concerns about traineeship quality focus particularly on low or no pay in traineeships but also encompass issues such as the kind of work trainees are asked to undertake, particularly where traineeships are treated as essentially entry level staff with mundane tasks rather than development opportunities. Interviewees were keen to point out that much of the public debate on these topics centres on a minority of poor quality traineeships and that most traineeships are actually of reasonable quality. However it is the poor

practices that dominate the news. In the context of the recession there is a particular concern that graduates are being 'forced' to work in unpaid or low quality traineeships (Observer 2011). Certain sectors have been identified as having particular concentrations of poor practice, for example sectors described by one interviewee as 'glamour sectors' such as fashion, media journalism and politics.

In terms of social mobility there has been concern regarding recruitment practices to traineeship opportunities, notably that senior people within organisations are offering traineeship opportunities to friends and family rather than recruiting openly. In addition concern has been raised over unpaid traineeships excluding those from poorer backgrounds who cannot afford to work for three months on low or no pay.

There appears to be very little appetite for further formal regulation of traineeships, both the Confederation of British Industry and Trade Union Congress have argued in favour of enforcing existing regulation on pay rather than introducing new legislation and creating a legal 'internship' status. The key difference appears to be that the TUC favours a stricter interpretation and tougher enforcement of NMW law. Similarly traineeship campaign groups such as Intern Aware, Internocracy and Interns Anonymous have been pushing for an end to unpaid internships. There appears to be some activity on the part of HMRC and BIS (the government departments responsible for enforcing the NMW) in terms of targeting sectors associated with reputations for unpaid work such as the 'glamour' sectors noted above. Beyond this the government appears to prefer voluntary codes to further regulation of traineeships.

Effectiveness of Case-studied Traineeship: Outputs and Results

There is limited data on take up of traineeships. The literature includes a number of estimates ranging from around 8,000 to 280,800. These are included in the table below with comments on their potential accuracy.

Table A 1: Data on traineeship take up

Number	Source	Year	Comments
1.7% of 2010 graduates (6450/8520)	DELHE	2010	Number of graduates in voluntary or unpaid work six months after leaving university according to HESA's DELHE survey. Likely to be a substantial undercount of the actual figure. Only refers to single cohort of grads at a single point in time. Excludes paid traineeships & those working and training simultaneously.
98,583	LFS	Q4 2010	Number of LFS respondents reporting they have a temporary contract because they are receiving training. May not refer exclusively to trainees in the sense adopted here and would exclude unpaid traineeships
1,440	Mellors-Bourne & Day 2011	2010	Number of traineeships undertaken in the first six months of the Graduate Talent Pool
35,000	Mellors-Bourne & Day 2011	2010	Estimate of 'structured' graduate placements in 2010 based on data from GTP and HEFCE internships scheme

Number	Source	Year	Comments
15-20,000	Mellors-Bourne & Day 2011	2011	Estimate of 'structured' graduate placements in 2011 following the fall in advertisements on GTP and the end of the HEFCE scheme.
280,800	Lawton & Potter 2010	Summer 2010	Number of firms offering placements based on extrapolation from CIPD survey, likely to be a significant overestimate.
40% 2006-2010 graduates	Real Prospects 2011	2006-2010	Survey of 22,000 graduates from 2006-2010, asking how many took work experience or traineeship placements while studying. Unclear how representative of actual population.
50,000 – 70,000	Government	2010	Government estimates published by the Guardian newspaper, methodology unclear
3,375	Graduate Talent Pool	December 2011	Total traineeship vacancies on GTP website in December 2011

As should be clear from the case study so far, traineeships in the UK are marked by a high degree of diversity. As such it is difficult to make definitive statements about their effectiveness. Interviewees were generally in agreement that a good quality traineeship could significantly increase the employability of graduates both in terms of improved skills and experience and greater access to networks important for securing employment. This tallies to a certain extent with surveys of employers which often find that employers particularly value certain skills that can only really be developed outside of formal education such as employability skills (CBI 2011) and commercial awareness (CIPD 2010b). Furthermore employers themselves regard traineeships as beneficial to trainees (CIPD 2010b).

There is a lack, however, of formal evaluation of the effectiveness of traineeships. The informal status of traineeships makes it difficult to collect information on them for the economy as a whole. Such evaluations that do exist relate primarily to government traineeship initiatives, the table below highlights some results from the Graduate Talent Pool, HEFCE Graduate Internships and the NI Graduate Internship Programme (HEFCE Undergraduate Internships are not included because the majority of the participants had entered the labour market at the time of the evaluation). It is worth noting that these schemes, particularly those run by HEFCE are likely to offer traineeships at the higher end of the traineeship quality spectrum. The results from the Graduate Talent Pool and HEFCE Graduate Internship evaluations feature control groups of sorts, those who applied for an internship but were unsuccessful in the HEFCE case and those either registered but did not apply or who applied unsuccessfully for an internship through GTP. Obviously these control groups are not ideal given that the reasons graduates were unsuccessful on either scheme may have some bearing on their ability to find work. Nonetheless, the results point to some positive employment effects of traineeships. In the HEFCE and GTP evaluations 28 per cent and 22 per cent of trainees respectively found long term work with their traineeship employer. Forty six per cent and 40 per cent found long term employment overall compared with 25 per cent and 26 per cent of unsuccessful/non applicants. In addition temporary employment was higher for unsuccessful/non applicants. However although unemployment was higher amongst unsuccessful HEFCE applicants, it was about the same (22-21 per cent) between unsuccessful/non applicants and successful applicants in the GTP.

