

DARBA VIDĒ BALSTĪTAS MĀCĪBAS  
KSZTAŁCENIE DUALNE



DUÁLNE VZDELÁVANIE  
DUALNO IZOBRAŽEVANJE



# COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF DUAL EDUCATION SYSTEM

## Comparative analysis of Dual Education Systems

The final report has been prepared by the Project consortium. The content of this report has been developed in the international project IDES – “Introduction of Dual Education System and Identification of its Quality”. The project is co-financed by the European Union under the Erasmus + KA2 program (project number: 2019-1-SK01-KA202-060776).

### Authors:

Slovakia: Ivana Kočanová, Monika Višňovská, Ján Dzurdženík, Natália Vince, Mária Kokardová.

Poland: Justyna Franczyk, Kinga Oszust, Jakub Karp

Latvia: Ilze Buligina, Inta Baranovska, Guntra Kaufmane

Slovenia: Ana Lučka Pirnat, Andreja Sever, Petra Sternad, Ana Žemva Novak

### Project consortium:

Slovakia: Agentúra na podporu regionálneho rozvoja Košice, n. o. / Košický samosprávny kraj (Agency for the Support of Regional Development Košice, Košice self – governing region);

Poland: Rzeszowska Agencja Rozwoju Regionalnego S.A (Rzeszowska Regional Development agency)

Latvia: Valsts Izglītības Satura Centrs (National Centre for Education)

Slovenia: Gospodarska Zbornica Slovenije (Slovenian Chamber of Commerce)

Published in 2022

The IDES project aim was to strengthen the key practical competences and skills of young people during their study at secondary vocational schools and also after their graduation to be more competitive and better prepared for labour market in order to better utilize local human resources, to increase economic development of rural areas and to prevent brain drain.

The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

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## Introduction. EU VET policy context of the project

Work-based learning (WBL) is a high-level vocational education and training (VET) priority in Europe. In the *Riga Conclusions* – a European level medium term policy document in VET adopted 22 June, 2015 during the Latvian Presidency of the EU Council, [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education\\_culture/repository/education/policy/vocational-policy/doc/2015-riga-conclusions\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/education/policy/vocational-policy/doc/2015-riga-conclusions_en.pdf).

Two priorities (Priority 1 and Priority 5) are related to WBL developments – promoting WBL in all its forms and introducing systemic approaches for training of VET teachers and trainers in both, school and WBL settings.

Apprenticeships are strongly supported at European level by the *European Alliance for Apprenticeships* (EaFA), <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1147>, established in 2013. It unites governments and key stakeholders with the aim of strengthening the quality, supply and overall image of apprenticeships across Europe, while also promoting the mobility of apprentices. These aims are promoted through national commitments and voluntary pledges from stakeholders.

Further on the *Council Recommendation of 15 March 2018 on a European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships* (2018/C 153/01), [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32018H0502\(01\)&from=EN](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32018H0502(01)&from=EN) promotes the concept of quality and effective apprenticeships that lead to a combination of job related skills, work based experience and learning, and key competences that facilitate young people's entry in the labour market. They are part of the formal vocational education and training (VET) systems and they exist in parallel to other work-based learning and/or vocational pathways, they reinforce the link between the world of work and the world of education and training. In addition to providing a pathway to excellence, quality apprenticeships can also contribute to fostering active citizenship and social inclusion by integrating people of different social and personal backgrounds into the labour market.

On 1 July 2020, the European Commission put forward a comprehensive plan to repair and prepare for the next generation Europe – *European Skills Agenda for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience*. It sets ambitious, quantitative objectives for upskilling and reskilling the labour force. Its 12 actions focus on skills for jobs by partnering up with Member States, companies and social partners to work together for change, by empowering people to embark on lifelong learning, and by using the EU budget as a catalyst to unlock public and private investment in people's skills, <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=89&furtherNews=yes&langId=en&newsId=9723>.

Currently new initiatives are emerging, such as *European Education Area*, the *Digital Education Action Plan*, the proposals for a *Council Recommendation on A Bridge to Jobs*. November 24, 2020, Council Recommendation on vocational education and training for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience was adopted. These documents address the issues of streamlining the European cooperation processes and the use of the common instruments, modernising VET systems to equally support young people and adults, people in employment and the unemployed. Other important aspects are matching the changing world of work and skills, embracing also digital and green transitions, and highlighting the central role of VET in the lifelong learning processes with increasing transparency and permeability of learning pathways and enhanced cooperation among education and training sectors and levels. A particular focus is on high quality VET offers, including apprenticeships and work-based learning (WBL). There is also call for simplifying governance of the EU level that includes a monitoring framework to assess the progress towards identified objectives. The Member States are invited to define their sets of indicators and objectives for quantitative and qualitative performance monitoring of their VET systems.

In addition, 2020 is closing the current policy cycle of European cooperation in VET within the framework of the Copenhagen process, the German Presidency of the European Union has made

a major input in preparing the *Osnabrück Declaration*, adopted 30 November, 2020. Following the Riga Conclusions (having set EU VET priorities for 2015-2020), the *Osnabrück Declaration* is a new European level mid-term policy document for VET. It aims at reinforcing the process of European cooperation in VET and defining a set of concrete priority actions for the next five years.

Thus, according to all the key EU policy documents in VET, the close links between the education and employment sectors remain as a top-level priority for the next planning period. For this reason the results of the IDES project are relevant also in long-term in European context. These results and conclusions encourage further national WBL developments and contribute to increasing WBL quality and stakeholder co-operation, at the same time promoting transnational collaboration and exchange of good practice.

The IDES project consortium consists of four countries – **Latvia, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia** – with different vocational education and training systems and history regarding the introduction and implementation of apprenticeships (dual system, work-based learning).

According to *CEDEFOP European database on apprenticeship schemes*, (hereinafter – CEDEFOP database), <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/data-visualisations/apprenticeship-schemes>, for all the four Consortium partners the apprenticeships are in relatively recent developments. In Latvia and Slovenia WBL is an alternative pathway to the regular school-based VET program, whereas in Slovakia and Poland the dual scheme seems to be more substantially integrated into the training process. In Slovenia the key responsibility is on the employers' side and in Poland the role of crafts guilds is highly relevant.

**In Slovakia<sup>1</sup>** the System of Dual Education was introduced in 2015 in the Act on VET. It is a new mode of study of the available ISCED Level 3 and 4 VET programmes that requires extensive practical education at employer's workplaces. The Act on VET requires students participating in a System of Dual Education to undertake a significant part of their practical education directly at the employer's workplace (at least 50% of all learning hours to be undertaken at the employer's workplace). The law also requires there to be a contract between students and employers, however, students do not become employees but formally remain students of their school. In addition, the act makes employers exclusively responsible for organisation, quality and content of practical education and requires them to pay all expenses related to financing of practical education, including salaries of students. This is a particularly important aspect and deserves attention, since in many countries the motivation of employers remains a challenge to be addressed. The apprenticeship scheme was newly introduced in academic year 2015/16.

**In Poland<sup>2</sup>**, national documents and working definitions use the term of dual learning to various forms of school and employers' cooperation to deliver training, including short-term traineeships or longer spells without a contract between the learner and the employers. Apprenticeship can be considered as a form of practical vocational education that is based on a contract of apprenticeship between the employer and the learner and, in combination with theoretical training, is carried out to deliver skills and competencies described in relevant curricula (i.e. to acquire the vocational skills required to work in a given profession. Since activities take place at the workplace, the aim is to apply and deepen knowledge and skills in real working conditions. In the case of upper-secondary education, apprenticeship is organised in the context of the juvenile employment framework (vocational preparation of juvenile workers. Apprentices are referred to as 'juvenile workers' and must be 15 years of age, and should not exceed 18 years. At upper-secondary level, this framework is available mostly through first-level three-year-long programmes offered by branch (sectoral) schools. Approximately 70-80% of employers participating in the vocational preparation scheme are members of craft guilds.

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<sup>1</sup> According to CEDEFOP database

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

In Slovenia<sup>3</sup>, the current apprenticeship scheme is an alternative pathway of the upper-secondary vocational education (EQF level 4), open to anyone that signs an apprenticeship contract with a training company.

In Latvia<sup>4</sup>, the WBL scheme was introduced formally in 2015 (Vocational Education Act amendment ensuring that a VET program can also be implemented in the form of WBL). It was piloted in a limited number of VET institutions in 2013/14 onwards, and further on was mainstreamed and developed with a stable legal basis starting from 2015 (the afore mentioned amendments to the VET Act) and 2016 when the respective Cabinet of Ministers Regulation were introduced stipulating the rights and responsibilities of the involved parties.

In order to identify the advantages and disadvantages of these individual systems, compare the various policy measures to address challenges, as well as propose general recommendations for improving the systems, within the IDES project a matrix and matrix-based questionnaire were designed for the IDES consortium project partners (for the Matrix and Questionnaire see Annex 1 and Annex 2 to the report).

The questionnaire consisted of 25 targeted questions (with sub-questions) in order to identify the key policy and practical measures implemented in each Consortium country regarding the introduction and quality of apprenticeship. In order to ensure a uniform and comprehensive approach, both, the matrix and the questionnaire structure and content were first tested among the consortium and revised according to the proposed improvements, before the final version was spread among the partners for filling out.

The analysis of the Consortium partners' questionnaires clearly shows their countries commitment to address the emerging VET challenges, WBL being one of the key tools for achieving labour market skills' based competence. The analysis of the questionnaires also allows to identify the strengths of each Consortium country, as well as opportunities for improvement and growth in certain aspects, also by potentially applying the experience from the other Consortium countries.

In the present report the information and analysis of the existing situation in each country is structured according to the questions included in the questionnaire, allowing to obtain an overview of the situation on the respective issue in all the four countries and enabling to identify effective approaches or best practice to be promoted and potentially shared with other partners.

## 1 Responsible public bodies for work-based learning

In all the Consortium countries the responsible ministry for WBL is the Ministry of Education and typically also an agency under Ministry sub-ordination or a partner institution, in particular with regard to respective curriculum developments/curriculum revision for WBL implementation. It is also typical that the work of the ministries regarding WBL started with some preparatory phases on overall education and labour market compliance issues, before WBL was introduced as a mainstream activity with underlying legal basis. This work is frequently related to the national qualifications' frameworks, <https://europa.eu/europass/en/european-qualifications-framework-eqf>. It is very prominent in the case of Slovakia and Poland. In Slovenia the role of chambers has been crucial in the promotion and implementation of WBL. There were also some other preliminary or preparatory measures taken. For example, in Latvia a pilot phase was introduced with a voluntary involvement of six VET institutions to test WBL approaches, before WBL legislation was drafted and introduced in 2016, thus following a bottom-up approach. Also the WBL conceptual approaches were developed in close co-operation with social partners and other relevant ministries, relying also on the support from the EU Erasmus+ programme project on WBL development by public authorities. It is important

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<sup>3</sup>According to CEDEFOP database

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

to note that in Latvia with the support from two subsequent EU Erasmus+ projects not only national WBL developments were promoted, but simultaneously also the three Baltic countries (Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia) collaboration on WBL implemented.

**In Slovakia** the key responsible public bodies for WBL implementation are the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports of the Slovak Republic, and the State Institute of Vocational Education (ŠIOV).

Ministry of Education in the field of vocational education and training:

- determines the system of study fields of vocational education and training and the content of vocational education and training in cooperation with self-governing regions or professional organizations,
- develops, in cooperation with professional organizations normative of material-technical and spatial requirements and model of curricula, which publishes on its website [www.siov.sk](http://www.siov.sk),
- form strategic, conceptual and methodological documents.

The Ministry of Education carries out repeated verification of the employer's competence to perform practical training in the dual education system on the basis of the employer's application, which has been rejected by the relevant professional organization.

The State Institute of Vocational Education is a directly managed organization of the Ministry of Education, Research and Sports of the Slovak Republic. It originated from the Institute of Youth Training, which operated in the years 1991 to 1994.

The mission of the ŠIOV is the professional and methodological management of secondary vocational schools, the creation of educational projects, the provision of vocational and pedagogical and educational activities in solving issues of secondary vocational education. The organization serves as the secretariat of the Government Council for Vocational Education and Training.

**In Poland** the Ministry of National Education initially started work on the Polish Qualification Framework in 2008 with the implementation of the project "Developing balance of qualifications and competences available on the labour market in Poland and the National Framework model Qualifications". Modernisation of Polish qualifications began with the adoption of the Act of 22 December 2015 on the Integrated Qualification System. It consisted of the adoption of common rules on qualifications in various areas. The integrated system consists, on the one hand, of those elements that already exist in Polish social and economic life, on the other hand, new instruments enabling effective integration of the whole system, the most important of which are the Polish Qualification Framework (PQF), <https://prk.men.gov.pl/en/1en/> and the Integrated Qualification Register (IQR), <https://prk.men.gov.pl/en/2en/>, in which all qualifications are included in an integrated system.

All qualifications included in the integrated system are also assigned to the Polish Qualification Framework level (PQF level). After numerous public consultations and the completion of the work of the working groups formed by various experts, it was possible to develop a final version. Currently, this document combines the experience of representatives of the world of education and the labour market, so that the PQF can provide a good basis for the identification of qualification levels in a system that includes qualifications obtained both in formal and non-formal education and as a result of learning informally.

**In Slovenia** the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport is responsible for the implementation of WBL. The Ministry is partially financing chambers for accreditation of training companies and implementation of the apprenticeship system in companies. The companies are also partially financed by Ministry of Economic Development and Technology. The National VET institute (CPI) is responsible for developing training standards and offering support to schools.

**In Latvia** the Ministry of Education and Science is responsible for the legal basis (Cabinet of Ministers regulation) on the organisation and implementation of WBL. The Ministry has also drafted the Guidelines for the implementation of WBL in order to facilitate common understanding and approaches among the involved stakeholders and to render practical support. WBL is implemented in close co-operation with social partners, sector expert councils, employers, the National Centre for Education (VISC) regarding standards and the State Quality Assurance Service (IKVD) regarding licensing and accreditation of programs, as well as regarding data collection on WBL students and VET institutions offering WBL in certain programs/ qualifications. In order to ensure a broader employers' involvement, a national level European Social fund project of the ESF Specific Objective 8.5.1. was implemented during the present 2014-2020 planning period, assigning its management to the government social partner – the Employers' Confederation of Latvia.

## 2 The VET institutions as important labour market players

**In Slovakia** there is a variety of VET institutions offering vocational education and training up to EQF level 4 – public schools (secondary vocational schools – SVS) – state schools, private schools, and church schools.

- ISCED 3A programs (upper secondary vocational education) – can be completed by an apprenticeship certificate or a school-leaving examination, or both.
- ISCED 3C programs (secondary vocational education) – can be completed by apprenticeship certificate.
- ISCED 4A programs (post-secondary education) – post-secondary qualification education.

As to the owners/ funders, there are 1) regional self-governments which are responsible for establishing of state schools; 2) church are responsible for establishing of church schools; 3) private schools are established by private persons. As to supervision and financing – state schools are financed from the state budget; church and private schools are also financed from the state budget, but they can also charge tuition fees. Supervision is provided by the founder of the secondary school and state authorities. Employers themselves do not provide formally recognized qualifications.

**In Poland** in 2017, a vocational education reform was initiated in Poland in response to the needs of the economy. In secondary education (initial VET at up to EQF level 4), a new school system has been adopted, including: 3-year first degree branch (sectoral) school – 2-year second degree branch (sectoral) school and 5-year vocational upper secondary school. The classification of vocational education professions has been arranged and the individual professions are assigned to 32 areas (sectors) of training, for example: administration and service, building, electro-technical and electronic, mechanical and mining and metallurgy, agro-forestry with environmental protection, tourist and gastronomy, medical and social and artistic (The Regulation of the Minister for National Education of 22 February 2019 on practical vocational education (Journal of Laws of 2019, item. 391), compatible with <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/data-visualisations/apprenticeship-schemes/country-fiches/poland>

A new basis curriculum has been developed for all professions and 2 qualification. The curriculum for each profession includes: learning outcomes common to all professions, learning outcomes common to professions within the area (sector), and learning outcomes relevant to one or two qualifications. Each qualification is assigned to a specific level of the Polish Qualification Framework consisting of eight levels. Each of them is described by means of general statements characterising the knowledge, skills and social competence requirements to be met. Confirmation the qualification is done by accession for the professional examination carried out by the District Examination Board.

Besides this types of institution there are also the special job-training schools – three-year post-primary schools for students with mild and significant mental retardation, and with conjugated disabilities. The curriculum consists of two components: general education, in which students

consolidate and broaden the knowledge and skills they have acquired so far, and adaptation to work, i.e., shaping appropriate attitudes towards work. The main aim of the education is to prepare young people to play social roles and to live and work independently and actively in protected conditions.

As part of education at the vocational school patronage classes are also organised by entrepreneurs, created according to the needs of companies: e.g. Opel Manufacturing Poland (mechatronics profile, class created in 2016, first graduates in 2019), Volkswagen Poznań/Gestamp Poland (precision mechanic profile, class created in 2016, first 12 pupils graduates in 2019).

**3-YEAR SPECIAL JOB-TRAINING SCHOOLS – EQF level 3.** Responsible bodies: Gmina's government entities/Cities with powiat status government entities/ Powiat's government entities/Voivodship's government entities. Supervision. Leading authority: Ministry of National Education; Curatorships of education in local level; Gmina's government entities/Cities with powiat status government entities/, Powiat's government entities/, Voivodship's government entities. Work Attitude – as part of these activities, students are prepared to acquire practical skills and perform activities in the following examples areas: household, garden work, handcrafting. Public financing – general subsidy (education subsidy) from the state; subsidy from local government budget (these institutions could be financed by: Gmina's government entities/ Cities with powiat status government entities/ Powiat's government entities/ Voivodship's government entities}

**3-YEAR FIRST DEGREE BRANCH (SECTORAL) SCHOOL – EQF level 3.** Previously this type of school was called Basic vocational school. The basic vocational schools were abolished on 31 August 2019 on the basis of the 2017 reform of the educational system. They were replaced by 3-year first degree branch (sectoral) school. The first students will graduate from the first degree of professional education in 2020, with EQF level 3. The Polish Qualifications Framework (PQF) is a reference system for qualifications awarded in Poland. There are 8 levels in the PQF. Each of them is described by means of the general characteristics of the scope and complexity of knowledge, skills and social competence required from persons with a given level of qualifications. In the PQF, the typical characteristics of qualifications given in general, vocational and higher education are taken into account. The Polish Qualifications Framework makes it possible to refer Polish qualifications to the levels of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and through the EQF to the levels of qualifications in individual EU countries. The school is implementing the curriculum for general and vocational education. The curriculum for general education in this type of school is defined in the Regulation of the Minister of National Education.

Thus, vocational training shall be at worker or journeyman (apprentice) level, depending on the institution running the school. Completion of basic vocational training shall be attested by a diploma. A graduate receives only a certificate confirming the possession of general education at the basic level. Professional qualifications can be obtained by passing an examination confirming one qualifications in the profession carried out by the District Examination Boards or by passing a journeyman's exam organised by craft guilds. The graduate will obtain: a diploma certifying professional qualifications after passing examinations confirming qualifications in the profession, a vocational diploma on completion of first degree branch (sectoral) or journeyman's certificate.

