

A European quality framework for apprenticeships

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A European trade union proposal. The European quality framework for apprenticeships was launched during a conference held on 14 April 2016 in Brussels. This framework consists of 20 quality criteria, which have been developed in a bottom-up approach through engaging with experts at national and European levels over the course of 4 joint sectoral seminars and 20 national country visits. Twenty quality standards for apprenticeships are proposed by the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and Unionlearn (TUC) in their new publication “A European Quality Framework for Apprenticeships – a European Trade Union Proposal”. Despite increased interest by policy-makers in apprenticeships as a means to combat youth unemployment, apprenticeships have been in decline in recent years (and even more so since the 1980s). As part of its contribution to EU policy to boost quality skilled jobs, the ETUC, with national trade unions from across Europe, has drawn up the report setting out 20 quality standards. It is inspired by existing quality apprenticeship schemes across Europe and based on good practice at national and sectoral level. According to these criteria apprenticeship schemes should:

- be formalised by national law and/or collective bargaining agreements;
- be governed and assessed by social partners (trade unions and employers) together with public authorities and training institutions;
- cover a wide range of occupations and provide employment opportunities for women and men;
- be properly funded with equitable cost-sharing between employers and public authorities;
- involve a formal contract and ensure apprentices are paid;
- include a strong training component and a balance between work-based and school-based training;
- promote mobility through including provision for doing part of the apprenticeship in another European country (like ‘Erasmus’ does for university students).

Countries covered in the proposal: Belgium,

Bulgaria; Cyprus; Czech Republic; Denmark; Estonia; France; Germany; Greece; Ireland; Italy; Latvia; Lithuania; Luxembourg; Netherlands; Poland; Romania; Slovenia; Spain; and, United Kingdom

Subject Tags: apprenticeships

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