Table A 2: Results from the Graduate Talent Pool, HEFCE Graduate Internships and the NI Graduate Internship Programme

	L/t employment with same company	L/t employment other company	Total I/t employment	Temporary employment	Total employment	Unemployed	Voluntary/ traineeship	Further study
Completed Hefce graduate traineeship	28%	18%	46%	14%	60%	15%	5%	8%
Unsuccessful Hefce graduate traineeship	n/a	25%	25%	25%	50%	27%	12%	9%
Completed GTP traineeship	22%	18%	40%	22%	62%	22%	7%	No figure given
Unsuccessful or non applicant GTP traineeship	n/a	26%	26%	Slightly higher than those completing traineeship (no figure given)	n/a	21%	Slightly higher than those completing traineeship (no figure given)	Slightly higher than those completing traineeship (no figure given)
Completed GIP NI	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	62%	30%	3%	5%

In terms of softer outcomes participants in the HEFCE Undergraduate scheme reported feeling more employable as well as improving skills such as time management, communicating, problem solving and team working. Similarly amongst HEFCE Graduate Interns over 50 per cent reported a great deal or significant improvement in a range of work-related skills, in particular 80 per cent felt this was the case in relation to time management, problem solving and communication. Eighty two per cent felt more confident about their employability (Oakleigh Consulting & CRAC 2011). For GTP participants the most cited skills developed were similar: Time management, communications and prioritisation.

Alongside the effectiveness of traineeships in assisting with labour market transitions, one area of particular relevance to the UK has been the potential for traineeships to improve social mobility. Particularly amongst policy makers, traineeships have been put forward as a way to make access to professional occupations fairer (Milburn 2009, HM Government 2010). Interviewees generally agreed that traineeships could help in this regard. One interviewee felt that traineeships in professions such as banking were particularly beneficial to graduates from less prestigious universities. Traineeships give these graduates to demonstrate their ability to employers despite their CV looking less impressive. However there is a lack of empirical data showing the impact of traineeships on social mobility and some studies of traineeships seem to indicate that opportunities tend to go to graduates with existing advantages, for example the evaluation of the GTP found graduates with higher degrees were more likely to successfully obtain placements and Asian graduates had a lower success rate (Mellors-Bourne & Day 2011).

The consensus amongst interviewees was that traineeships could be beneficial to organisations if they were organised in the right way. Having an additional member of staff at lower cost could be perceived as a benefit, however the extent to which this is the case depends on both how effectively the trainee is used by the organisation and the extent of resources committed to the supervision and training of the trainee. Interviewees noted that there could be considerable cost attached to running traineeships. Problematically it may be that some of the worst traineeships – those with little mentoring and guidance in which trainees undertake routine or basic tasks for low or no pay may be the cheapest for employers. Responses from employer surveys also shed some light on the benefits to firms. For example the CIPD (2010b) found that 76 per cent of employers felt traineeships were a useful recruitment tool, 69 per cent that they could help develop talent within their industry, 52 per cent that trainees were a cost-effective resource, 50 per cent that mentoring trainees was a useful development opportunity for existing staff and 33 per cent that trainees could improve productivity.

Employer testimonials from schemes such as Unlocking Cornish Potential indicate that employers saw particular benefits from having a skilled graduate working on a specific project that they would not otherwise have had capacity to undertake. In some cases these project delivered substantial business benefits.

Conclusions

The key weakness of open market traineeships in the UK is the variability in quality. Were all traineeships run in accordance to the kind of standards recommended in quality frameworks, providing meaningful work, opportunities for development and decent pay and working conditions they could be considered a useful mechanism for helping the transition between education and work. In the view of interviewees, the majority of traineeships are of a reasonable quality but a substantial minority remain more quality in terms of pay and content.

At a minimum the issue of pay and traineeships needs to be dealt with. Although much of the debate on trainee pay revolves around the 'fairness' of offering unpaid traineeships (Lawton & Potter 2010), the issue is more or less straightforwardly one of compliance with the law. Traineeships need to comply with NMW legislation, recent government

guidance is fairly clear about the circumstances under which traineeships can be paid or unpaid (Businesslink 2011). There is a need to ensure this information is disseminated and a case for some kind of targeted enforcement by regulators.

The next set of issues relate to broader concerns about traineeship quality. Quality frameworks are an attractive low-cost option for policy makers. However, it is difficult to assess what impact they will realistically have on traineeship quality. There is only anecdotal evidence of uptake and they appear to be more relevant as sources of practical guidance than soft regulation. In the UK situation it is questionable how much added value would result from the production of another general quality framework relative to promoting those already in existence. It is difficult to comment on the transferability of UK quality frameworks, some elements appear to be general good practice whereas others might need to be adapted according to local labour laws and regulations.

Some form of official national 'kitemark' scheme has been suggested as a means of indicating to applicants the quality of a traineeship scheme. The difficulty here would be how such a scheme could be monitored and run on a large scale. To be effective and credible there needs to be some mechanism for independently assessing the quality of a traineeship scheme. Current kitemark schemes are either small scale, highly expensive to businesses wishing to be accredited or both. Employers often cite the cost of traineeships as a barrier and would perhaps be unwilling to spend large amounts of money having their traineeship schemes evaluated. One option could perhaps be to include a traineeship/work experience strand to existing business standards such as Investors in People in the UK.

Among the more interesting schemes noted above are those such as Unlocking Cornish Potential and the HEFCE traineeship schemes. The involvement of a third part in these schemes provides support to both trainees and employers to get the best out of a traineeship as well as helping to match trainees and employers. It seems reasonable to suppose that under these circumstances traineeships will be more consistent in terms of quality, allowing the trainee to develop and the employers to make use of the trainees' graduate-level skills. The obvious downside of these schemes from the point of view of policy makers is that they are likely to require a higher level of public funding. However, if traineeships are to become a central part of youth transitions into the labour market, these kinds of schemes seem rather more promising than attempting to regulate the open market via quality charters.

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