The school reform introduced on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019 the possibility of student traineeship for pupils in the first degree branch (sectoral) school. The aim is to gain experience and practical skills necessary to perform work in real working conditions on the basis of a contract concluded between students and the employer. The entity accepting a student for the internship is obliged to provide the student with safe and hygienic conditions for the internship in accordance with the principles set out in the Act – Labour Code. The period of the student's internship shall be included in the period of employment, on which employee rights depend.

The costs of the financial benefit paid to the student accepted for the student internship may be included in the tax deductible costs by the employer. The employer-student-school cooperation has

also been strengthened with regard to the education of students of first degree branch (sectoral) schools who are juvenile employees. It was proposed that companies hire students for professional preparation in the form of vocational training.

**2-YEAR SECOND DEGREE BRANCH (SECTORAL) SCHOOL – EQF level 4.** As a result of the education reform the establishment of this type of school takes place on 1 September 2020. A second degree branch (sectoral) school is a natural option for those students who have completed a first degree branch (sectoral) school. Education in such an institution will be a continuation of qualifications from the previous school. The most important aspect of the second degree branch (sectoral) school is the possibility of taking the baccalaureate exam, and this is connected with the possibility of starting university studies. The prerequisite for taking the exam is a continuous education after the industry school of the first degree. After graduation from the second degree school the graduate will obtain: a diploma certifying professional qualifications after passing examinations confirming qualifications in the profession; a professional diploma after passing the exam in the second qualification, bachelor degree.

**5-YEAR VOCATIONAL UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL – EQF level 4.** Leading authority: Ministry of National Education. Many of technical secondary schools are departmental (subordinate to the ministries of the relevant industries), while **some are established with larger companies**. Curatorships of education in local level; Gmina's government entities/Cities with powiat status government entities/Powiat's government entities/Voivodship's government entities. Public financing: general subsidy from the state of Poland; subsidy from local government budget. The study at the technical secondary school lasts for five years and ends, as in high school, with a maturity exam and additionally a diploma confirming professional qualifications. The graduate will obtain: a diploma certifying professional qualifications after passing examinations confirming qualifications in the profession; a professional diploma after passing the exam in the second qualification; bachelor degree.

The school reform introduced on 1st September 2019 the possibility of student traineeship for pupils in vocational upper secondary school. The aim is to gain experience and practical skills necessary to perform work in real working conditions on the basis of a contract concluded between pupils and the employer. The entity accepting a student for the internship is obliged to provide the student with safe and hygienic conditions for the internship in accordance with the principles set out in the Act – Labour Code. The period of the student's internship shall be included in the period of employment, on which employee rights depend. The costs of the financial benefit paid to the student accepted for the student internship may be included in the tax deductible costs by the employer.

All the above data are by *Education in the 2018/2019 school year*, Statistics Poland, Statistical Office in Gdańsk, Warszawa, Gdańsk 2019, Vocational education and training for the future of work: Poland, CEDEFOP REFERNET THEMATIC PERSPECTIVES2020 ([https://cumulus.cedefop.europa.eu/files/vetelib/2020/vocational\\_education\\_training\\_future\\_work\\_Poland\\_Cedefop\\_ReferNet.pdf](https://cumulus.cedefop.europa.eu/files/vetelib/2020/vocational_education_training_future_work_Poland_Cedefop_ReferNet.pdf)).

The VET systems attempts to address the challenges of national economy and labour market. In Poland the biggest shortage of employees occurs: in construction industry (e.g. concrete worker, bricklayer, plasterer, and machine operator), manufacturing industry (e.g. welder, electrician, and CNC machine operator), transport industry (e.g. logistics, car mechanic, and driver), catering industry (e.g. cook, baker, chef, confectioner), medical and care industry (min. nurse, doctor), service industry (e.g. hairdresser, beautician), financial industry (e.g. accountant, accounting officer).

**In Slovenia** the types of VET institutions are: upper-secondary vocational schools offering upper-secondary vocational programmes at EQF 4 for 3 years; basically state, supervised by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, with minimum of 24 weeks of WBL in companies, it is possible to have an apprenticeship contract with 56 weeks of WBL in companies. Upper-secondary vocational schools offering upper-secondary technical programmes at EQF 4 level for 4 years, supervised by the

Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, minimum of 4 weeks of WBL in companies. Upper-secondary vocational schools offering upper-secondary vocational technical programmes at EQF 4 level, for 2 years, state supervised, by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, minimum of 2 weeks of WBL in companies.

**In Latvia** vocational secondary education programmes are basically provided by ‘profesionālā vidusskola’ and ‘tehnikums’ and lead to both a diploma of vocational secondary education and professional qualification at EQF level 4. EQF level 3 vocational education programmes (arodizglītība) are provided by ‘arodskola’ (a relatively limited number of schools and programs of this type) and lead to a certificate of vocational education and professional qualification at EQF level 3. These programmes do not give a right to enter higher (tertiary) education. Work-based learning can be implemented in Latvia at EQF level 2-4. Currently consultations are being held on the introduction of WBL at EQF level 5 as well.

### 3 Existence of WBL legal framework

In all the four countries there is a solid legal framework for WBL. These developments are relatively recent.

**In Slovakia** Act No. 61/2015 31.03.2015 “Coll. Act on Vocational Education and Training and on Amendments to Certain Acts” (hereinafter – VET Act SK), with its amendments of 14. 06. 2018 has been the key legal document with regard to WBL. This law regulates vocational education and training of a secondary vocational school; types of secondary vocational schools; practical training; dual education system; verification of the employer's ability to provide practical training in a dual education system; regulation of mutual rights and obligations of the pupil, secondary vocational school and employer in practical training; material and financial security of the pupil; coordination of vocational education and training for the labour market.

**In Poland** the Regulation of the Minister for National Education of 22 February 2019 on practical vocational education (Journal of Laws of 2019, item. 391). In 2017, a vocational education reform was initiated in Poland in response to the needs of the economy. In secondary education (initial VET at up to EQF level 4), a new school system has been adopted, including: 3-year first degree branch (sectorial) school, 2-year second degree branch (sectorial) school and 5-year vocational upper secondary school. The classification of vocational education professions has been arranged and the individual professions are assigned to 32 areas (sectors). LAW of 22 December 2015 on the Integrated Qualification System was revised on 13th December 2019. The Integrated Qualification System (IQS) is a set of solutions for the establishment, awarding and quality assurance of those qualifications which are included in the IQS. The act defines, among other things, the Polish Qualifications Framework and the Integrated Qualifications Register.

The Polish Qualifications Framework (PQF) is a reference system for qualifications awarded in Poland. There are 8 levels in the PQF. Each of them is described by means of the general characteristics of the scope and complexity of knowledge, skills and social competence required from persons with a given level of qualifications. In the PQF, the typical characteristics of qualifications given in general, vocational and higher education are taken into account. The Polish Qualifications Framework makes it possible to refer Polish qualifications to the levels of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and through the EQF to the levels of qualifications in individual EU countries. Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 13 April 2016 represents the characteristics of the second degree of the Polish Qualifications Framework typical for general qualifications – levels 1-4. Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 13 April 2016 represents the characteristics of the second degree of the Polish Qualifications Framework typical for professional qualifications – levels 1-8. The Act of 14 December 2016 on the education law (Journal of Laws of 2019, item 1148, 1078), which lists places where an apprenticeship can take

place (Article 120 (1)) and entities that may conclude agreements on apprenticeship (Article 120(5)) – *Ustawa z dnia 14 grudnia 2016 r. Prawo oświatowe, Dz. U. z 2019 r. poz. 1148 i 1078*.

The Regulation of the Minister for National Education of 22 February 2019 on practical vocational education (Journal of Laws of 2019, item. 391) – *Rozporządzenie Ministra Edukacji Narodowej z dnia 22 lutego 2019 r. w sprawie praktycznej nauki zawodu, Dz.U. 2019 poz. 391*

The Regulation of the Council of Ministers of 28 May 1996 on vocational preparation of apprentices and their remuneration (Journal of Laws of 1996, No. 60, item. 278) – *Rozporządzenie Rady Ministrów z dnia 28 maja 1996 r. w sprawie przygotowania zawodowego młodocianych i ich wynagradzania, Dz.U. 1996 nr 60 poz. 278*.

**In Slovenia** Zakon o poklicnem in strokovnem izobraževanju/ Vocational and Professional Education Act of 13.07.2006, last changes 19.07.2019 and Zakon o vajištvu/ Apprenticeship Act of 19.5.2017.

**In Latvia** in the period 1 December 2010 to 30 November 2015 the State Education Development Agency (VIAA) together with four cooperation partners – the Latvian Employers' Confederation (LDDK), the Latvian Free Trade Union Confederation (LBAS), the National Centre for Education (VISC) and the Education Quality State Service (IKVD) implemented the ESF project “Nozaru kvalifikāciju sistēmas izveide un profesionālās izglītības pārstrukturizācija” (Development of Sectoral Qualification System and Improving Efficiency and Quality of Vocational Education), 2010/0274 / 1DP / 1.2.1.1.1 / 10 / IPIA / VIAA / 001), (hereinafter – Project 1.2.1.1.1). The aim of the project was to improve the quality and efficiency of VET in accordance with the development needs of economic sectors by restructuring VET, establishing a sectoral qualifications system, researching economic sectors, developing or improving basic occupational standards and specialization qualification requirements, as well as for developing system that ensures the recognition of skills acquired outside the formal education. The results of the Project 1.2.1.1.1 were subsequently translated into the respective legal regulation and served as a basis for further joint education and labour market developments, including WBL. Amendments to the Law on VET 2015 introduced the concept of WBL. Prior to the Amendments of 2015 WBL was not referred to in legislation. Prior to this WBL approaches were piloted in a limited number of VET institutions in 2013/14 and onwards, and only after testing was mainstreamed and developed with a stable legal basis. Cabinet of Ministers' Regulation of 15 July 2016 No. 484 “Procedures for Organisation and Implementation of Work-based Learning”, <http://likumi.lv/ta/id/283680-kartiba-kada-organize-un-isteno-darba-vide-balstibas-macibas> (Regulation No 484) is the umbrella (overarching) regulation, it determines: WBL is the form of the VET programme implementation; 25% of VET programme implemented at the enterprise (excluding qualification practice; individual learning plan for students; employment contract or Scholarship agreement between enterprise and student; rights and responsibilities of the Sectoral Expert Councils, VET school, enterprise, student; the requirements for the WBL in-company trainers (e.g. pedagogical competence); Sectoral Expert Councils' responsibilities – promotion of WBL, information dissemination, advice and recommendation on implementation, assessment of the WBL implementation, as well as assistance regarding the choice of enterprises for WBL.

Simultaneously Cabinet of Ministers Regulation 15 July 2016 No 483 “Regulation on the implementation of the Operational Program “Growth and Employment” 8.5.1 specific objective “To increase the number of qualified VET students through their participation in work-based learning or training practices at an enterprise”, <http://likumi.lv/ta/id/283736-darbibas-programmas-izaugsmes-un-nodarbinatiba-8-5-1-specifiska-atbalsta-merka-palietinat-kvalificetu-profesionalas-izglitiba-i...> was adopted to provide legal basis for the implementation of a targeted ESF project for WBL development in Latvia.

Thus, currently the key policy instrument for promoting and implementing apprenticeship is the ESF project “On the participation of VET learners in apprenticeships and training in companies” (hereinafter – SAM 851 project), <http://www.ddd.lv/projekts/darba-vide-balstibas-macibas/>, implemented by the Employers' Confederation of Latvia. The SAM 851 project has invested also in

the development of regional affiliations to promote apprenticeships to employers in all part so the country. The norms of the Regulation No 483, however, may not contradict the overarching Regulation No 484.

In June 2017 the “Guidelines on the Organisation and Implementation of WBL” were developed by the Ministry of Education and Science in order to provide common principles and methodological support for the involved partners in the WBL implementation. It is a recommendation at national level for various target groups involved in the implementation of WBL and is not legally binding. It offers clarification for the application of the legal framework as well.

August 2, 2019 changes have been made on the simplified cost methodology (of 26 June, 2017) applied within the OP 851 project to increase support to companies involved in work-based learning training practices in the provision of tutors, as well as, as well as to increased support to the educational institution for the execution of payments and the collection and storage of the supporting documentation justifying the expenses of the students involved in the project. October 16, 2018 OP 8.5.1. Project approved a simplified cost methodology for personal protective equipment, accident insurance and vaccination costs. It is planned to make further changes in the future, applying the methodology to new qualifications.

Regarding the WBL legal basis the bottom-up approach was applied in Latvia. A pilot phase was introduced in 2013 with the involvement of six VET institutions to test WBL approaches, before WBL legislation was drafted and introduced in 2016. Also the WBL conceptual approaches were developed in close co-operation with social partners and other relevant ministries, relying also on the support from the EU Erasmus+ programme project on WBL development by public authorities.

## 4 Financing of work-based learning

Financial mechanisms in WBL is a crucial issue. The sources and mechanisms tend to vary, they can be covered by private or public funding, shared public/private funding, co-financed by EU, by individual companies, chambers, professional associations and other bodies. Also in the case of the four consortium countries the approaches are quite different.

### **In Slovakia**

Sources for WBL costs are the state budget, the European Social Fund and the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF), – within National Project Dual Education (hereinafter referred to as the NP DE SK) entitled “Dual Education and Increasing the Attractiveness and Quality of VET” (the project is managed by the ŠIOV organization).

The financing of employers of vocational education is managed through the state budget (through a contribution to the provision of practical teaching in the system of dual education from the budget heading of the Ministry of Education). Contribution for the provision of practical teaching in the system of dual education is implemented according to § 21a of the VET Act SK. An employer who provides practical training in the dual education system shall be provided with a contribution to ensure practical training in the dual education system (hereinafter referred to as the "contribution") from the budget heading of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports of the Slovak Republic Education").

Entitlement to the allowance is as follows: a small enterprise or a medium-sized enterprise in the amount of EUR 1,000, an employer who, during the school year, has provided the pupil with practical instruction of more than 400 hours, in the amount of EUR 700; or an employer who, during the school year, has provided the pupil with practical instruction in the range of 200 to 400 hours, in the amount of EUR 300. Entitlement to the allowance arises for the employer for each pupil with whom he has concluded an apprenticeship contract in the school year in which he first began to provide this pupil with practical teaching in the dual education system. The employer shall submit a

written application for the allowance by 31 March of the relevant school year in which he / she provides the pupil with practical training in the dual education system. Attachment to the application is a copy of: certificates, dual education contracts, an apprenticeship contract concluded with a pupil. The Ministry of Education shall provide a contribution to the employer for each pupil once a year as of 30 June of the relevant school year in which the employer provided the pupil with practical training in the dual education system.

It should also be noted that the payment to the student is individually determined in the apprenticeship contract (some employers pay the student an amount beyond the scope of compulsory paid productive work, or pays a corporate scholarship).

An employer who provides practical training in the system of dual education is also entitled to a tax benefit provided by the state in the form of a reduction in the tax base of a taxpayer who is a provider of practical training. For each student with whom the employer has concluded an apprenticeship contract, the employer may reduce the tax base for income tax by:

- a) EUR 3,200 per pupil, if the taxpayer provides more than 400 hours of practical training in the tax period,
- b) EUR 1,600 per pupil if the taxpayer provides more than 200 hours of practical training in the tax period.

### **In Poland**

Sources for WBL costs are public financing: general subsidy from the state of Poland; subsidy from local government budget (Gmina's government entities/Cities with powiat status government entities/Powiat's government entities/Voivodship's government entities).

Numerous programmes financed by the European Union: Erasmus +, 16 regional operational programmes with a student traineeship component. Also Companies, contribute, e.g. with private financing of student traineeship for pupils or the costs of a cash benefit paid to a student accepted for a student internship may be included by the employer in tax deductible costs. Patronage classes are also financed by private companies.

In order to strengthen the potential of schools providing vocational training, changes are introduced in the tax regulations which create tax preferences for entrepreneurs (legal persons or natural persons), making donations to public schools providing vocational training, or public vocational training centres. In the case of legal entities conducting business activity, the change of regulations will allow for tax deduction in total up to 10% of income. In the case of natural persons, up to 6% of the income. The current legal limit for donations (i.e. 10% of income in CIT and 6% of income in PIT).

In order to support the needs of the dynamically developing economy, changes have been introduced in the scope of distribution of the part of the general educational subsidy consisting in taking into account the forecast of the demand for employees in the professions of professional education and differentiating the amounts set for the students covered by the vocational training in the professions of professional education of particular importance for culture and national heritage. Schools educating in occupations for which the labour market is forecast to have a higher demand will receive an increased educational subsidy. Taking into account the forecast of demand on the local labour market when distributing the subsidy each year will concern only students of 1st classes.

Such a solution will ensure financial stability of local authorities in vocational training, they will be sure that the decision to start training in the profession for which there is demand will translate into higher funding under the subsidy until the end of training in that profession. Moreover, the forecast of demand for employees in professions of branch education will constitute a reference point for the Self-Governments of Voivodships to determine annually the list of professions in which the reimbursement of young workers' salaries will be paid to employers. On the basis of the forecast, the subsidy to employers for the costs of education of young employees in professions for which there is a special demand on the labour market will also be increased to PLN 10 000. The forecast of

demand for employees in the professions of vocational education will be included for the first time in the division of the part of the general educational subsidy between individual local government units for 2020, while differentiating the amounts set for students covered by vocational education. In Poland public expenditure on education in 2018 amounted to PLN 77.9 billion, which represented 3.7% of GDP. Spending on one vocational school student is only 12% higher compared to spending on one general secondary school student.

**In Slovenia** WBL is financed by companies themselves, companies receive reimbursement (ESF or state) to cover part of the expenses.

#### **In Latvia**

Currently the key policy instrument for promoting and implementing apprenticeship is an ESF project “On the participation of VET learners in apprenticeships and training in companies” (hereinafter – SAM 851 project), <http://www.loodk.lv/projekts/darba-vide-balstibas-macibas/>, implemented by the Employers’ Confederation of Latvia. The SAM 851 project has invested also in the development of regional affiliations to promote apprenticeships to employers in all part so the country. State budget is used to finance a WBL program as any other VET program. No state budget is used directly (earmarked) to support employers for the implementation of WBL. The general provisions for VET program financing are used

Exemption from citizens income tax – according to Law on Citizens Income Tax, Article 9, paragraph 81) – scholarships up to 280 euros per month, paid to a learner in accordance with the procedure specified by the Cabinet for organizing and implementing work-based learning, by a merchant, institution, association, foundation, natural person registered as an economic operator, as well as an individual enterprise, including farmers or a fisherman's farm and other economic operators, <https://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=56880>

## **5 WBL tutors and WBL tutors’ training**

WBL tutors and WBL tutors’ training is a pre-condition for a high quality WBL, and it is recommended to have systemic approaches for training and support to WBL tutors. It is not rare that specific programs or modules are being used for the purpose. Sometimes there is also particular legislation or regulation regarding the requirements for WBL tutors in companies, also determining the maximum number of students per tutor in company. In all the consortium countries measures have been taken to ensure systemic approaches to the training of WBL tutors, even though there is a different approach to tutors’ competence requirements and training, the number of students under tutors supervision and other issues.

