

Euroapprenticeship is a project aiming at building and developing a network of competent bodies and intermediary organisations which provides expertise, information, help and support to any learning mobility project promoted by Vocational Education and Training providers, for the benefit of SMEs, Skilled Crafts Companies and of apprentices.

Euroapprenticeship is not a programme directly dedicated to apprentices, since it does not directly provide money for mobility projects and it does not propose direct placements for young people. But it provides information and contacts to find the right support and the best adapted solutions for each young people.

## I - ABOUT THE CONTEXT

### THE INCREASING IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING MOBILITY

"...every young person should have the opportunity to take part in some form of mobility, whether this be during their studies or training, in the form of a work placement, or in the context of voluntary activities."

*Conclusions of the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member states on youth mobility, 20 and 21 November 2008 (OJ C 320, 16.12.2008),*

The working environment of SMEs and Skilled Craft Companies undergoes profound changes. Professional and technical expertise is in itself no longer an assurance of survival and success. It must be accompanied by new mindsets geared towards more adaptability and new competences that allow both management and labour to cope with permanent changes and to interact with partners and competitors with diverse cultural backgrounds. One must possess social, intercultural and communication competences, be capable of creativity and innovative thinking, have sufficient ability for self-directed learning and last but not least have enough self-confidence and self-reliance to act in an unpredictable environment. Such competences cannot be taught using school-based approach.

Placements abroad rightly fit as a new and valuable tool for better adapting European VET-systems to labour market needs. Transnational mobility in the context of VET is therefore considered as a meaningful didactic tool to foster competences of the participants such as foreign language proficiency, intercultural and personal (broad, generic) competences. The use of placements abroad is now a regular feature of many national VET-systems, as well as the focus of the EU-programme Leonardo da Vinci and of various regional funding schemes.

Competent bodies and Intermediary organisations have already developed since years activities aiming at increasing the number and the quality of European training pathways.

Among those organisations, Regional Authorities, Professional/Sector Organisations or Chambers of Skilled Crafts Companies have played a major role as they are involved in the implementation of training programmes for apprentices. The representatives of SMEs and Skilled Crafts Companies on the one hand, some regions and regional authorities on the other hand, recently made strong political decisions that aim at enhancing European pathways for apprentices and people in alternate IVET systems. They also got committed on a concrete level by developing services and tools to support field players in implementing mobility schemes.

In December 2008 the General Assembly of UEAPME<sup>1</sup> voted a resolution on mobility of apprentices and young people in initial VET, which strongly called for the European Commission to equip the current and future education and VET programmes for the period 2014-2020 with measures allowing to increase the transnational mobility in VET.

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<sup>1</sup> UEAPME is the European employers' organisation representing the interests of European crafts, trades and SMEs

In May 2009 some regions from 15 Member States and territorial authorities approved the Barcelona Declaration on the contribution of the regions and territorial authorities regarding the organization and promotion of training mobility of individuals in initial vocational education and training.

## THE ACTION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

In 2009 on the basis of an open call for proposals, the European Commission selected APCM together with UEAPME and its members to be in charge of setting up a “network of mobility networks” and a web platform called Euroapprenticeship to support the mobility of apprentices. Its ultimate aim is to make placements abroad a realistic and feasible option for apprentices in all Member States of the European Union and even beyond.

## II. OBJECTIVES OF THE *EuroApprenticeship* PROJECT

The main objective of *EuroApprenticeship* is to build and organise a network of competent bodies and intermediary organisations which provides expertise, information, help and support to any learning mobility project promoted by VET providers, for the benefit of SMEs or Skilled Crafts Companies and for the benefit of apprentices or people in alternated training systems.

More specifically, the *EuroApprenticeship* project aims at :

- supporting VET-providers in creating sustainable European partnerships,
- supporting competence development in companies by facilitating access to transnational mobility,
- implementing a coherent quality system,
- proposing appropriate methods and tools for the recognition of mobility periods as a recognized part of the domestic education and training (curriculum approach / added value approach),
- providing expertise on legal, financial, administrative and other practical issues,
- supporting “new comers” with identifying suitable and experienced host companies and training centres
- enhancing the role of intermediary organisation in motivating and supporting companies.

In order to achieve these objectives, the *EuroApprenticeship* Project is developing a network and a web-based collaborative platform. This work is based on already existing mobility projects, tools and networks that have been successfully implemented by the partners of the project or associated organisations during the last years, among others EURONAVER ([www.euronaver.net](http://www.euronaver.net)), MOBIVET-REGIO Forum and peer learning activities, PRO MOBILITY Network, App-and-Go, Mobility-EU, SME-Master (more detailed information on those projects and networks is given in the Partner’s description part).

### On an operational level, the specific activities of the project are:

#### **1. Setting-up a web-based platform that provides information and tools supporting mobility:**

- Basic information in the main EU languages about mobility and apprenticeship, accessible from the open part of the web platform. This information is targeted towards apprentices, companies and VET Providers.
- Specific information and tools accessible to the members of the *EuroApprenticeship* Network in the restricted area.

#### **2. Elaborate and implement methodologies, work processes, quality criteria and tools for the coordination and development of the *EuroApprenticeship* Network:**

*EuroApprenticeship* will work as a “club”, which members can have access to specific information, events, newsletter ... and tools through the web platform. They will also be able to participate to peer learning activities and networking seminars.

#### **3. Provide services and tools to support the creation of sustainable partnerships and mobility activities for VET providers (including companies):**

For some intermediary organisations and competent bodies, getting information and tools on the Web Platform is not enough to easily deal with all the dimensions of mobility. In this case, adequate resources and services will be provided, such as training for trainers, fund raising, partners-finding, technical support, recognition, guidance, ...

#### **4. Setting-up an observatory of mobility in Apprenticeship:**

To develop and monitor its own activities, the *EuroApprenticeship* Network needs to collect and analyse information on such issues as qualification systems and framework, alternated training systems and methods, mobility programmes, mobility data and figures, ... This information will be shared with all the stakeholders and policy-makers in the field, through the implementation of an Observatory on learning mobility for apprentices.

The Observatory will provide indications about the evolutions of the fame or “brand awareness” of mobility, through a periodical *EuroApprenticeship* Barometer.

#### **5. Create and disseminate a “Trademark” for European Mobility of Apprentices:**

In order to give more visibility to learning mobility *EuroApprenticeship* should develop as a brand and provide specific communication tools (logo, visual aid, quality charters, etc...) to valorise the role of VET providers and companies in the implementation of mobility.

This activity will be closely linked to the existing communication tools, especially those implemented by the European Commission in the framework of the Lifelong Learning Programme.

### **III. TARGET GROUPS AND BENEFICIARIES OF *EuroApprenticeship***

#### **Target Group : Competent bodies and Intermediary Organisations:**

They can be Competent Institutions involved

- in the elaboration of training policies and the organisation of the training / apprenticeship systems: (e.g. : Skilled Crafts, Professional organisations, Branches, Regional and National Authorities) ;
- and/or in the organisation of mobility.

The project will provide adding value to them by:

- supporting and guiding those organisations without any experience to get into mobility
- Incorporating them in the *EuroApprenticeship* Network, so that they can develop mobility on a wider scale.

#### **Other beneficiaries of *EuroApprenticeship***

- VET-Providers,
- Individuals: persons such as apprentices, persons in alternated based IVET systems
- Enterprises: SMEs and Skilled Crafts companies
- Mobility Networks: Existing Apprentices-Mobility Networks mainly at regional and sectoral levels.

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