In Slovakia there are systemic approaches in place regarding the training of WBL tutors based on the Activity 1 in the NP DE SK: “Involvement of professional organizations in the process of ongoing transformation of VET and building a cooperation platform for cooperation of partners involved in the system of dual education, education and training of tutors”.

The training of main tutors is provided by a professional organization, with competence to the fields of education in which the student performs practical training under the guidance of the main tutor. The certificate of completion of the training of main tutors is issued also by the same professional organization. Based on an agreement between professional organizations and after discussion in the council of employers for the dual education system, the training of main tutors on the basis of an agreement with professional organization has been carried out since 1 April 2019 by the Republican Employers' Union through an instructor for main tutors.

There are no specific programs or modules used for the purpose in Slovakia. According to § 21b of the VET Act SK, the chief tutor is a person under whose guidance the student performs practical training at the workplace of practical training, if:

- is in an employment relationship with an employer or is an employer who is a self-employed person,
- has achieved at least secondary vocational education / a full secondary vocational education / higher professional education in the relevant field of study or in a related field of study in which the pupil is preparing,
- at least five years performed professional activities in the scope of educational standards for a particular field of study or educational standards to the extent relevant field of study in which the student prepares,
- holds a license or other document proving professional competence, if such professional competence is required for the performance of the relevant profession,
- has a certificate of completion of the training of main tutor issued by the relevant professional organization.

Degree of education achieved is not required if the main tutor has passed an aptitude test for the relevant profession or activities.

The maximum number of pupils per main tutor is 40 pupils.

The legislation, however, stipulates the requirements for WBL tutors in companies. According to § 22 of the VET Act SK, a tutor is a person under whose guidance a pupil carries out practical training at the employer's workplace or at the workplace of practical training, if:

- is in an employment relationship with an employer or is an employer who is a self-employed person,
- has achieved at least secondary vocational education / a full secondary vocational education / higher professional education in the relevant field of study or in a related field of study in which the pupil is preparing,
- at least three years performed professional activities in the scope of educational standards for a particular field of study or educational standards to the extent relevant field of study in which the student prepares,
- holds a license or other document proving professional competence, if such professional competence is required for the performance of the relevant profession,
- has a certificate of completion of the training of main tutor issued by the relevant professional organization.

Degree of education achieved shall not be required if the tutor performed at least five years professional activities in the scope of educational standards for a particular field of study or educational standards to the extent relevant field of study in which the student is prepared. The employer may assign a maximum of 3 pupils to the tutor on one day of practical training.

The maximum number of students who can carry out practical training under the guidance of the main tutor is 10-12 students per group (depending on the field of study or teaching).

The maximum number of students per tutor in company has not been determined. It is based on material and technical support (depending on the norm given by the state). The maximum number is 10 – 12 students per 1 group (depending on the field of study)

**In Poland** as a result of the education reform, a new form of vocational training is planned for teachers of theoretical vocational subjects and teachers of practical vocational training – obligatory professional training (industry training). The training will be carried out on a 40-hour basis, periodically over three years, in companies related to the profession taught. The aim of industry training is to improve the professional skills and qualifications needed to perform work, including in particular: getting acquainted with the technologies used in the company, getting acquainted with devices, tools and other technical equipment used in production processes or services, get to know the specifics of working in real-life conditions in the field related to the taught profession, improving practical skills in applying theoretical knowledge, gaining new professional experience related to the

profession, establishing professional contacts to use them in the vocational training process, improving interpersonal skills in direct contact with employees, identification of the needs and employment opportunities of school-leavers on the regional or local labour market.

Legislation and regulation regarding the requirements for WBL tutors in companies: Act of 22 November 2018 amending the Act – Education Law, the Act on the Education System, and certain other acts (Journal of Laws of 2018, item 2245). Act of 26 January 1982. – Teacher's Charter (uniform text: Journal of Laws of 2018, item 967 as amended) – art. 70c (effective from 1 September 2019). The maximum number of students per tutor in company depends on the firm practice.

**In Slovenia** training is mandatory. 24-hours training for tutors is implemented based on a standard set at national level (CPI). Training is provided by chambers and schools. Training of tutors is also integrated in Master's exams. Support: Chambers have offices for WBL. There are coordinators of WBL in each school, financed by the Ministry of education. There is 24-hours training for tutors, based on 2 modules: Developmental characteristics of the adolescent and the psychological basis of learning, teaching and communication; Strategies and methods of WBL. A training company must be accredited by one of the chambers. It must fulfil material (particular field of work, training place, and equipment) and staff (trained tutor) requirements. In practice, 1 tutor is responsible for not more than 3 students or apprentices in certain period of time.

In Latvia, the requirements are set out in the Regulation No 484 Article 10. The tutor in work-based learning in the company meets the following requirements: the person has a master craftsman qualification awarded by the Latvian Chamber of Crafts and a relevant master's practice certificate or the person's pedagogical competence, professional education in the field and experience meet at least one of the following requirements: the person has a professional qualification of a teacher; the person has pedagogical knowledge acquired in the regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers regarding the education and professional qualifications required for teachers and the procedure for the improvement of teachers' professional competence in the said teacher professional competence development B program in the amount of at least 72 hours; the person has pedagogical knowledge acquired by a practical interactive modular educational program for WBL tutors in the amount of not less than 32 academic hours.

The educational program is developed and implemented by educational institutions after coordination with the Ministry of Education and Science to ensure uniform quality all over the country; the person's professional education in the sector or experience meets at least one of the following requirements: the person has professional education in the sector; the person has at least three years of work experience in the industry.

Recommended number of students- 6 per company tutor, according to the document – “Guidelines on the Organisation and Implementation of WBL” adopted in June 2017 by the Ministry of Education and Science in order to provide common principles and methodological support for the involved partners in the WBL implementation.

## 6 Social dialogue and relevant stakeholder involvement

Social dialogue and other relevant stakeholder involvement at national level regarding WBL developments is one of the key issues to ensure the WBL relevance to the labour market. Various forms and degrees of social dialogue exist in the Consortium countries. The social partners are to a varying degree involved at national level dialogue and decision making regarding WBL developments.

**In Slovakia** it is a communication among several institutions: The Ministry of Education – ŠIOV – professional organizations – employers. According to § 28 of the VET Act: The following institutions are involved in the coordination of vocational education and training for the labour market at

national level: 1. Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic, 2. Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic, 3. Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic, 4. Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic, 5. Ministry of Transport and Construction of the Slovak Republic, 6. Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic, 7. Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic, 8. Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic.

Organizations participating in the coordination of vocational education and training for the labour market at the level of the self-governing region are following :a) self-governing region, b) a district office in the seat of the region, c) the Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family in the seat of the region, d) regional chambers of trade unions, professional organizations and employers who contribute to the development of regional employment, e) employee representatives, f) founders of secondary schools in a self-governing region, g) Centre for pedagogical-psychological counselling and prevention of the region. The Ministry's tasks include coordinating the implementation of tasks related to social dialogue, in particular those concerning cooperation with social partner organisations and social dialogue institutions, especially the Employers' Council for the Dual Education System.

The Council of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Vocational Education and Training is an advisory body to the Government of the Slovak Republic in the field of vocational education and training. The Government Council discusses the statute of the Employers' Council for the dual education system, limits the scope of the relevant professional organization in the field of vocational education and training, discusses the statutes of commissions to verify the employer's ability to provide practical training in the dual education system, discusses proposals of the working group for coordination of vocational education and training, proposals Employers' Councils for the Dual Education System, performs advisory activities for vocational education and training issues, for the competence of professional organizations in the exercise of their competence in the dual education system.

**In Poland** the social dialogue can be formalised, where collective negotiations are conducted by specially established institutions, councils or committees. They act on behalf of legal acts or bilateral acts. The Ministry's tasks include coordinating the implementation of tasks related to social dialogue, in particular those concerning cooperation with social partner organisations and social dialogue institutions. There is no data on the forms of social dialogue.

**In Slovenia** stakeholders are involved on the national level (Council of VET experts) and on local level i.e., level of singular school or school centre, at local level stakeholders are involved in school councils and in working groups, i.e., working groups for open curricula definition. Council of VET experts – for VET education issues. Social-dialogue council – for general and economic issues, including human resources and education.

**In Latvia** there is a well-established systemic social dialogue. With the aim to improve coordination between education and employment policies both for initial and continuing vocational education and support the involvement of employers in education development and delivery, in July 2016, the Minister of Economy, the Minister for Education and Science, and the Minister for Welfare established the Employment Council – meeting regularly, usually at monthly basis. The Tripartite Sub-Council for Co-operation on VET (PINTSA) meets on regular basis to discuss better linkage between education and employment policies in concrete terms, with a particular emphasis on apprenticeships.

The sectors are being represented in Sector expert councils – advisory bodies supporting the development of quality IVET programmes in line with the needs of the labour market. They are operating in compliance with Cabinet of Ministers' Regulation of 15 July 2016 No. 485 "Procedure for the Development of Sector Expert Councils, their Tasks and Coordination of Activities", <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/283737-nozaru-ekspertu-padomju-izveidosanas-darbibas-un-darbibas->

[koordinācijas-kartība](#) Sectoral expert councils operate on the basis of tripartite cooperation. Their members include representatives from employers' organisations, trade unions, ministries (the education, economics, and welfare ministries), as well as other branch ministries, and the State Employment Agency

VET institutions (Competences centres) as stipulated by VET Law have established advisory bodies – Conventions – where the local and regional aspects of VET and apprenticeship developments are regularly discussed. In the Conventions the VET institution's administration, local or regional employers, local and national government organisations are represented to better coordinate the local/ regional and national priorities for better education and employment/ labour market compliance.

The work done since 2013 regarding introduction of apprenticeships in the VET system indicates to the existence of strong social dialogue in Latvia at various levels – VET institution, local and regional level, sector level, ministerial and social partner level. The social dialogue refers to various aspects – the drafting of legal framework, development of standards and curriculum, compliance to labour market demands, determining the priority areas, incentives to the involved parties and now increasingly also to graduate tracking.

The role of VET institutions Conventions and Sector Expert Councils is growing – since their establishment by amendments to the VET Law in 2015. It takes time for new formations to acquire a meaningful role in the education – employment collaboration procedures. The Ministry of Education and Science after having analysed the achievements so far is planning measure to support and optimise their work in the coming planning period of 2021-2027, based on the lessons learnt.

It should be noted that the Tripartite Sub-Council for Co-operation on VET (PINTSA) is an instrument allowing for an immediate reaction for identified problems or challenges, since all the three sides of the dialogue are involved and present, and they accountable to the Council. Any issue that is raised can be included in the Agenda of the Council meeting, and if necessary, included repeatedly – until the partner agree on a common beneficial solution. Above all – if the issue has a high level policy context, the Employment Council discusses it among the three relevant ministers of education, economy and employment, thus allowing for solutions at a high policy level.

This allows to conclude that the existing institutional mechanisms are well designed for addressing apprenticeship issues at all levels and on all relevant components, allowing for taking necessary decisions and follow up the processes.

## 7 Involvement of sector organisations, employers and their organisations

Involvement of sector organisations, employers and their organisations, professional and sectoral associations and chambers is also crucial for the success of WBL. The involvement mechanisms and degree of involvement are also relevant.

**In Slovakia** a broad spectrum of stakeholders is involved: Republican Union of Employers; Association of Employers' Unions and Associations of the Slovak Republic; Slovak Chamber of Commerce and Industry; Association of Industrial Associations; Slovak Chamber of Agriculture and Food; Slovak Chamber of Commerce; Slovak Forestry Chamber; Slovak Mining Chamber. All these professional organizations (depending on the field of study) ensure verification of the employers' competence, while during the inspection they monitor the material-technical, spatial, professional and personnel ability of the employer to provide practical training in accordance with the Education Act and the Vocational Education and Training Act.

**In Poland** the Program Council is the main part of the system of building cooperation between the education community and entrepreneurs. The work of the Sector Councils is supervised by the Programme Council composed of representatives of ministries responsible for development,

education, higher education, labour, representatives of the formal and non-formal education sector, as well as business organisations and social and economic partners.

**Sector Councils:** Each sector council is a grassroots initiative of the industry, as it is created by people connected with the sector – entrepreneurs, employers' and employees' organisations, representatives of the education system, science, administration, and labour market institutions.

**In Slovenia** Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Chamber of Crafts are relevant stakeholders. Chambers are the link between schools and businesses. They are responsible for accreditation of companies where students can do practical training and for support of the apprenticeship system. Chambers are also involved in development activities on the subject, which is coordinated by CPI (National VET institute). CPI as a national institute, established by the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Labour, compiles curriculum, and sets educational standards.

**In Latvia** the coordination of Sector expert councils performs a relevant role in ensuring the proper linkage between the education providers and the sectors – alongside with the numerous sectoral associations. Employers' Confederation of Latvia (LDDK) (formal social partner) and Latvian Agricultural Organization Cooperation Council (LOSP) for coordination of SECs in the agricultural sector are responsible. Currently the key policy instrument for promoting and implementing apprenticeship is an ESF project "On the participation of VET learners in apprenticeships and training in companies" (hereinafter – SAM 851 project), <http://www.ldap.lv/projekts/darba-vide-balstibas-macibas/>, implemented by the Employers' Confederation of Latvia. The SAM 851 project has invested also in the development of regional affiliations to promote apprenticeships to employers in all part so the country. Sector expert councils provide the necessary expertise also regarding the VET program content and the examination for awarding the qualification – their experts participate in all stages of the program implementation – from the development of standards and programs to the development of examination content.

## 8 Company involvement and contractual arrangements

The overall approaches regarding contractual arrangements are similar, whereas the approaches to company involvement differs in the Consortium countries. The contractual parties determine the tasks, rights and responsibilities, also the companies' suitability/competence for WBL provision is being assessed/monitored through different procedures and to a varying degree.

**In Slovakia** the secondary vocational school develops a school educational program for vocational education and training in cooperation with the employer with whom it has concluded a contract on dual education. The secondary vocational school is obliged to regularly inform the employer about all important facts related to the pupil's educational process. This information obligation is fulfilled through a pedagogical employee appointed by the principal of a secondary vocational school in agreement with the employer. A secondary vocational school may provide the employer with an appropriate number of masters of vocational education or teachers of professional practice who are employees of the secondary vocational school and under whose guidance practical training for the pupils will be provided if the employer does not employ: (a) master or teachers of vocational education and training; (b) the required number of masters or teachers of vocational education and training.

Dual education contract concluded between the employer (company) and the secondary school – its subject is the employer's commitment to provide students with practical training at their own expense and responsibility and the commitment of the secondary vocational school to organize vocational education and training in the dual education system (see § 23 of the VET Act). The student is obliged to participate in practical training(a)according to a practical training schedule; and(b)under the guidance of a master of vocational training, a teacher of vocational training, a chief instructor or an instructor. During practical training, the pupil performs only practical work and

productive work, which correspond to the profession, group of professions or professional activities for which the pupil is preparing.

A pupil who performs practical training in the system of dual education is obliged to observe the internal rules of the workplace of practical training. If a pupil demonstrably intentionally causes damage during practical training and does not eliminate this damage by restoring it to a previous state, the secondary vocational school or employer may demand compensation from the pupil. Compensation for an individual student may not exceed an amount equal to four times the minimum wage. During practical training, the student has the rights and obligations of the employee in the field of safety and health at work.

Material security of the student – if a student performs practical training at the employer's workplace or at the workplace of practical training, the employer shall provide at his own expense: (a) personal protective equipment for the student; and (b) an assessment of the pupil's medical, sensory, and psychological fitness, if his / her assessment is required for the performance of practical training. An employer who provides practical training in the system of dual education shall reimburse the pupil from his / her own costs for the boarding of the pupil during the practical training.

An employer who provides practical training in the system of dual education may reimburse the student from his / her own costs for (a) accommodation of the pupil in the school dormitory; (b) travel allowances for transport from the place of permanent residence to the secondary vocational school, the place of practical training and the school dormitory and back and from the school dormitory to the secondary vocational school and the place of the practical training course and back.

Apprenticeship contract concluded between the employer and the pupil's legal representative or the employer and the adult pupil – Its subject is the employer's obligation to prepare the student for the performance of a profession, a group of professions or for the performance of professional activities in the workplace of practical teaching and the obligation of the student to participate in practical training directly with the employer according to his specific needs and requirements (see § 25 – 26 of the VET Act). The student acquires from the apprenticeship contract the right to prepare for a profession corresponding to the profile of the graduate of the field of study in which he / she is preparing and the right to financial and material security according to the conditions agreed in the apprenticeship contract.

An employer who provides practical training in the system of dual education shall issue the internal rules of the workplace of practical training, which he shall publish in a visible place at the workplace of practical training. The internal rules of the practical training workplace include the organization of practical training, the operation and internal regime of the practical training workplace, measures for the protection of safety, health and property and other details related to the participation of pupils in practical training. The internal rules of the workplace of practical training may also be issued as a part of the internal regulations of the employer.

An employer who provides practical training in a dual education system is obliged to reimburse a part of the cost of practical training to a secondary vocational school, if (a) part of the practical training is carried out in a workshop led by masters or teachers of vocational education and training who are employees of a secondary vocational school, or (b) the practical training shall be carried out at a practical training workplace under the guidance of masters or teachers of vocational education and training who are employees of a secondary vocational school.

An employer who provides practical training in the dual education system is obliged to immediately notify the relevant trade union organization or the relevant professional organization that issued the certificate that he has ceased to meet the conditions or that the dual education contract has been terminated.

An employer who provides practical training in the dual education system delegates its representative to the examination commission for the final examination, the subject graduation commission for the professional part of the graduation examination or to the examination commission for the graduation examination.

The suitability and eligibility of companies to provide WBL is monitored – through trade unions and professional organizations. This is stated in § 11 of Act no. 61/2015 Coll. Act on Vocational Education and Training and on Amendments to Certain Acts: For the purpose of verifying the employer's competence, the relevant professional organization shall establish a Commission for the verification of the employer's competence to provide practical training in the dual education system. The relevant professional organization shall maintain a list of professionally qualified persons for each field of study to which it has material competence. From the list of professionally qualified persons, members of the commission are appointed who verify the competence of a specific employer.

A person who has been performing a profession or professional activities within the scope of the curriculum of professional subjects determined by the educational standards of the relevant field of study is considered to be a professionally qualified person. Details on the composition, method of appointment of members and verification activities of the commission shall be regulated by the statute of the commission issued by the relevant trade union or relevant professional organization after discussion by the Council of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Vocational Education and Training.

(Note: The law states what is to be included in the application for verification of the employer's competence, which annexes must be attached and how the verification process itself takes place)

Assessment of the activity of employers and performance of the control of vocational education and training in the system of dual education is made by the State School Inspectorate in cooperation with the delegates of professional organizations, which controls the suitability and effectiveness of the premises, material and technical support and didactic techniques used in the educational process. The State School Inspectorate in the performance of the school inspection also:

- controls the compliance of school educational program with a national education program, with the objectives and principles of education,
- monitors and evaluates the quality of education and training,
- provides advice to the audited entity in remedying the identified deficiencies.

Based on the findings and evaluations, the State School Inspectorate may make a proposal to a professional organization to revoke the certificate of competence of the employer to provide practical training.

**In Poland** the school headmaster has been required to cooperate with the employer of the profession or sector to which the profession is assigned or with the individual farm manager before introducing a new profession to school education. This cooperation will be carried out in the framework of a contract or agreement covering one or more training courses and may consist in particular of: the creation of patronage classes, implementation of vocational training, including practical vocational training, in cooperation with the employer, the equipment of workshops or school workshops, the organisation of professional examinations, training of vocational education teachers, including the organisation of professional training, implementation of vocational guidance and promotion of vocational training.

The obligation for the headmaster of a school providing vocational training to establish cooperation with the employer will apply in the school year 2019/2020 – 2021/2022 to schools starting education in new professions, and from the school year 2022/2023 and in subsequent school years to all schools providing vocational training. This obligation does not apply to sectoral upper secondary schools, as vocational training will take place there on qualification vocational courses.

The headmaster of the school or facility may, by way of a decision, remove a student from the list of students in the cases specified in the statutes of the school or facility. Deletion takes place on the basis of a resolution of the pedagogical council, after consulting the students' self-government. The provision does not apply to a student covered by compulsory education. In justified cases, this student, at the request of the school principal, may be transferred by the school superintendent to another school.

The school head may conclude an agreement with the certifying institution referred to in the Act of 22 December 2015 on the Integrated Qualifications System, regarding one-time, free of charge, accession by students or graduates to the validation and certification of market qualifications operating in the Integrated Qualifications System. The contract is concluded with the consent of the student or graduate, and in the case of a minor student or graduate – with the consent of the parent. Each student who starts to implement the apprenticeship plan is obliged to keep a "Work placement log".

The obligation to take the professional examination will be a condition for graduation. The certificate of professional qualification will include one combined result from the written and practical parts. On the professional qualification certificate, instead of the results for each qualification, there will be an average of all qualifications in a given profession. From 2022 onwards, the results of the professional examination may be taken into account when recruiting to universities. Students and graduates will be able to start validating and certifying market qualifications free of charge under the provisions of the amended Education Law. The right to validate and certify is granted to students or graduates covered by an agreement concluded between the headmaster and the certifying institution.

The entity accepting a student for the internship is obliged to provide the student with safe and hygienic conditions for the student's internship under the terms of the Act – Labour Code.

-An employer who employs juveniles for vocational training in the form of vocational training, directing them to theoretical training to the first-degree industry school in accordance with the regulations issued on the basis of art. 191 § 3 of the Act of June 26, 1974 – Labour Code, agrees with the school headmaster: 1) the scope of vocational education provided by the school and the employer, resulting from the vocational curriculum; 2) the number of days a week in which practical training is held at the employer's; 3) how each party monitors the implementation of the vocational curriculum.

The employer, as a co-operator with the school or as a co-founder of the curriculum, may also take part in the meetings of the teaching board. Employers who have concluded an employment contract with juvenile employees for the purpose of vocational preparation are entitled to co-financing of the costs of education, if: 1) the employer or the person running the establishment on behalf of the employer or the person employed by the employer has the qualifications required to conduct apprenticeships for adolescents specified in the provisions on apprenticeships for adolescents and their remuneration; 2) the juvenile worker completed the apprenticeship and passed: a) in the case of a young person employed for the purpose of apprenticeship with an employer who is a craftsman – a journeyman examination in accordance with the regulations issued under Art. 3 sec. 4 of the Act of March 22, 1989 on crafts, b) in the case of a young person employed for the purpose of apprenticeship for an employer who is not a craftsman – a vocational examination; 3) the juvenile employee has completed training to perform a specific job and passed the exam, in accordance with the provisions referred to in point 1.

ACT of December 14, 2016 Educational Law – Obligation to cooperate between schools and employers. Monitoring the process of implementing the core curriculum for vocational education – cooperation between schools and employers – carried out by the National Centre for Supporting Vocational and Continuing Education

Diagnosis of the quality of practical vocational training – on the basis of research, including IDI (individual deepened interviews) conducted with three groups of respondents who were participants in the vocational education process.

**In Slovenia** schools monitor student progress. Schools are not contractual parties. Students have to carry out practical on-the-job training under the instructions and under the supervision of the employer, keep an apprenticeship diary on a regular basis, inform the employer of the essential circumstances which affect or are likely to affect the fulfilment of his contractual obligations and of any changes affecting the fulfilment of his apprenticeship rights, refrain from any conduct which, having regard to the nature of the work carried out by the employer, is materially or morally detrimental or likely to harm the business interests of the employer, protect the personal data and business secrets of the employer, are to be acquainted with safety and health care measures and to fulfil other duties in accordance with the regulations on safety and health at work, and fulfil other contractual and legal obligations.

Practical training by working for an employer and apprentice education at school may last a total of a maximum of eight hours per day and 36 hours per week. If school hours are five or more hours a day, practical on-the-job training with the employer may not take place on the same day. During the school holidays, the apprentice can be practically trained, but the employer must allow at least six weeks of uninterrupted summer holidays in each school year and at least eight days of other holidays determined by the school calendar.

An apprentice who undergoes practical training with the employer for at least four and a half hours a day, has the right to a break of at least 30 minutes. An apprentice has the right to rest between two days when he is practically trained, the rest lasting at least 12 uninterrupted hours and up to a weekly rest period of 48 uninterrupted hours. An apprentice may not be practically trained to work at night between 10pm and 6am the following day. An apprentice may not work overtime. An apprentice may not receive practical training by working on Sundays and public holidays but may be practically trained by working for a maximum of one Saturday of the month and no more than six Saturdays in the school year.

The apprentice is entitled to at least one day of excused absence from practical training due to personal circumstances and without replacing practical training in case of own marriage, death in the family (parents, siblings, grandparents, parents, spouse, child) and a natural disaster suffered by the apprentice or his family, and in other cases provided for in a collective agreement binding on the employer.

Company has to provide the apprentice with quality practical training in accordance with the educational program, enable the apprentice to fulfil the obligations under the educational program at school, pay the apprenticeship fee determined by the contract and the law, ensure safe and healthy work in accordance with regulations, protect and respect the apprentice's personality and consider and protect privacy, in addition to holidays in accordance with the school calendar, allow the apprentice at least six free working days to prepare for the final exam; keep records in accordance with the law, provide medical examinations appropriate to safety risks and health at work, register the apprenticeship contract with the competent chamber. May, under certain conditions, terminate the apprenticeship contract.

Chambers inspect companies with verification. They send an expert to the company to check whether the company has the appropriate material and personnel conditions (mentors with the right education, enough years of practical experience and a mentor exam) and whether it will be able to train students according to the program and standards set for a particular programme. Chambers also check and verify every single apprenticeship contract.

**In Latvia** VET school has the overall responsibility for the implementation of the WBL program. It has to ensure at least 25% of VET programme implemented at the enterprise and individual learning

plan for students. A tripartite agreement – school, student and company – has to be concluded. Additional bi-lateral agreement is concluded between the student and the company – on wage in case of job contract, or agreement on the allowance (both types of remuneration are acceptable according to Regulation No. 484). The student has to follow the requirements by the school and the company, has the right to receive remuneration, individual labour protection means and the civil liability insurance. The company has to ensure remuneration – either through an employment contract or allowance agreement between the enterprise and student. Apart from the wage/allowance also the individual labour protection means and the civil liability insurance of the learner have to be ensured during the implementation of the individual plan in accordance with the training contract.

Advice (opinion) on the company quality/suitability can be obtained from the Sector Expert Council (Regulation no. 484). VET institutions are free to choose whether they will implement a VET programme in apprenticeship mode or in a school-based mode. VET programme standards apply regardless of its form of organisation or delivery (school-based or workplace based / apprenticeship). Also, the qualification is the same. A WBL VET programme can be adapted from an existing school-based VET programme or a new can be created, based on the same VET standard. The school has to report in the Education Information System (VIIS) that the programme has been adapted or created anew for the delivery in WBL mode. If the VET programme is adapted, it does not need to be licenced or accredited anew, since it concerns only the mode of delivery. In case a new programme is being created for the WBL mode, the licencing and accreditation process is the same as for any other VET programme.

The programme (its mode of delivery) is adapted at school and company level to meet the needs of apprenticeships. The contract on remuneration is signed between the learner and the company. Together with them, the school enters the tripartite agreement which sets general provisions and training related issues. The type of agreement depends on the type of remuneration: It can take the form of an ordinary work contract (where wage is paid to the apprentice), or of an agreement in the case an al VET standards that are developed for the corresponding VET programmes are applied to the ‘work-based learning’ scheme (common standard for school-based VET and the apprenticeship option). A training plan is agreed between the schools, the employer and the apprentice, and details issues related to the volume and content of workplace training, the type of alternation etc. allowance is paid (exempt from citizens’ income tax up to a certain level).

Sector expert councils play an important role as advisory bodies supporting the development of quality IVET programmes in line with the needs of the labour market. Sectoral expert councils operate on the basis of tripartite cooperation. Their members include representatives from employers’ organisations, trade unions, ministries (the education, economics, and welfare ministries), as well as other branch ministries, and the State Employment Agency. Sectoral associations are also relevant actors. These stakeholders have a role in the development of the actual content of the programme and the expected outcomes (through setting the standards, content of the examinations etc.)

## 9 National, regional, local aspects in WBL

**In Slovakia** planning at national, regional and also local level takes place. The Self-governing regions, when determining the highest number of pupils for the relevant school year, takes into account the needs of the labour market on the basis of VET and WBL forecasts (see also the comment in question 6), which concerns paragraph 28 of the VET Act.

Act No. 209/2018 Coll., changing and amending Act No. 61/2015 Coll. on Vocational Education and Training and on changes and supplements to some acts, § 30 section 1). Ministry of Labour in the frame of regular prognoses of labour market development annually publishes on its website the

information on a) employment of secondary school graduates in the labour market by individual regions, secondary schools, fields of study and vocational education and training and the job performed, b) additional needs of employees in the labour market divided by related fields of study and related fields of vocational education and training in cooperation with corporative and professional organizations by April 30, of the calendar year. § 31 The Self-Governing Region, sections 1), 2), 3), 4), 5), 6) a) b) c), 7). The Self-Governing Region at regional Council for Professional Education and Training (KROV) discusses the planned number of students in the first year each year by November 15, for the following school year. Until November 30, of the respective year the Chairman of KROV agrees with the number of students by his signature. At the same time, the approved planned number of secondary school students is published on the Self-Governing Region website and is sent for approval to the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports of the Slovak Republic. §29 section 5) The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports of the SR reviews delivered application for evaluation of students planned numbers of secondary schools first-year according to §31 section 5).

In January of the following year the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports of the SR discusses the adjustment of secondary schools first-year students' number with Self-Governing Region and schools founders (schools performance plan), subsequently, by January 31, it will publish the adjusted number of students on its website. §47 section c) criteria for determining the maximum number of first-year secondary school students for a given year. The Self-Governing Region advances at planning according to §47 head c).

**In Poland** the forecast of demand for employees on the national and provincial labour market will be announced annually until 1 February of a given year. This forecast in accordance with the provisions of the Act – Education Law will be: a tool used, among others, by voivodship labour market councils in the implementation of tasks imposed by the Act on Promotion of Employment consisting in providing opinions on the validity of education in a given profession, was a point of reference for the Self-Governments of Voivodships for the annual determination of the list of professions in which the employers will be reimbursed for the remuneration of young workers for their professional preparation, a key tool in the new way of financing vocational training (based on the results of the forecast, each year there will be a distribution of the part of the education general subsidy allocated to vocational training).

As the forecast will affect the relevance of funding for education, school leaders should take into account the results in the annual planning of vocational training. The aim of the forecast is to provide premises for shaping the offer of the industry education system in accordance with the needs of the national and provincial labour market. Based on the forecast, differentiation of amounts established per students covered by vocational education will be made when dividing the educational part of the general subsidy between individual local government units.

**In Slovenia** it is planned at national level through consultations at local level. The labour market forecast is not really considered in planning the educational offer. The labour market forecast is present in instruments of career advisors

**In Latvia** the Ministry of Economy is responsible for medium and long-term forecasts, the Ministry of Welfare – for short term forecasts. These forecasts are being taken into consideration when planning VET developments and provision, but more specific arrangements are implemented by the Sector expert councils that advise the Ministry of Education and Science regarding annual enrolments and the forward planning of enrolment.

## 10 Autonomy of VET institutions

The freedom of VET institutions in determining their choices as to the participation in WBL, offer of particular programs in WBL mode differs in the consortium countries.

**In Slovakia** secondary vocational schools are governed by VET Act, which defines the rights and obligations of institutions providing VET and also in which cases a secondary vocational school may conclude a contract on dual education. Secondary vocational schools address employers, but employers can also address secondary schools – they can choose whether to establish cooperation – the link between schools and employers is Dual Point. The school and the employer may also use the model curriculum for the given field of education for which the school curriculum is being developed as a basis (sample) for the elaboration of the curriculum of vocational subjects.

The model curriculum can be modified by the subject teacher to the extent of 30% of the total number of teaching hours. The teacher can thus update the content of vocational education.

The stated scope of possible adjustments to the model curriculum can be a basis for the school and the employer to update the content of the school educational program prepared by the school before the school enters the dual education system.

**In Poland** the obligation for schools to cooperate with employers, on the basis of a contract or agreement, has been introduced, which covers at least one cycle of education.

**In Slovenia** schools can present local needs to the Ministry of Education, but the final decision depends on financing. Schools have to define 20% of the curricula. Together with local companies and other relevant stakeholders, school have to define the local offer of vocational modules for every vocation.

**In Latvia** there is freedom of choice whether to implement programs in WBL mode. It is not compulsory, however, VET schools are encouraged by the Ministry of Education and Science to increase participation, especially in STEM qualifications and branches.

## 11 Incentives at national, institutional and individual level

There are various type of incentives existing at national, institutional and individual level in the Consortium countries to promote WBL developments. These incentives may concern the VET institutions, the VET students and the employers.

**In Slovakia** there are two main national incentives: 1) contribution to the provision of practical training in the WBL system (see the contribution to the provision of practical teaching in the system of dual education according to § 21a of the VET Act in question 4 of this questionnaire); 2) tax deductible item – divided according to the size of the company. Every employer who provides practical training in the WBL system is entitled to a tax benefit in the form of a reduction in the tax base of the taxpayer who is the provider of practical training. In accordance with §17 par. 37 of Act no. 595/2003 Coll. on income tax, the employer may reduce his income tax base for each student with whom he has concluded an apprenticeship contract by: a) € 3,200 per pupil, if the taxpayer provides more than 400 hours of practical training in the tax period, b) € 1,600 per pupil if the taxpayer provides more than 200 hours of practical training in the tax period. Financial security of the student (applies only to WBL) individual (see the question 18).

**In Poland** traineeships with employers based on a contractual, will be included in the period of employment individual. Employer may include salary paid to the student as a deductible expense. The employer will receive 10,000 PLN co-financing for the education of a young employee. The company may also deduct donations made to the vocational school from its income.

**In Slovenia** financial incentives for companies are on national level, financed by the ESF found. Incentives cover part of expenses of companies.

Chambers offices for WBL. Chamber of Commerce and Chamber of Crafts establish WBL offices to support companies, offices are partially financed by the Ministry of Education. Coordinators of WBL

represent the link between schools and companies, they are financed by the Ministry of Education. Training of tutors is financed by ESF funds (project based).

In Latvia. Implementation of WBL is a criterion (one of) for awarding VET competence centre status – which is an incentive for VET institutions to become WBL providing school.

Exemption from citizens income tax – according to Law on Citizens Income Tax, Article 9, paragraph 81) – scholarships up to 280 euros per month, paid to a learner by an employer in accordance with the procedure specified by the Cabinet for organizing and implementing work-based learning (Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No.484) <https://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=56880> are exempt from taxation.

At national level currently the key policy instrument for promoting and implementing apprenticeship is an ESF project “On the participation of VET learners in apprenticeships and training in companies” (hereinafter – SAM 851 project), <http://www.lood.lv/projekts/darba-vide-balstibas-macibas/>, implemented by the Employers’ Confederation of Latvia. The SAM 851 project has invested also in the development of regional affiliations to promote apprenticeships to employers in all parts of the country.

Incentivising the stakeholders is still a challenge, as it requires additional work. The social responsibility of enterprises is growing only gradually. With the recent growing lack of labour force entrepreneurs are showing more interest in WBL – to attract actual labour force.

## 12 Publicity for WBL promotion

**In Slovakia**, a website [http://dualnysystem.sk/was\\_created\\_for\\_employers/students/secondary\\_schools](http://dualnysystem.sk/was_created_for_employers/students/secondary_schools), where up-to-date information for all target groups involved in SDV is available.

Furthermore, the website <http://potrebyovp.sk/> was created for the same target group, where employers and schools involved in system of dual education are registered on one portal with the published current offer of training places for those interested in system of dual education.

Within the National Operational Program Human Resources, a website <https://mojduel.sk/> was created for employers / students.

On the website <http://www.rzsdu.sk> for employers, where all trade union and professional organizations are at one place for the purpose of unified operation and representation of employers' interests in the field of vocational education and training at the national and regional level.

**In Poland** there are various formats for publicity. National conference. Representatives of business, state institutions, headmasters of vocational training schools, universities and research institutions and practical training managers. The aim of the conference was to show the challenges facing the Polish economy, the role that vocational education can play in this area, as well as to present the direction of changes in vocational education in the context of socio-economic conditions and the expectations and needs of employers. Regional campaigns promoting industry and technical education. Primary school graduates and parents are the target group. A regional online and local media campaign which will present materials to encourage students in the final years of primary schools to take up studies in technical and trade schools. III Congress of Education System Development was organized, the participants discussed programmes coordinated by FRSE and how to improve the quality and effectiveness of education. The motto of the event was: "Erasmus + FRSE. Education of the Future + Future of Education".

The Minister of National Education resumed the honorary patronage of the event. During the congress the programmes conducted by FRSE were summarised and plans for financing international educational programmes for the following financial perspective (2021-2027) presented. Participants discussed how participation in international programmes, projects and initiatives would help to

improve the quality and attractiveness of education. Industry seminars. Employers, headmasters of vocational training schools. During the meetings, key issues related to which industries and professions educate young people, how best to verify the knowledge and skills of students were discussed. Letter from the Prime Minister of Poland and the Minister of National Education Employers. The Prime Minister and the Minister of National Education have issued a special letter to employers, in which they ask them to undertake actions for the benefit of vocational education, including taking patronage of vocational schools. The Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland and the Minister of National Education invited employers to cooperate more closely in planning and implementing promotional campaigns addressed to young people who decide to choose their future professional path.

**In Slovenia** educational fairs are relevant. Basic education students and upper-secondary students, also parents participate. The fair is organized once a year. Prospective high school and university students can obtain all the necessary information in one place. Open house/open days. Once a year companies invite prospective students to their companies, where they are shown the company and work processes. Campaigns on the Internet and social networks. Various campaigns are organized with the help of EU and national funds.

**In Latvia** the Ministry of Education and Science has been implementing communication and WBL promotional activities, also with the support of EU Erasmus+ projects dedicated to WBL (for national authorities and policy experimentation). The Employers Confederation of Latvia within the SAM 851 project implements a WBL promotion communication plan. Students, families, companies, society in general are the key target groups. Individual VET schools have their individual WBL promotion campaigns locally and regionally. Promotion activities are also being implemented in the framework of the European VET week.

### 13 Students' encouragement in WBL

Students' encouragement to get involved in WBL requires a lot of effort, and these efforts are often linked with the career and occupation guidance measures.

Students' encouragement to get involved in WBL requires a lot of effort, and these efforts are often linked with the career and occupation guidance measures.

**In Slovakia** information support is well organised, including through the websites (listed in previous question). Career guidance and work with a pupil must start at primary school. Educational counsellors and teachers who work with the student know about the student, his/her abilities, preparation for lessons and his/her possibilities. It is also necessary to work with the student throughout the secondary school, so that the students are really interested in their field during their studies and remain in the selected field after graduating from school. Dual Points (established by ŠIOV in each regional city) significantly facilitate the work of educational and career counsellors. Their task is to create a unified space and information source about the dual education system, about teaching and study fields, to connect primary schools, secondary vocational schools, employers, pupils and parents in one place.

As part of the National Project Dual Education – 312000 – National Operational Program Human Resources, in addition to Dual Points, a Centre for Orientation in Career Decision-Making was also established for primary school pupils. The Talent Centre is an innovative support in the career guidance of primary school pupils, especially those in their final year of study. Pupils will gain comprehensive information about their ideas about study and work.

At the national level, a number of activities are organized aimed at primary school pupils to promote the possibility of secondary vocational education and to choose a profession. E.g. In an effort to bring closer to the public the possibilities of secondary vocational education in the field of transport

and postal services, the Ministry of Transport and Construction of the Slovak Republic in cooperation with railway companies, selected regional partners, universities and secondary vocational schools regularly organizes career guidance days entitled: Where to go to primary school – STUDY TRANSPORT.

In addition to national activities, all self-governing regions also organize events to motivate pupils to choose a profession, like event “Career days”. It is the event for the pupils in final years of primary schools, intended for principals and educational counsellors of primary schools. It is aimed at a presentation of high schools where pupils also learn about dual education. The event is connected with a workshop or conference. In the program, there is also part aimed at the topic of dual education – principals and high school students who work effectively in SDE are invited to the discussion and they talk about their experiences.

There are also several organizations that help to connect students to the labour market. E.g. IAESTE (The International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience) is an international, non-profit student organization that strives to establish closer mutual contact between employer and student through the implementation of a number of projects. IAESTE Slovakia cooperates with many companies, among which it has become known especially for organizing the Job Fair Opportunities, the implementation of the Job Catalogue, as well as the educational project How-Know. Every year, the prestigious job fair Days of Opportunities is organized on the campus of five Slovak universities. The fair is organized twice a year in spring and autumn and allows company representatives to establish direct contact with students in the form of personal consultations. The fair is intended for all students and graduates of technical fields and offers them the opportunity to meet under one roof of representatives of companies with a broad focus offering vacancies and a willingness to communicate. The companies involved in this fair operate in the fields of information technology, electrical engineering, telecommunications, energy, finance, banking, chemical, automotive and other technical industries.

The Pedagogical and Psychological Counselling and Prevention Centres also organize, Career Choice Days – on the basis of tests, students learn what type of personality they belong to, what their prerequisites are, what is the need of the labour market, what are their study opportunities etc.

**In Poland** information support and career guidance are well established. In order to support students in making educational and professional decisions, the school conducts classes related to planning their own educational and professional career. Classes are conducted by the teacher on career counselling.

**In Slovenia** there is obligatory WBL participation for regular students of upper-secondary education. WBL is an obligatory part of every vocational and technical curriculum. Schools motivate students to find a training company.

Information day. Once a year, secondary schools and faculties organize an information day where future high school and university students can come to the future school / faculty for a tour.

Presentation of apprenticeships in secondary schools. Secondary vocational schools and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry organize a presentation day before students make a final decision. Prospective students are introduced to the apprenticeship system, and companies that practically educate apprentices are also introduced.

Counselling and career guidance. In primary schools through tests and personal counselling, counsellors help students make decisions in further education.

Traveling exhibition of professions. Chamber of Commerce and Industry moves posters presenting professions to primary schools, where students can see it and get a sense of where they see themselves in the future.

**In Latvia** – VET institutions implement their own career guidance activities, including WBL involvement. At national level career guidance is being implemented through a project by ESF funding “Career support in general and vocational education institutions”. The projects activities are: 1) Development and publication of a set of informative and methodological materials (including in the e-environment) for the implementation of career support in general and vocational education institutions; 2) Development and approbation of samples of career development support action plan in general and vocational education institutions involved in the implementation of specific support; 3) Additional education of teachers of general and vocational education institutions involved in the implementation of specific support – career counsellors and career support specialists in the issues of implementation of career support measures; 4) Organization of national professional mastery competitions – SkillsLatvia, EuroSkills and WorldSkills – for students of vocational education institutions, including organization of professional skills demonstration events to increase the attractiveness of vocational education; 5) Preparation of contestants – winners of national professional skills competitions and participation in the international skills competitions of young professionals WorldSkills and EuroSkills; 6) Career support measures – career information, career education and career counselling, etc. provision of activities for the students of the educational institutions involved in the project in all regions of Latvia and cities of the Republic. Part of all the activities contribute to the promotion of WBL, in co-operation with VET institutions.

## 14 Student support in WBL

Individual approach to students in WBL is becoming increasingly important for a successful implementation of WBL. The approaches to this differ from country to country.

**In Slovakia** cooperation between secondary vocational schools (SVS) and employers/SVS and pupils/SVS and Dual Point/Dual Point and pupils / primary schools and SVS (between educational counsellors at schools) plays a main role. It works on a voluntary basis – it's individualized and it depends on the employer himself. In the dual education system, the employer is solely responsible for the organization, content and quality of the pupil's practical training and for this purpose pays all costs associated with the financing of the practical training (§ 10, section 4 of the VET Act).

In Poland if the internships take place in a town from which there is no possibility of daily travel to the place of residence, the school head is obliged to provide free accommodation and a lump sum for meals in the amount of not less than 40% of the allowance for an employee employed in a state or local government budgetary unit from for a business trip within the country. Funds for the organization of practical vocational training outside the school are provided by the school management.

Practical support for travel expenses to the company offering WBL, accommodation, meals, means of individual protection, insurance etc. A school sending students to practical vocational training is obliged to reimburse students for such education in places outside their place of residence and outside the school's seat of travel costs for internships (§ 8 of the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 15 December 2010 on practical vocational training). The condition for receiving such a refund by the students commuting to the internships is the possibility of returning the student to the place of residence or school seat every day.

**Preparation for the profession** Practical vocational training for students is organized by the school they attend. In the case of young people, it is organized by the employer who concluded an employment contract with them for the purpose of vocational preparation. This education takes the form of practical classes and apprenticeships. Apprenticeships are organized for students in order to apply and deepen the acquired knowledge and professional skills in real working conditions.

**In Slovenia** – coordinators of WBL bear a lot of responsibility. Every school organises support for individual students to find an appropriate training company. Coordinators of WBL communicate with

companies in order to establish a training contract, they also monitor and visit students during WBL. Individual approach implemented by companies. Some companies organize support for general subjects for students to make it easier for them to pass the tests. Practical support for travel expenses to the company offering WBL, accommodation, meals, means of individual protection, insurance etc. Most companies have an organized meal. If they do not have it, they pay the students a certain amount for it. Transportation is usually not organized, but students get money for the public transport. Insurance is the responsibility of companies. For the time a student spends in the company, he is insured in the same way as the employee.

**In Latvia** support to students is being implemented through the state budget and the ESF SAM 8.5.1. Project funding. For every student there is a WBL supervisor from the school and from the company. These supervisors work in collaboration mode, ensuring that the students' individual WBL implementation plan is being implemented in good quality. The state budget and SAM 8.5.1. Project ensure covering/ reimbursement of travel expenses (to reach the company offering WBL), accommodation, means of individual protection, insurance. Some other forms of support may be implemented on an individual basis, including a specific support from a particular company.

## 15 Parents' involvement

**In Slovakia** parents are legal guardians and have a great influence on the choice of their child's profession. They give agreement to the school and the employer to participate in the dual education system, unless the student is 18 years old. It is important for parents to participate in a welcoming parent meeting at the beginning of the school year in the presence of pre-agreed employers connected to the secondary school in the third round of employer recruitment as an opportunity to involve already admitted students in the system of dual education. An excursion with an employer is also possible, which will be arranged by Dual Point in the district town (this excursion is attended by a primary school pupil and a parent).

**In Poland** parents are being seen as an important target group to encourage students' involvement in VET/WBL. According to research, 80% of young people point to their parents as the most important persons in the process of choosing a profession. It is understandable that many parents are not professionally prepared for this, but due to their importance and many years of influence, they can be called the first non-professional advisors to the profession. It is the parents' attitude, their preparation, fulfilment of their duties that determines to a large extent the child's life path, choice of school or abandonment of further education. The offer of vocational and trade schools is very often addressed not only to students but also to parents as key career advisors for children.

The new rules on the educational system guarantee parents' influence on the functioning of the school. Special powers have been conferred on the Parents' Council. The most important powers of the parents' council include: to adopt, in consultation with the Board of Education, the educational and preventive programme of the school or institution; to give its opinion on the programme and timetable for improving the effectiveness of the school's education or upbringing; to give its opinion on a draft financial plan submitted by the headmaster; to give its opinion on resolutions on conducting pedagogical experiments at school. In response to the parents' demands, the new educational law introduces the possibility to accumulate funds on a separate bank account of the parents' council. The parents' council can express its opinion on any matter concerning the school and address all school governing bodies.

In addition, two representatives of the parents' council will be appointed by the body in charge of the school to the board of directors.

**In Slovenia** since students are minors, parents play a key role in their decisions. They are invited to all presentations, where they are usually especially addressed. They are also signatories to all documents.

**In Latvia** VET institutions see parents as important counterpart for the career guidance and counselling of VET students, also regarding WBL. For students under the age, the parents fulfil the legal arrangements required for the implementation of WBL.

## 16 Standards/ curriculum/ program, supporting documents, guidelines

**In Slovakia**, the school educational program is the basic document of the school, according to which education is carried out in schools. The school educational program for VET in the system of dual education is prepared by the school in cooperation with employers with whom the school has concluded a contract on dual education.

The school educational program must be developed in accordance with the principles and objectives of education and training under the Education Act and the relevant state educational program. The elaboration of the school educational program is carried out mainly through the subject commissions of the school. In the dual education system, it is recommended that the representative of the contractual employers of the school in the system of dual education be a member of the relevant subject commission. When creating the school educational program, the school, in cooperation with the employer, will prepare a curriculum and syllabus.

The creation of a school curriculum should respect the following stages:

- Analysis of employers' requirements in system of dual education and labour market needs,
- Analysis of the profession,
- Creation of a graduate competency profile,
- Creation of a curriculum,
- Creation of educational content,
- Definition of learning resources,
- Development of the evaluation system.

The thematic educational plan is also elaborated, which is a schedule of taught topics of the subject professional training or professional practice for individual units (day, week, etc.). It is processed in the system of dual education according to the curricula of the subject professional training or professional practice of the given field of study prepared by the contracted school in the school educational program.

The thematic educational plan of the subject vocational training or professional practice is compiled in the dual education system mostly by the employer in cooperation with the contracted school.

The trainer of practical training (main tutor, tutor, trainer of vocational education) has the opportunity to specify in more detail in the thematic plan the content of practical training and thus include in the content of practical training new knowledge arising from current developments in science and technology and the need to adapt the curriculum to current needs of the field of study, labour market or region. Changes in the content are proposed by the trainer and discussed by the relevant subject commission, especially on the basis of the requirements of the employer.

**In Poland** the key documents are: Ordinance of the Minister of National Education of 16 May 2019 on the core curriculum of education in professions of professional education and additional professional skills in selected professions of professional education (issued by the Minister of National Education). School statute by the Pedagogical council. Framework internship program by internship supervisor. Internship schedule by internship supervisor. Framework curriculum by the school headmaster, after consulting the school council, and if the school council has not been appointed – after consulting the pedagogical council, parents' council and the student council. Ordinance – Minister of national education, Ministry of Education.

**In Slovenia** for curriculum the responsibility is with the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport. CPI coordinates the curricula development. In next step curricula is presented to the Council of VET

experts, finally is adopted by the Ministry of education. Standards of WBL programs is the responsibility of National VET institute (CPI). Training standards are prepared by experts nominated by chambers, WBL standards take part in the curricula. Apprenticeship contract is the responsibility of Chambers. It is signed by the student, parents (legal representatives) and a representative of the company, and is registered by the chamber. Apprenticeship training plan is the responsibility of the school. The school and company together prepare a plan for each student that is signed by the parents (legal representatives), the school, and the chamber.

**In Latvia** standards and qualification requirements are the responsibility of the National Centre for Education (VISC). VET programs are developed and modularisation of VET programs is implemented by VET institutions. Adapting the VET program to the WBL mode is the responsibility of VET institutions. Registering the VET program in the VIIS information system is the responsibility of VET Institution in co-operation with the State Quality Assurance Service (IKVD). Individual plan for WBL implementation for every student is the responsibility of the VET institutions.

The VET curricula reform started in 2010 is now close to finalisation. It has a crucial role in the implementation of apprenticeship as well, since it allows for a flexible way in the implementing a VET program – either in a school-based or company-based mode (apprenticeship). The majority of revised occupational standards and modular education programmes have been developed in close cooperation with social partners, sectoral expert councils and sectoral associations. This allows also for taking into account the principles of the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET), since the learning outcomes approach is being implemented, as well as the possibility of accumulating, transferring and recognizing them, thus ensuring flexible learning anywhere and anytime also regarding apprenticeships.

Similarly, through the use of ECVET formal, non-formal and informal learning outcomes, the recognition of qualifications is designed to ensure their comparability between different VET institutions, as well as between countries, through a gradual accumulation mechanism for qualifications. It is also important that lifelong learning opportunities are expanded by combining formal and non-formal learning. This means that, if necessary, every adult would have the opportunity to improve their general and professional skills, as well as to be upskilled – to change their way of life or profession in co-operation with employers and in compliance with labour market demand.

There is a formalised procedure how an apprenticeship program is being accredited. Its content is based on an occupational standard or qualification requirement. The standards, VET (apprenticeship) program content and the examination content is being developed in collaboration with employers' organisations taking into consideration the latest developments.

The VET institutions are obliged to introduce all the current data on the revised modular apprenticeship programs and the students in the State education information system (VIIS), so that the process can be monitored and necessary data for analysis obtained.

The tutors in apprenticeship programs (both, at schools and companies) have to have pedagogical competence. For those not having the needed competence a modular program of a minimum of 32 hours is being offered. In an apprenticeship program for each learner there is an individual study plan prepared, and an agreement is being concluded among the three parties – the VET institution, the company and the student.

Even though implementation of apprenticeship programs is not compulsory (VET institutions are free to choose whether they will implement a VET program in apprenticeship mode), certain shifts in tradition can be observed. If initially only part of the VET institutions committed themselves to apprenticeships, and the employers were hard to be persuaded on the benefits for the company, the situation is gradually changing. Survey by the Ministry of Education and Science shows that

employers start seeing apprenticeship as a tool for preparing their future work-force, which was not the case in initial stages of the process.

The learners in their turn alongside with the improved skills' acquisition at a company based program point out the socialisation aspects as well, pointing out that the company environment in itself contributes to their growth as responsible persons and citizens and future employees/ employers. The VET institutions acknowledge the clear benefits and assets of apprenticeships, at the same time pointing out the amount of work that needs to be done in order to ensure all the individualised approaches and organisational procedures in high quality. It can be concluded that in seven years' time since the first piloting started in Latvia, a shift in thinking paradigms of the involved parties has taken place in support of apprenticeship.

## 17 Time spent at the company

**In Slovakia** it depends on the field of study: in M – specialization (studies lasts 4 years, ends with a school-leaving examination) – 20%; at K – specialization (study lasts 4 years, ends with obtaining an apprenticeship certificate and a school-leaving examination) – 50%; in H – specialization (study lasts 3 years, ends with obtaining an apprenticeship certificate) – 60%; in Q- specialization (study lasts 2 years – higher vocational education) – 50%; in F – specialization (study lasts 2 years, the student receives a certificate of completion of basic education or post-secondary qualification study) – 80% Document stipulating the requirement. The school curriculum and thematic plans determine the number of hours a VET student must complete to fill a graduate profile.

**In Poland** in schools, the number of hours of vocational education should be adjusted to the number of hours specified in the provisions on the framework curricula for public schools, envisaged for vocational education in a given type of school, keeping the minimum number of hours for the learning outcomes appropriate for the qualification distinguished in the profession. Hours range from 360 – 1350. The minimum share of practical training in: Basic vocational schools = 60% (970 h / 3 years); Technicians = 50% (735 h / 4 years). Relevant documents – Regulation of the Minister of National Education of May 16, 2019 on the core curriculum for vocational training in sectoral education and additional professional skills in selected occupations in sectoral education – pursuant to the Act of December 14, 2016 – Education Law.

**In Slovenia** upper secondary vocational education – 3 years. It depends on what kind of education the student chooses. There are three ways to do practical training. Through a collective agreement (concluded between the school and the company), the student is educated in the company for 24 weeks in three years, and the rest of the practical lessons are carried out in the school. Through an individual contract (concluded between the student and the company and registered at the chamber), the student is educated in the company for up to 52 weeks in three years. Through an apprenticeship contract (signed between the apprentice, the parents and the company and registered at the chamber), the apprentice is in the company for 56 weeks or more in three years. Upper-secondary technical education – 4 years (4 – 12 weeks), upper-secondary vocational technical education – 2 years (2 weeks), higher vocational study programmes – 2 years (20 weeks). Document stipulating the requirement is the collective agreement or individual contract or apprenticeship contract.

**In Latvia** at least 25% at initial VET programs has to be implemented in WBL mode (according to Regulation No.484). In short-cycle continuing VET programmes (after secondary education) the share of training implemented at the workplace represents around 70% of the total volume of the programme.

## 18 Remuneration of students for work during WBL

**In Slovakia** the apprenticeship contract codifies the form of remuneration, which takes two forms: 1) in the form of productive work, which the employer is obliged to pay in the form of an hourly wage (for each hour of productive work performed in the amount of at least 50% of the hourly minimum wage; It is paid by the employer and is stated in the apprenticeship contract; 2) in the form of a motivational scholarship to a pupil preparing for a profession, a group of occupations or professional activities in a field of study or field of study included in the list of fields of study and fields with insufficient number of graduates for labour market needs (its amount depends on student). It is paid by the school, but it is not stated in the curriculum.

The employer may (but does not have to) provide a company scholarship from his / her own resources to a student who performs practical training at the employer's workplace or at the workplace of practical training. The company scholarship is provided monthly during the school year up to a maximum of four times the amount of the subsistence minimum. In determining the amount of the corporate scholarship, particular account shall be taken of the student's achievement in practical training and his / her regular participation in practical training. Document stipulating the requirement – VET Act.

**In Poland** the salary depends on the stage of education. In the first year of study, the gross salary is PLN 266.57 and the net salary is PLN 230.02. In the second year of education, the gross salary is PLN 319.89 and the net salary is PLN 276.03. In the third year of education, the gross salary is PLN 373.20 and the net salary is PLN 322.04. The document stipulating the requirement is § 19 and 20 of the Regulation of the Council of Ministers of May 28, 1996 on vocational training of adolescents and their remuneration (Journal of Laws of 2018, item 2010, as amended).

**In Slovenia** during the practical training or during the apprenticeship students have the right to a reward for working time. The amount for students is determined by the branch collective agreements. The remuneration of apprentices is stipulated by the Apprenticeship Act. The minimum amount is 250 EUR for first year, 300 EUR for second year and 400 EUR for the third year apprentices. The remunerations amount is a payment for a full month's work. Document stipulating the requirement is the Vocational and Professional Education Act and Apprenticeship Act.

**In Latvia** remuneration is compulsory – either wage or stipend (up to certain level exempt from citizens' income tax). Remuneration to apprentices is compulsory. It can take the form of wage under an ordinary work contract, or of an allowance (exempt from citizens' income tax up to a certain level). Document stipulating the requirement is Regulation No 484. According to Law on Citizens Income Tax, Article 9, paragraph 81 – scholarships up to 280 euros per month, paid to a learner in accordance with the procedure specified by the Cabinet for organizing and implementing work-based learning, by a merchant, institution, association, foundation, natural person registered as an economic operator, as well as an individual enterprise, including farmers or a fisherman's farm and other economic operators, <https://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=56880>.

## 19 Follow-up on employment of WBL graduates

**In Slovakia** the procedure for employing WBL graduates is individual – it depends on the student and the employer. If a student with his diligence and diligence convinces the employer of his qualities and if the employer has the opportunity to hire new employees, there is a high probability that such a student will be hired.

However, the employer may also enter into a future employment contract with a secondary vocational school or vocational trainee, at the earliest on the day the pupil reaches the age of 15. The subject of the contract is the employer's obligation to accept the pupil after the final examination, school-leaving examination or graduation examination and the commitment of the

pupil to become an employer's employee. The trial period cannot be agreed in this case. The contract on the future employment contract is concluded with the consent of the legal representative, otherwise it is invalid. The employer may refuse to enter into an employment contract if he does not have a suitable job for the student because his tasks change, due to the student's medical incapacity to perform work corresponding to the qualification obtained by completing a field of study, or were agreed in the contract on the future employment contract (Act No. 61/2015 Coll.).

Document stipulating the implementation of the procedure: Activity 2 within the NP DE states: Update and verification of labour market needs (implemented at the regional level through Dual Points, but also through the Council of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Vocational Education and Training and the Trexima collection portal), transformation of occupations and employment for teaching and study departments (implemented by Trexima within the implementation of the National System of Occupations project), ongoing analyses of employment of graduates of all secondary schools in the Slovak Republic (implemented through CVTI SR – Slovak Centre for Scientific and Technical Information of the Slovak Republic established by Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports of the Slovak Republic – registered unemployment of high school graduates). The document stipulating the requirement is the VET Act.

**In Poland** inspection carried out by the superintendent of education, which aims to determine the state of compliance with the provisions of law in a given educational unit regarding teaching, educational and care activities as well as other statutory activities conducted by these units. The audit concerns the compliance of the vocational education offer in schools providing vocational education with the classification of professions in the sectoral education.

The results of these inspections are published publicly – after analysing the protocols, branch schools meet the criteria of the requirement. Document stipulating the implementation of the procedure – Act of December 14, 2016 Education Law, Regulation of the Ministry of National Education of August 25, 2017 on pedagogical supervision, Regulation of the Minister of National Education of February 15, 2019. on the general goals and tasks of education in the occupations of sectoral education and the classification of occupations in sectoral education (Journal of Laws, item 316),

**In Slovenia** the graduates tracking is not in place.

**In Latvia** it is in process – procedures are gradually being introduced – in compliance with State Revenue Services. Document stipulating the implementation of the procedure. No formal legal documents in place, yet.

## 20 WBL in the lifelong learning context

**In Slovakia** WBL is also used in the continuing – postgraduate study. The dual education system can also be used for subsequent forms of education, which are regulated by § 45 of Act no. 245/2008 Coll. on upbringing and education (School Act). Unlike the dual education system, which is entered by primary school graduates aged 15 to 16, graduates of previous studies aged 18 and over enter follow-up studies. Therefore, this study is simply referred to in the system of dual education as "Dual education 18+". Dual education 18+ is also suitable for employers providing practical training in vocational education and training for occupations with an increased risk of damage to health, which are not suitable for minors.

Forms of Dual Education 18+: Dual 18+ in the form of a 1-year abbreviated study (abbreviated in meaning of shortened in time); Dual 18+ in the form of a 2-year post-secondary qualification study with professional training; Dual 18+ in the form of a 2-year post-secondary qualification study with professional experience; Dual 18+ in the form of a 2-year abbreviated study (abbreviated in meaning

of shortened in time); Dual 18+ in the form of higher professional study. The regulating legal documents is the VET Act.

**In Poland** general education at the 1st level trade school opens up a lifelong learning process. In addition to vocational education, the first-degree industry school is designed to equip students with an appropriate body of general knowledge, which is the foundation of education, enabling them to acquire various professional qualifications during further education and enabling continuation of education in the second-cycle industry school, and then its further improvement or modification. Documents or procedures in place: the core curriculum of general education for the first-cycle industry school. Application period: from 2017

**In Slovenia** the same VET curricula are aimed also for adult learners. The WBL of adult learners is not regulated at the national level. VET providers (schools) regulate it. Usually, WBL is shortened because adult learners already have certain work experiences. In practice, non-employed adult learners have difficulties in finding appropriate training company. Employment offices stipulate companies to involve the unemployed in work-based-training (training at working place) and similar initiatives, usually not connected to vocational qualifications and quite short (e.g. 3 months)

**In Latvia** WBL is being implemented also in continuing VET programs. Documents or procedures in place. The same legal documents and procedures apply for initial VET and continuing VET programs. Consultations have started on the implementation of WBL also at NQF level 5 – as continuing VET programs, as well as short cycle higher education programs – allowing a broad spectrum of employees from the labour market to be trained, reskilled or up-skilled.

## 21 Existence of databases, mapping tools or studies on WBL

**In Slovakia** ŠIOV – output of the national project (final reports). Slovak Business Agency – a survey aimed at assessing the state of dual education was carried out as of 31.07.2018. Available on the website: [https://www.npc.sk/media/uploads/files/Anal%C3%BDza\\_stavu\\_du%C3%A1lneho\\_vzdel%C3%A1vania\\_v\\_regi%C3%B3noch\\_SR\\_vo\\_v%C3%A4zbe\\_na\\_MSP\\_na\\_zver\\_íddOOLp.pdf](https://www.npc.sk/media/uploads/files/Anal%C3%BDza_stavu_du%C3%A1lneho_vzdel%C3%A1vania_v_regi%C3%B3noch_SR_vo_v%C3%A4zbe_na_MSP_na_zver_íddOOLp.pdf)

**In Poland** the map shows the education system in Poland. It indicates that a student may choose at a certain stage about post-primary school. A trade school is included, after which you can continue your education or start working in the profession. Documents or procedures in place - <https://docplayer.pl/49416635-Analiza-regulacji-prawnych-dotyczacych-szkolnictwa-i-kształcenia-zawodowego.html>

**In Slovenia** national VET institute evaluates WBL provision and prepares reports presented to the Council of VET experts. In addition, the apprenticeship pilot is monitored by the National VET institute. The final report will be prepared in November 2020.

**In Latvia** apprenticeship piloting started in 2013 prior to the adoption of legal framework – with a ‘bottom-up’ approach by 6 VET institutions testing the development and implementation of apprenticeship programs in co-operation with employers. The results of the pilot phase is represented in the Report by the Ministry of Education and Science to the Cabinet of Ministers of August 2014 “On the feasibility of the implementation of work-based learning in the context of the Latvian vocational education and training system”, <http://www.mk.gov.lv/lv/mk/tap/?pid=40319533&mode=mk&date=2014-08-12>

To analyse the achieved results till the end of 2018 Ministry of Education and Science in co-operation with the University of Latvia carried out a survey among employers, VET students and VET Institutions regarding the implementation of work-based learning, and labour market skills. The results from the survey and the data obtained from the employers Confederation of Latvia have been used by the Ministry of Education and Science for drafting Policy Report to the Cabinet of

Ministers on the implementation of work-based learning in Latvia, <http://tap.mk.gov.lv/mk/tap/?pid=40319533,%20April,%202019>

Documents or procedures are not yet in place – VET graduate tracking procedures (regarding their employment after finishing the school) under discussion and development.

## 22 Digitalisation in WBL

**In Slovakia**, the publication of teaching materials is handled by the school directly with the employer. Regarding the situation caused by COVID-19, the State Institute of Vocational Education in cooperation with the Employers' Council for the Dual Education System is publishing information about vocational education and training in the dual education system, which is published at <http://dualnysystem.sk/>. All materials and instructions for entering the system of dual education are available on the website.

**In Poland** the application integrated with the textbook is part of a new program for teachers of first-degree professional schools. The program provides textbooks to facilitate learning, an integrated mobile application for conducting lessons for the teacher and a full didactic housing. Document stipulating the requirement – the offer was presented by the Operon publishing house on its website.

**In Slovenia** some schools have developed an application to monitor WBL.

**In Latvia** under development but not operational yet. Digitalisation increases with the Covid-19 impact prevention measures. Document stipulating the requirement – in process. Education development guidelines (2021-2027)

## 23 National and EU funded projects and international co-operation in WBL

Are there any national and EU funded projects in place? Are there any relevant international co-operation developments in WBL, e.g. regarding co-operation agreements, mobilities, and peer-learning?

**In Slovakia** – National project Dual Education supported from National Operational Program Human Resources (European Structural and Investment Funds), implemented by State Institute of vocational education.

The main goal of the national project is the widespread implementation of the dual education system in all suitable study fields, deepening the employer – high school – student relationship within the dual education system, creating a unified information environment for the dual education system and electronic implementation processes, increasing attractiveness and quality of VET and preparation of tutors, trainers and teachers to perform these tasks.

Learning by Doing, co-funded by the European Union through the Danube Transnational Programme, is a strategic project, build in such a manner that all key Vocational Education and Training (VET) actors (chambers, regional or national level authorities and multinational companies) could directly participate in the project, representing all 14 countries of the Danube Transnational Programme area. Project aims to improve capacities of all relevant VET actors through reinforcing regional, national and transnational partnerships in order to ease the existing VET systems in the Danube countries.

Work-Based Learning in Future IT Professionals Education co-funded by the European Union through the Erasmus+ Programme. The main aim of the project is to design, develop and evaluate a new educational model of learning programming languages and later advanced IT topics, which will be

based on the suitably balanced combination of several contemporary educational approaches, modern learning environment and immediate feedback.

Internationalization of Work Based Learning in the Agribusiness Sector co-funded by the European Union through the Erasmus+ Programme. The IWB-Labs project focused on the agribusiness sector and with the purpose to increase students' motivation proposed the application of a Work-based learning (WBL) approach. The students carried out virtual work experiences where they applied in a real work environment the skills learnt at school. The work experience which was carried out at transnational level took the form of a virtual internship carried out at distance.

**In Poland** – "Rzeszów vocational schools open to the labour market" financed by the European Social Fund under the Regional Operational Program of the Podkarpackie Voivodeship for 2014-2020 Technical School Complex om. Eugeniusz Kwiatkowski in Rzeszów. Project value: PLN 9,400,749.38. The amount co-financed from the EU: PLN 7,990,636.97. The main objective of the project is to improve the conditions and increase the quality of vocational education at 16 SZiPKZ in Rzeszów through the development of an educational offer tailored to the needs of the regional labour market.

The project entitled "Cooperation between the school and the employer as a path to success – 2nd edition". Project co-financed by the EU Complex of Energy Schools in Rzeszów. Total project value: PLN 689,857.75. Co-financing amount from the EU: 620,871.97 PLN. The main goal of the project is to improve the quality of vocational education in the Complex of Energy Schools (ZSEn) in Rzeszów in the profession of an IT technician by modifying the curriculum for the needs of the employer Quarto Computers by 30/09/2021.

"The best at start" – a project co-financed by the European Union from the European Social Fund under the Regional Operational Program of the Podkarpackie Voivodeship for 2014-2020. Vocational Training Centre in Rzeszów. Total value of the project: PLN 910,838. Co-financing of the project from the EU: PLN 819 754.21. The aim of the project is to increase employment among the graduates of the School Complex of the Vocational Training Institute in Rzeszów by acquiring additional qualifications and improving the quality of practical education thanks to additional internships and apprenticeships with employers.

"Internship abroad as a key to success in the profession on the European labour market" under the European Social Fund, Human Capital Operational Program, Priority III – High quality of the education system, Measure 3.4 – Openness of the education system in the context of lifelong learning, Sub-measure 3.4.2 – Promotion of lifelong learning. Vocational Training Centre in Rzeszów. Co-financing from the EU: EUR 29 480. The acquisition of the trainee personnel skills and competences adapted to the requirements on the European labour market.

"Educational mobility as a chance for success" 2019-2021 as part of the Erasmus + Program. Mechanical School Complex for them. Gen. W. Anders in Rzeszów. Co-financing from the EU: EUR 178 168. The aim of the project is to improve the professional qualifications of 53 students of the Mechanical School Complex (ZSM) in Rzeszów through foreign apprenticeships. And improving the professional qualifications of 6 teachers of ZSM in Rzeszów through the implementation of mobility.

There are many EU projects in the Podkarpacie region that aim to raise the level of education in a professional school and prepare students for their future professional career. Sample projects implemented in recent years have been selected.

**In Slovenia** – WBL Accelerator, Verein Auxilium, E+ KA2 <https://www.wblaccelerator.eu/en/>, ELT for WBLT Employers' Confederation of Latvia, E+ KA2, VET reform, VET institute, ESF, Apprenticeship pilot takes part in this project,

New WBL VET institute, Chamber of Commerce, E+ KA3, <http://newwbl.eu/>,

See the goal! National VET institute E+ KA2, <https://www.seethegoal-eu.si/>,

SERFA National VET institute E+ KA3 <https://www.serfa-project.eu/>;  
Learning by Doing, VET institute, Chamber of Commerce, Interreg Danube, <http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/learning-by-doing>,  
CWIC, VET institute, VET center Velenje, E+ KA2, <http://cwic.scv.si/>

**In Latvia** currently the key policy instrument for promoting and implementing apprenticeship is an – ESF project “On the participation of VET learners in apprenticeships and training in companies” (hereinafter – SAM 851 project), <http://www.iddk.lv/projekts/darba-vide-balstibas-macibas/>, implemented by the Employers’ Confederation of Latvia. The SAM 851 project has invested also in the development of regional affiliations to promote apprenticeships to employers in all part so the country.

“National Authorities for Apprenticeships: Implementing Work Based Learning in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia” (WBL-Balt)

“Testing New Approaches to Training VET and Workplace Tutors for Work Based Learning” (TTT4WBL)

The WBL-Balt project promoted WBL developments in the three Baltic countries – implemented research on WBL developments, as well as developed conceptual approaches from the implementation of WBL.

Through the TTT4WBL project the Baltic countries have trained 800 WBL trainers and tutors according to a common methodology – tandem training – where VET institutions and company trainers and tutors interactively learn together and develop a common understanding how WBL should be implemented in the best possible way. Currently the three Baltic Ministries of Education and Science are discussing a joint competence profile for WBL tutor. This would contribute also to the quality of WBL student and trainer/ tutor mobility in the Baltics.

Other ongoing projects are related to the development of individualised approaches in WBL, as well as on curricula development in particular sectors. E.g. in wooden and metal industry and logistics:

- “Individual Approach and Individual Learning Plan in WBL: Training for WBL Tutors” (ILP4WBL), <http://qualityplacements.eu/open-education-resources-for-ilp/> (Latvia, Lithuania, Finland)
- “Skills for the Baltic Wood industry – European Quality in Vocational Education and Training”, <https://www.skilled-up.eu/> – co-ordinated by the German – Baltic Chamber of Commerce (Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Germany)
- Industry 4.0 CHALLENGE: Empowering Metalworkers for Smart Factories of the Future (Baltic associations of metalworks, VET institutions – working with smart technologies, joint upgraded standards, assessment tools), <https://www.masoc.lv/en/projects/industry-40-challenge-empowering-metalworkers-for-smart-factories-of-the-future-4change>
- FinLat-Logic – Aligning work-based learning curricula in VET programmes of logistics through cross-border WBL in Latvia and Finland, <https://www.visc.gov.lv/lv/projekts/projekts-finlat-logic>

## 24 Focused studies on WBL by EU and international organisations

### In Slovakia:

CEDEFOP – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (2014). Slovakia: VET in Europe: country report. Available at website:

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/slovakia-vet-europe-country-report-2014>

The VET in Europe report for Slovakia provides basic insight into the state of the vocational education and training system of Slovakia. It situates the Slovakian education and training system within a broad political, social, economic, and labour market framework.

CEDEFOP – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (2015). Slovakia: Skills forecasts up to 2025. Available at website:

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/slovakia-skills-forecasts-2025>

CEDEFOP – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (2016). Spotlight on VET Slovakia. Available at website:

[https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/8102\\_en.pdf](https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/8102_en.pdf)

CEDEFOP – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (2016). Vocational education and training in Slovakia. Short description. Available at website:

[https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/4150\\_en.pdf](https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/4150_en.pdf)

CEDEFOP – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (2017). Statistical overviews on VET – Slovakia. Available at website:

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/statistical-overviews-vet-slovakia>

CEDEFOP – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (2018). Vocational education and training in Europe: Slovakia 2018. Available at website:

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/vocational-education-and-training-europe-slovakia-2018>

**In Poland** the available study is Education and Training Monitor 2018 by the European Commission. The main conclusions are as follows: in Poland, a lot is invested in education, but the level of expenditure per student remains below the level of the leading EU and OECD countries. The Polish education system is currently undergoing significant changes at each of its levels: from pre-school to higher education. Changes in the teaching profession have also been adopted recently. The changes introduced in September 2017 in primary education and lower secondary education are the cause of serious organizational and financial challenges.

Poland has performed well for most of the 2020 targets or is making rapid progress in this regard. The targets for early school leavers, tertiary education attainment and the employment rate of recent graduates have already been met. The targets for early childhood education, care and low achievers are close to being met, while adult participation in lifelong learning remains fairly low.

Another study: "Monitoring the Fate of Educational and Professional Graduates and Young Adults (POWR.02.15.00-00.0004 / 16)" performed by the Educational Research Institute commissioned by the Ministry of National Education. Sample conclusions are: The vast majority of potential recipients of information on the fate of graduates is interested in information about specific graduates. These are qualitative data, not statistical indicators characterizing certain features of the group of graduates. This means that statistical indicators should be presented in a clear and understandable way, so that people who are not used to using statistical indicators can easily interpret and use them. Proper data presentation is one of the key challenges in building a graduate tracking system. The information needs of employers focus on two different levels: individual (related to the interest of students with whom they had personal contact – in particular, concerning whether the graduates started work in accordance with the received education) and sector-territorial, related to the area of their activity. The fate monitoring system can provide information at the latter level. Knowledge of the salaries of graduates of vocational schools in terms of sectors and territories would allow to verify the beliefs of employers about the competitiveness of the employment conditions offered to graduates. The system could also provide a more general understanding of the phenomena related to the labour supply on the one hand and the effectiveness of various forms of apprenticeship on

the other hand. From the employer's perspective, information on the supply of graduates, exam results and the fate of graduates are important. The fulfilment of these demands means the necessity to integrate various data sources – information from the fate monitoring system, district reports on the implementation of educational tasks and examination results. Knowledge about vocational education at local level should be readily available and comprehensive.

Another study: Vocational education and training in Poland General characteristics performed by CEDEFOD. The main conclusions: the priorities of the Polish Presidency in the sphere of education include mobility related to learning and the reform of the higher education system.

We will strive for a better implementation of language competences in order to increase the educational and professional mobility of students. During the Polish Presidency, we also want to continue work in the field of lifelong learning and adult education. Effective vocational training is one of the priorities of the national education policy. Above all, a vocational school must be considered a positive choice. Only equal treatment of general education and vocational education, corresponding to the needs of learners, will enable them to acquire key competences as well as a solid professional preparation. This, in turn, will bring vocational education closer to the needs of the labour market.

Regarding general statistics: Education in the 2018/2019 school year: General secondary schools have been the most popular type of upper secondary schools for years, chosen by 46.7% of lower secondary school graduates in the 2018/19 school year. The vast majority of general secondary schools for youth were public, while most general secondary schools for adults were non-public. In the 2018/19 school year, there were 3,534 general secondary schools (183 fewer than in the previous year) with a total of 601.7 thousand students, including 58.8% women.

In recent years, there has been a gradual increase in the number of special job-training schools. In the 2018/19 school year, there were 522 such schools teaching 10.5 thousand students.

Following the educational reform, basic vocational schools were transformed into stage I sectoral vocational schools. In the 2018/19 school year, grade 3 students attended basic vocational school sections at stage I sectoral vocational schools. There were 1,578 stage I sectoral vocational schools with a total of 146.2 thousand students (by 9.6 thousand fewer than in the previous school year). The most popular were the narrow fields – engineering and engineering trades and personal services.

The number of technical secondary schools in the 2018/19 school year decreased by 0.6% compared to the previous school year, while the number of students dropped by 0.5%. This type of school was chosen mainly by men (60.7% of students of technical secondary schools). Students of these schools mostly studied the narrow fields of engineering and engineering trades and personal services.

**In Slovenia** – Apprenticeship review: Slovenia. Putting apprenticeship on track in Slovenia, by CEDEFOP, 2017, <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/4157>

**In Latvia** – fact finding mission and subsequent report of WBL developments in Latvia. In 2016 International Labour organisation (ILO) mission to Latvia with fact finding and report of WBL developments in Latvia. Regular monitoring activities by the European Commission in regarding the European semester and country specific recommendations.

## 25 Statistics on WBL implementation at national level

**In Slovakia** the following statistics are available:

During the academic year 2019/2020, 5885 students were involved in system of dual education, which represents 4.45% of students participating in WBL against the total number of VET students. Programs and / or qualifications are being offered in WBL form at ISCED 3, ISCED 4 levels.

Almost half of the students participating in WBL are studying in the sector of electrical engineering and mechanical engineering – 48.63%. Students in WBL are also interested in automotive industry – 16.04%. Popular among students is business and entrepreneurship sector – 9.33% of students involved in WBL and similarly popular is sector of accommodation and food services – 9.14%. The last of five most popular sectors in WBL is sector of crafts – 7.78% of all students involved in WBL. There are also other sectors represented in WBL, just not to such an extent: ICT (2.02%), transport and logistics (1.70%), construction (1.38%), food industry (1.36%), other services (0.66%), agriculture (0.51%), finance (0.20%).

In Slovakia, there is 438 VET institutions. 157 VET institutions are involved in system of dual education, which represents 36% of all VET institutions.

There is 727 companies involved in WBL.

**In Poland** the following statistics is available: statistics/information on VET students involved in WBL – formal 3-YEAR FIRST DEGREE VOCATIONAL SCHOOL: the total of 146.2 thousand students (including students of the basic departments) attended the first level of vocational schools. Of these, 93.4% were in schools of 1st degree and 6.6% in special schools of works. 2-YEAR SECOND DEGREE VOCATIONAL SCHOOL: The first recruitment of candidates will take place for the school year 2020/2021. 5-YEAR TECHNICAL SECONDARY SCHOOL: In the school year 2018/19 there were 505.6 thousand pupils. In technical secondary school, a significant advantage of men over women was maintained. In the school year 2018/19, men they accounted for 60.7% of technical students, i.e. 0.3 p.p. more than in the school year 2017/18.

Statistics/information on VET institutions involved in WBL: In the school year 2018/19, there were 1578 schools of 1st degree vocational school. In the school year 2018/19 there were 1879 technical secondary school. In comparison the number of technicians decreased by 0.6% and the number of students by 0.5% in the previous school year.

Statistics/information on companies involved in WBL: Companies involved in WBL (patronage classes organised by entrepreneurs, created according to the needs of companies: Opel Manufacturing Poland, mechatronics profile, class created in 2016, first graduates in 2019; Volkswagen Poznań/Gestamp Poland, precision mechanic profile, class created in 2016, first 12 pupils graduates in 2019. No data on other companies.

Programs and/or qualifications are being offered in WBL form: the classification of vocational education professions has been arranged and the individual professions are assigned to 32 areas (sectors) of training for example: administration and service, building, electrotechnical and electronic, mechanical and mining and metallurgy, agro-forestry with environmental protection, tourist and gastronomy, medical and social and artistic (Ordinance of the Minister of National Education of 15 February 2019 on general objectives and tasks of education in professions of professional education and classification of professions of professional education).

There is no statistics available regarding the percentage of students participating in WBL against the total number of VET students or the percentage of all students participating in WBL according to the sector. Regarding policies to promote certain programs/ qualifications for WBL provision (e.g. in STEM domain or other – there is lack of a coherent and single promotion policy. Different projects (e.g. EU-funded) produce brochures to promote vocational training and films to promote professions.

Regarding the most popular sectors or programs/ qualifications – administration and service, building, electro-technical and electronic, mechanical and mining and metallurgy, agro-forestry with environmental protection, tourist and gastronomy, medical and social and artistic.

**In Slovenia** – statistics/information on VET students involved in WBL: 13.000 – 14.000 students per year start the VET education; VET students represents 65% of all students of upper-secondary education. Statistics/information on VET institutions involved in WBL: all upper-secondary school

providing VET programs, 90 in total. **The 5-6 most popular sectors or programs/qualifications are toolmaker (metal design); mechanical technician; carpenter; mechatronic operator; electrician.** There are no policies in place to promote certain programs/qualifications for WBL provision.

**In Latvia** – statistics/ information on VET students involved in WBL. The aim: to increase number of qualified VET students – 3150 VET students will be involved in the WBL and 11 025 VET students – in practical trainings and training practices by 2023 August. Financing: 15.6 million EUR – alia ESF 13.3 EUR and state budget 2.3 EUR. Responsible for the implementation: Employers' Confederation of Latvia. 31 December 2019 2 088 unique students were involved in WBL in 469 enterprises (8.4% big size companies, 16.4%-medium size, 28.2% – small size and 47% – micro size). The latest information indicates that around 2600 employers, 37 VET institutions and almost 4000 learners have been involved in apprenticeship provision since the start of the SAM 851 project – with around 27 000 VET students being in the system in total. As apprenticeship is not a compulsory demand but the choice of the school, great attention is being paid to encourage schools and companies to get involved.

Regarding sectors – it can be concluded that the priority is still in service sectors, like tourism, catering, beauty industry, followed by metal and machine building sector, entrepreneurship, wood-work, construction, ICT and transport sectors, and still limited involvement of energy, chemistry and agriculture sectors. For this reason the policy dialogue has advised and promoted support to apprenticeships in STEM or related sectors in compliance with the priorities of the national economy where the labour force is much in demand or will be in the short and medium term.

Statistics: information on VET institutions involved in WBL – 37 VET institutions; information on companies involved in WBL – more than 1000 employers; programs and / or qualifications are being offered in WBL form – More than 200 qualifications available in WBL format.

The (approximate) percentage of students participating in WBL against the total number of VET students? – Around 3000 learners in total – around 11% against the total number of 28 000 in the system. However, the calculation does not reflect the situation per year or in any other concrete timeframe (the figure would be smaller).

The 5-6 most popular sectors or programs/ qualifications are: engineering, manufacturing and construction (34%), services (22%), humanities and arts (16%), social sciences, business and law (13%), natural sciences, mathematics and information technologies (10%), agriculture (3%), health care and social welfare (2%). The Ministry of Education and Science has a policy to promote WBL studies in STEM sectors. The instrument used – funding by the SAM 8.5.1. Project according to this criterion (applied recently).

## Conclusions

With the view to the IDES project aim – to strengthen the practical competences and skills of young people during their study at secondary vocational schools and also after graduation to be more competitive and better prepared for labour market in order to better utilise local human resources, to increase economic development of rural areas and to prevent brain drain – the survey implemented in the IDES project Consortium countries in 2020 has provided valuable input for analysing the situation in these countries regarding work-based learning developments as a means for improved human resources development by VVET systems and for sustainability in the utilisation of these resources in local/national contexts.

The analysis of the survey results has enabled to draw the key conclusions representing the overall panorama of the state of play in these countries regarding WBL policy and its implementation, as well as to focus on some particular aspects that are worth attention for further VET and WBL policy analysis. The following conclusions can be drawn from the survey implemented within the IDES project:

1. For all the four Consortium partners the apprenticeships (work-based learning) are relatively recent developments. In Latvia and Slovenia WBL is an alternative pathway to the regular school-based VET program, whereas in Slovakia and Poland the dual scheme seems to be more substantially integrated into the training process. In all the Consortium countries the responsible ministry for WBL is the Ministry of Education and typically also an agency under Ministry sub-ordination or a partner institution, in particular with regard to respective curriculum developments/ curriculum revision for WBL implementation. It is also typical that the work of the ministries regarding WBL started with some preparatory phases on overall education and labour market compliance issues, before WBL was introduced as a mainstream activity with underlying legal basis. It is worth noting that regarding implementation, in Slovenia the key responsibility is on the employers' side. In Poland the role of crafts guilds is highly relevant. In Slovakia the Ministry of Education may perform repeated verification of the employer's competence to perform practical training in the dual education system. However, in Latvia the strength is a well-developed social dialogue ensuring systemic collaboration with the relevant stakeholders.
2. The VET institutions are mainly implementing apprenticeship programs up to the equivalent of the EQF level 4 (with most typical programs in EQF level 3 and 4). As to the owners/ funders, these typically are 1) state established; regional self-governments established; 3) privately established/ owned 4) also church establishing schools. The volume (percentage) of the VET program to be implemented in a company varies in all the consortium countries.
3. There is a specific legal framework on WBL in all countries, determining the rights and responsibilities of the involved parties. In Slovakia, Poland and Latvia there is a clear link to the sector qualifications framework. As a means for ensuring labour market relevance of the WBL qualifications.
4. Financial mechanisms in WBL is a crucial issue. The sources and mechanisms tend to vary, they can be covered by private or public funding, shared public/ private funding, co-financed by EU, by individual companies, chambers, professional associations and other bodies. Also in the case of the four Consortium countries the approaches are quite different. The countries are looking for various incentives to motivate the employers, e.g. certain tax reduction/ exemption (as in case of Poland and Latvia), partially financing chambers for accreditation of training companies and implementation of the apprenticeship system in companies as in the case of Slovenia or a particular contribution to the companies, as in the case of Slovakia. Typically, additional funding is attracted from the European Social Fund or other EU sources. In the case of Slovakia the companies are also partially financed by Ministry of Economic Development and Technology.

5. WBL tutors and WBL tutors' training is a pre-condition for a high quality WBL, and there is an awareness in the Consortium countries for the need of systemic approaches for training and support to WBL tutors. It is not rare that specific programs or modules are being used for the purpose. Sometimes there is also particular legislation or regulation regarding the requirements for WBL tutors in companies, also determining the maximum number of students per tutor in company. In all the consortium countries measures have been taken to ensure systemic approaches to the training of WBL tutors, even though there is a different approach to tutors competence requirements and training, the number of students under tutors supervision and other issues.
6. Social dialogue and other relevant stakeholder involvement at national level regarding WBL developments is one of the key issues to ensure the WBL relevance to the labour market. Various forms and degrees of social dialogue exist in the Consortium countries. The social partners are to a varying degree involved at national level dialogue and decision making regarding WBL developments.
7. Involvement of sector organisations, employers and their organisations, professional and sectoral associations and chambers in WBL developments forms part of the national approach in the Consortium countries. The involvement mechanisms and degree of involvement vary, but are operating in a systemic way.
8. The overall approaches regarding contractual arrangements in WBL are similar, whereas the approaches to company involvement differs in the Consortium countries. The contractual parties determine their tasks, rights and responsibilities, also the companies' suitability/ competence for WBL provision is being assessed/ monitored through different procedures and to a varying degree.
9. Planning of WBL takes place at national, regional and also local level. It is quite typical that labour market forecasts are being taken into account regarding VET and WBL enrolment, and the forecast will affect the relevance of funding for education. Also quite typically planning at national level takes place through consultations at local level. The labour market forecast is being used also as an instrument for career advisors. There are also advisory bodies assisting the national stakeholders. E.g. in Latvia Sector expert councils advise the Ministry of Education and Science regarding annual enrolments and the forward planning of enrolment.
10. Regarding VET institutions' autonomy in the Consortium countries, there is a relatively high degree of freedom of VET institutions in determining their choices as to the participation in WBL, in offering particular programs in WBL mode. In Slovakia secondary vocational schools are governed by VET Act, which defines the rights and obligations of institutions providing VET and also in which cases a secondary vocational school may conclude a contract on dual education. In Poland the obligation for schools to cooperate with employers, on the basis of a contract or agreement, has been introduced, which covers at least one cycle of education. In Slovenia schools can present local needs to the Ministry of Education, but the final decision depends on financing. Schools have to define 20% of the curricula. In Latvia there is freedom of choice whether to implement programs in WBL mode. It is not compulsory, however, VET schools are encouraged by the Ministry of Education and Science to increase participation, especially in STEM qualifications and branches.
11. There are various type of incentives existing at national, institutional and individual level in the Consortium countries to promote WBL developments. These incentives may concern the VET institutions, the VET students and the employers. In Slovakia there are two main national incentives: 1) contribution to the provision of practical training in the WBL system; 2) tax deductible item – divided according to the size of the company. In Slovenia financial incentives for companies are on national level, financed by the ESF fund. Incentives cover part of expenses of companies. Chambers offices for WBL. Chamber of Commerce and Chamber of Crafts establish WBL offices to support companies, offices are partially financed

by the Ministry of Education. Coordinators of WBL represent the link between schools and companies, they are financed by the Ministry of Education. Training of tutors is financed by ESF funds (project based). In Poland traineeships with employers based on a contractual, will be included in the period of employment. Employer may include salary paid to the student as a deductible expense. In Latvia implementation of WBL is a criterion (one of) for awarding VET competence centre status is an incentive for VET institutions.

12. Publicity for WBL takes various forms in the consortium countries. Typically there are various websites in place. In addition, national conferences, regional campaigns industry seminars and fairs are being organised. Communication plans refer to students, families, companies, society in general as the key target groups. Individual VET schools have their individual WBL promotion campaigns locally and regionally. Promotion activities are also being implemented in the framework of the European VET week.
13. It can be seen that the students' encouragement to get involved in WBL requires a lot of effort, and these efforts are often linked with the career and occupation guidance measures, for example, the Talent Centre is an innovative support in the career guidance of primary school pupils, especially those in their final year of study in Slovakia. Pupils will gain comprehensive information about their ideas about study and work. In Poland there is a targeted activities to support students in making educational and professional decisions. The school conducts classes related to planning their own educational and professional career. Classes are conducted by the teacher on career counselling. In Slovenia there is a broad spectrum of measure sin place: WBL is an obligatory part of every vocational and technical curriculum. Schools motivate students to find a training company. Other activities are: information day, presentation of apprenticeships in secondary schools, counselling and career guidance in primary schools (through tests and personal counselling, counsellors help students make decisions in further education), traveling exhibition of professions. Chamber of Commerce and Industry moves posters presenting professions in primary schools, where students can see it and get a sense of where they see themselves in the future.
14. Students' support in WBL takes different forms. In Slovakia in the dual education system, the employer is solely responsible for the organization, content and quality of the pupil's practical training and for this purpose pays all costs associated with the financing of the practical training. Whereas in other Consortium countries various other support forms exist, for example, free (or subsidised) accommodation and (a lump sum for) meals; travel cost, insurance. School organises support for individual students to find an appropriate training company. Coordinators of WBL communicate with companies in order to establish a training contract, they also monitor and visit students during WBL. Individual approach is implemented by companies.
15. Parents' involvement has been acknowledged as an important measure. In Slovakia parents are legal guardians and have a great influence on the choice of their child's profession. They give agreement to the school and the employer to participate in the dual education system, unless the student is 18 years old. In Poland parents are being seen as an important target group to encourage students' involvement in VET/WBL. According to research, 80% of young people point to their parents as the most important persons in the process of choosing a profession. In Slovenia since students are minors, parents play a key role in their decisions. They are invited to all presentations, where they are usually especially addressed. They are also signatories to all documents. Latvia VET institutions see parents as important counterpart for the career guidance and counselling of VET students, also regarding WBL. For students under the age, the parents fulfil the legal arrangements required for the implementation of WBL.
16. The curriculum is developed according to similar general principles in all the consortium countries. The educational program is the basic document of the school, according to which education is carried out in schools. In all the countries there are clearly defined subsequent

steps, and the role of the employers' representatives defined in order to ensure labour market compliance.

17. Time spent at the company varies in the Consortium countries. In Slovakia it depends on the field of study and type of program – from 20 – 80%. In Poland the number of hours of vocational education should be adjusted to the number of hours specified in the provisions on the framework curricula for public schools, ours ranging from 360 – 1350. In Slovenia it depends on what kind of education the student chooses, as there are three ways to do practical training – through a collective agreement, through an individual contract and through an apprenticeship contract. In Latvia at least 25% at initial VET programs has to be implemented in WBL mode (according to Regulation No.484). In short-cycle continuing VET programmes (after secondary education) the share of training implemented at the workplace represents around 70% of the total volume of the programme.
18. Remuneration of students is being addressed in all the consortium countries. In Slovakia the apprenticeship contract codifies the form of remuneration, which takes two forms: 1) in the form of productive work, which the employer is obliged to pay in the form of an hourly wage (for each hour of productive work performed in the amount of at least 50% of the hourly minimum wage; 2) in the form of a motivational scholarship to a pupil preparing for a profession, a group of occupations or professional activities in a field of study or field of study included in the list of fields of study and fields with insufficient number of graduates for labour market needs (its amount depends on student). It is paid by the school, but it is not stated in the curriculum. In Poland the salary depends on the stage of education. In the first year of study, the gross salary is lower than in the subsequent years. In Slovenia during the practical training or during the apprenticeship students have the right to a reward for working time. The amount for students is determined by the branch collective agreements. The remuneration of apprentices is stipulated by the Apprenticeship Act. The minimum amount is 250 EUR for first year, 300 EUR for second year and 400 EUR for the third year apprentices. The remunerations amount is a payment for a full month's work. Document stipulating the requirement is the Vocational and Professional Education Act and Apprenticeship Act. In Latvia remuneration to apprentices is compulsory. It can take the form of wage under an ordinary work contract, or of an allowance (exempt from citizens' income tax up to a certain level.)
19. Graduate tracking is only partly in place in the Consortium countries. In Slovakia the procedure for employing WBL graduates is individual – it depends on the student and the employer. If a student with his diligence and diligence convinces the employer of his qualities and if the employer has the opportunity to hire new employees, there is a high probability that such a student will be hired. In Poland inspection carried out by the superintendent of education, which aims to determine the state of compliance with the provisions of law in a given educational unit regarding teaching, educational and care activities as well as other statutory activities conducted by these units. In Slovenia the graduates tracking is not in place. In Latvia it is in process – procedures are gradually being introduced – in compliance with State Revenue Services. Document stipulating the implementation of the procedure. No formal legal documents in place, yet.
20. Lifelong learning aspects greatly refer to adult education. In Slovenia the same VET curricula are aimed also for adult learners. The WBL of adult learners is not regulated at the national level. VET providers (schools) regulate it. Usually, WBL is shortened because adult learners already have certain work experiences. In practice, non-employed adult learners have difficulties in finding appropriate training company. Employment offices stipulate companies to involve the unemployed in work-based-training (training at working place) and similar initiatives, usually not connected to vocational qualifications and quite short (e.g. 3 months). In Poland general education at the 1st level trade school opens up a lifelong learning process. In Slovenia the same VET curricula are aimed also for adult learners. The WBL of

adult learners is not regulated at the national level. VET providers (schools) regulate it. Usually, WBL is shortened because adult learners already have certain work experiences. In Latvia WBL is being implemented also in continuing VET programs. Documents or procedures in place. The same legal documents and procedures apply for initial VET and continuing VET programs. Consultations have started on the implementation of WBL also at NQF level 5 – as continuing VET programs, as well as short cycle higher education programs – allowing a broad spectrum of employees from the labour market to be trained, reskilled or up-skilled.

21. Information provided by the Consortium countries indicates that most typically relevant reports on WBL implementation exist, however, the processes on development of databases or mapping tools are still in planning or initial development stages.
22. Digitalisation is gradually being introduced, however, there are still challenge to be addressed by all the four Consortium countries to meet the modern approaches and developments. In Slovakia the system is operational. The publication of teaching materials is handled by the school directly with the employer. Regarding the situation caused by COVID-19, the State Institute of Vocational Education in cooperation with the Employers' Council for the Dual Education System is publishing information about vocational education and training in the dual education system, which is published at <http://dualnysystem.sk/>. All materials and instructions for entering the system of dual education are available on the website. In Poland the application integrated with the textbook is part of a new program for teachers of first-degree professional schools. The program provides textbooks to facilitate learning, an integrated mobile application for conducting lessons for the teacher and a full didactic housing. Document stipulating the requirement – the offer was presented by the Operon publishing house on its website. In Slovenia some schools have developed an application to monitor WBL. In Latvia a common digital platform is under planning/development but not operational yet. Digitalisation increases with the Covid-19 impact prevention measures. Documents stipulating the requirement is in the development process. Education development guidelines (2021-2027) represent major developments in the field.
23. Survey shows that EU funded programs and projects have a major influence on the WBL developments – in mainstream procedures especially ESF, as well as in testing and piloting innovative approaches, mobilities, peer-learning, especially Erasmus+ program. National programs are yet less well developed. If compared to EU funded programs and projects. Thus, the issue of sustainability needs to be addressed.
24. In all the consortium countries there is a strong emphasis on studies and research by EU and international bodies, especially the role of EU agency CEDEFOP (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training) is being stressed. Parallel to this, also national studies and surveys play an important role.
25. Statistics on WBL is generally available in the Consortium countries. The question remains to what extent this statistics can be used for further planning of WBL future developments and in what way to use this statistics in VET and WBL policy planning. Further exchange of experience seems to be needed in this respect.

## Country specific recommendations

### Recommendations for Slovakia

The IDES project consortium has developed recommendations for Slovakia to improve the functioning of the dual education system (DES):

- identify the demand for qualifications in the labor market; on the basis of the findings, actively participate in the creation of basic vocational education curricula that reflect the challenges and current needs of the labor market,
- increase the number of places in group H departments when determining the number of pupils for the 1st year,
- adjust the proportion of pupils admitted to grammar schools and secondary vocational schools in favor of secondary vocational schools,
- prefer the participation of pupils in DES after the 1st year of study at a secondary school (after sufficient acquaintance with the environment and possibilities of the company providing DES),
- in cooperation with companies, to provide education and training for secondary school students, which is adapted to the current needs of the labor market,
- raise parents' awareness of DES, for example by:
  - providing information on the possibility to study in DES through Edupage,
  - to call representatives of secondary schools providing DES at some parents' meetings,
  - implement a campaign aimed at emphasizing both the benefits of DES (effective acquisition of practical skills or the possibility of financial evaluation), as well as pointing out the student's choice (starting a working career immediately after high school or the opportunity to continue studying at university),
- provide quality career counseling at primary schools, while the career counselor at primary school should be adequately informed, sufficiently motivated and willing to cooperate with the Centers for Pedagogical and Psychological Counseling and Prevention (CPPPaP) and use the services of TalentCenters ([News – Talentcentrum](#)) – in this way, students would find out what their predispositions are and whether general education or a vocational school is more suitable for them,
- promote cooperation between primary and secondary schools, for example:
  - realization of “tasting” of professions directly at primary or secondary schools, where it is possible to call in representatives from companies within the DES;
  - implementation of weekend promotional events for potential pupils of 8th – 9th grade of elementary school and their parents,
  - organizing excursions to companies (not only providing DES) for primary school students together with their parents,
  - meetings of educational counselors at primary schools with DES coordinators at secondary schools,
  - implementation of workshops or day camps at secondary schools for pupils in the 6th – 8th year of primary school, which are focused on practical demonstrations within the relevant departments in which secondary schools offer DES,
- support the cooperation of primary and secondary school founders, who have the opportunity to support the above-mentioned cooperation between primary and secondary schools,
- hold meetings with representatives of primary schools, secondary schools and companies in order to exchange experiences and current information, which would lead to the search for effective forms of cooperation based on real needs.

## **Recommendations for Poland**

The IDES project consortium has developed recommendations for Poland to improve the functioning of the dual education system:

- providing high quality infrastructure in vocational schools,
- providing teaching and training of students adapted to the needs of the labour market,
- ensuring good cooperation between vocational schools and higher education institutions,
- exchanging good practice in teaching, training and developing teachers' competences,
- encouraging adult for life long learning,
- ensuring an adequate number of teaching staff and instructors of practical vocational training who have adequate competences,
- adjusting qualifications and competences of vocational subjects teachers by facilitating their access to trainings and internships in enterprises,
- increasing employers' involvement in organizing practical vocational training,
- identifying and forecasting the demand for qualifications on the labor market and actively participate in the development of vocational education core curricula,
- adjusting core curricula to current challenges and current needs of the labor market,
- increase interest in vocational education and its attractiveness in society, especially among young people,
- provide high quality career guidance and counseling for all age groups, especially for young people in secondary schools.

## **Recommendations for Slovenia**

### ***1. Improving the promotion of apprenticeships/dual education systems***

Primary school pupils and their parents should be presented with what opportunities they have to pursue their careers. They should be presented with the benefits of work-based learning. They should be prepared with a set of companies that welcome students to WBL and apprentices to apprenticeships. These activities are for now actively carried out only by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and individual schools, but unfortunately there is no regulated promotion of apprenticeship professions at national level. The stakeholders who in charge of the promotion nevertheless carry out presentations in their own direction and in most cases with their own financial resources. If the financial part were to be regulated, stakeholders would be able to carry out even more promotional activities to enable young people to provide quality counselling and to make it easier to opt for an apprenticeship system.

### ***2. Increasing the integration of all stakeholders in dual systems – strengthening collaboration and stakeholder involvement***

In Slovenia, the apprenticeship system is taken care of by Ministry of Education, Science and Sports, and Ministry of Economic Development and Technology. The Centre for Vocational Education is responsible for the schools and the overall evaluation of the apprenticeship system, while the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Chamber of Craft and Small Business take care of companies. We note that there is often no interest from some stakeholders in connecting and addressing challenges in dual education system/apprenticeships. The actions are both individual and disorganised. Thus, how much help will be given to individual companies, schools and, last but not least, students and parents, depends vastly on the will and motivation of each stakeholder.

### ***3. Informing school counsellors at primary school***

We note that counsellors at primary schools prefer general high school programmes and secondary vocational schools. Secondary vocational schools, of which apprenticeships are not part. In other

words, the interested parties are deterred from doing so. Training should be provided and the importance of vocational education should be demonstrated.

#### ***4. Overcoming the myths about dual education***

In Slovenia, we still see a deeply rooted myth that only boys/girls with learning and behavioural problems opt for apprenticeships. This is not the case, because often star pupils also opt for apprenticeships. In addition, some students think that if they decide to take an apprenticeship, they will get to the profession with less effort. It is believed that by being present in the company, they will quickly earn some money and that they will not have to learn. They are not aware that time in the company is also part of learning, which is not provided by a teacher, but by a mentor in the company.

#### ***5. Strengthening the Importance of mentoring in employers***

Some mentors complain companies do not appreciate enough of their contribution to working with young people. Management sometimes thinks this is an activity that they can do just passing through during their regular work. The work of the mentor should therefore be properly regulated and the importance of mentoring should be presented to the management. Mentors need to be empowered with the knowledge to carry out their work quality.

#### ***6. Regional development of dual systems and extension/diversification of dual education system programs***

In Slovenia, only certain regions, individual programmes and schools providing apprenticeships are selected for apprenticeships. Many young people who might choose to take part in dual education system do not do so because of the distance to the nearest school, offering such a programme.

#### ***7. Provision of adequate health insurance for foreign apprentices or apprentices whose parents are working abroad***

In Slovenia, we also have some problems with adequate health insurance for foreign apprentices, or apprentices where parents are employed abroad. Companies that register apprentices for insurance cannot adequately insure such students, as the Slovenian insurance system does not allow them to do so. The issue has been raised various times throughout the years, but alas, nothing has changed in this area.

#### ***8. Reducing administrative barriers to financial incentives***

Companies involved in dual education are eligible for certain financial resources, but some do not even apply for these resources, as this requires them to send a large number of supporting documents, which could also be checked in a different way. Because of the administration itself and the time spent for this purpose, they do not even decide on financial incentives.

#### ***9. Preparation of a dual system implementation plan and application of the dual system implementation plan***

Each school, in cooperation with companies, prepares a Plan for the Implementation of Apprenticeships or Dual System Programmes. It includes a short and transparent record of the agreement on which practical skills and professional knowledge of the chosen educational programme the apprentice will be able to acquire from the employer and which one will be in the school, when the student will be in school and when at the employer, how and between whom communication about apprenticeships and apprentices will take place, what are the obligations of the mentor during practical training with work, and a plan of cooperation in the implementation of intermediate tests and final examinations, where employers and trainees of apprentices from organisations, companies or operators must also be involved.

Some schools prepare it according to the line of least resistance, which means that they only copy existing plans for implementations, which other schools/companies have prepared, regardless of

whether in that particular company/school the content of the plan can be followed/executed at all. The plan for implementation of apprenticeship/dual system program is a document that needs to be prepared for each student individually. The importance of this document is that it is drawn up in accordance with the Apprenticeship Act and that it is adhered to as much as possible by all stakeholders, as this allows monitoring of apprenticeships and real-time adaptation where necessary.

#### **10. Easier transitions between companies**

Some apprentices would like to take an apprenticeship/be part of dual education in several companies to gain a broader view of a particular programme. Even when there is a mutual agreement of both companies and the school, this is very difficult to do in practice due to bureaucratic obstacles (e.g. duplicate documents, duplicate insurance payments and fees, ...).

#### **Recommendations for Latvia**

Taking into account the goal of the IDES project – to strengthen the practical skills and abilities of young people in order to promote their competitiveness and readiness for the labor market; in order to make better use of local human resources, increase the economic development of rural areas and prevent the emigration of intellectual labor – the IDES project has developed recommendations for the development of vocational education, including work-based learning and system sustainability, taking into account Latvia's medium and long-term planning documents:

- Strengthen the role of Vocational Education Competence Centres (VECC) as centers of excellence, resources and coordination for VET institutions, whose task is to provide methodological support to other VET institutions for the development of educational programs relevant to sectoral development, as well as implement educational programs in the form of work based learning.
- Continue to improve, modernize and digitize the learning environment in vocational education institutions in order to strengthen students' capacity for innovation, entrepreneurship, digital literacy and creativity, as well as to implement a student-centered learning approach in line with sectoral needs.
- Introduction and improvement of modular education programs, providing opportunities for the assessment, recognition, accumulation and transfer of learning outcomes in vocational education in various degrees and forms in the national and international context;
- To promote coordinated co-operation with representatives of economic sectors and employers: to improve co-operation between the VECC Convention and the National Expert Councils; increase the number of students in work based learning programs and develop long-term cooperation with companies by encouraging the participation of micro and small enterprises.
- To strengthen the involvement of employers in vocational education, paying special attention to the development of work-based learning.
- To improve the co-operation of vocational education institutions with the local government, to get involved in the processes of the local community and to improve the co-operation with students' parents.
- To create sustainable networks for the exchange of professional experience and cooperation in order to promote mutual learning among teachers, the transfer of educational innovation and good practice, and to strengthen belonging to the profession. In addition, strengthen co-operation between educational institutions and industry, as well as NGO experts, to ensure the transfer of knowledge and practice and the development of relevant competencies for teachers.
- To promote the involvement of vocational education institutions in the processes of education internationalization.

- To support and motivate the involvement of talented students in national and international events: SkillsLatvia, EuroSkills and WorldSkills, etc.
- To provide information measures and timely, individualized and independent career development support to the learners of vocational education institutions, as well as to the potential learners, for example, students in the primary education level.

## Annexes

### Annex 1. Matrix

#### Matrix for the IDES project

	Clusters of issues to be addressed	Comment
1.	<b>Types of VET institutions, ownership/ supervision, financing</b>	What VET institutions (at up to EQF level 4) can be involved in WBL. Are they under the supervision and financing of the national or local governments?
2.	<b>Responsible ministry/ ies for the implementation of WBL</b>	Which ministry/ ministries are responsible for the implementation of work-based learning (WBL) in your country?
3.	<b>Existence of WBL legal framework – type and title of the document(s), year of adoption</b>	Is the WBL regulated by a law, governmental regulations or other documents? Are there any other internal procedures or arrangements at national, regional, institutional level?
4.	<b>Financing</b>	What financial mechanisms are used to finance WBL? What are the sources? Are the costs covered/shared by the public budget, co-financed by EU, by companies, chambers, professional associations and other bodies?
5.	<b>WBL tutors and WBL tutors' training</b>	Are there systemic approaches in place for training and support to WBL tutors? If yes, are there specific programs or modules used for the purpose? Is there particular legislation or regulation regarding the requirements for WBL tutors in companies? Has the maximum number of students per tutor in company been determined? If yes, in what way and by what documents.
6.	<b>Social dialogue and other relevant stakeholder involvement at national level regarding WBL developments</b>	Is there a (relevant) social dialogue in place? In what form? What are other relevant stakeholders involved at national level dialogue and decision making (tripartite councils etc.)?
7.	<b>Involvement of sector organisations, employers and their organisations</b>	What sector organisations, associations or chambers are involved in supporting WBL developments? At what level? Through what mechanisms?
8.	<b>Company involvement and contractual arrangements</b>	What is the contractual basis for WBL? What are the contractual parties and the tasks, rights and responsibilities of the parties? Is the companies' suitability/ competence for WBL provision being assessed/ monitored? In what way? By what documents or regulation?
9.	<b>National, regional, local aspects</b>	Is the (labour force) planning being done at national, regional and also local aspect? Are long/ medium/ short term labour market forecasts being taken into consideration?
10.	<b>Autonomy of VET institutions</b>	How free are the VET institutions in determining their choices as to the participation in WBL, offer of particular programs in WBL mode etc.?
11.	<b>Incentives at national, institutional and individual level</b>	What type of incentives exist at national, institutional and individual level to promote WBL? How effective these have proved to be so far?
12.	<b>Publicity</b>	Is there publicity on WBL in place? What type of publicity? What are the key target groups? How effective has the publicity events or approaches been?

	<b>Clusters of issues to be addressed</b>	<b>Comment</b>
13.	<b>Student support (a)</b>	How are students being informed and encouraged to get involved in WBL? What organisations/ agents are involved in it? Are the occupation guidance measures in place?
14.	<b>Student support (b)</b>	To what level individual approach to students in WBL is being implemented? Do they get practical support? How is the practical support to WBL students organised?
15.	<b>Parent involvement</b>	Are parents being seen as an important target group to encourage student's involvement in VET/WBL? In what way does it manifest?
16.	<b>Standards/ curriculum/ program, supporting documents, guidelines</b>	Who is responsible for what? How are the responsibilities shared?
17.	<b>Time/ percentage spent at the company in WBL</b>	What is the percentage/ time spent at the company within a WBL program
18.	<b>Remuneration of students for work during WBL?</b>	How are students being remunerated for their work at a company during WBL?
19.	<b>Follow-up on employment of WBL graduates</b>	Is there a follow-up on employment of WBL graduates? What are the indications?
20.	<b>WBL in the lifelong learning context</b>	Is WBL used only in initial or also in continuing VET?
21.	<b>Existence of databases, mapping tools or studies on WBL</b>	Are there any databases, mapping tools or studies on WBL existing and available? What type and for what purpose?
22.	<b>Digitalisation in WBL</b>	Are there any digital approaches or solutions in place in WBL (e.g. applications etc.)?
23.	<b>National and EU funded projects and international co-operation in WBL</b>	Are there any national and EU funded projects in place? Are there any relevant international co-operation developments in WBL, e.g. regarding co-operation agreements, mobilities, and peer-learning?
24.	<b>Has your country been the object of a particular study on WBL by EU or international organisations or bodies?</b>	If yes, what are these studies? Are there any conclusions or recommendations useful for further work?
25.	<b>Statistics on WBL implementation at national level</b>	Is any formal statistics or informal information available regarding the numbers of VET institutions, VET schools and companies involved in WBL? How many programs and / or qualifications are being offered in WBL form? What is the (approximate) percentage of students participating in WBL against the total number of VET students? Where data available – what is the percentage of all students participating in WBL (=100%) according to the sector (e.g. 25% of automotive sector, xy % of agriculture and food sector etc.). What is the percentage of students in selected sectors that are participating in the dual education system (example: number of students in ICT sector = 100%, students in ICT sector participating in WBL = 30%)?

## Annex 2. Questionnaire

### Questionnaire on key approaches to work-based learning

**Dear expert!** You are kindly asked to fill out the questionnaire on work-based learning (WBL)<sup>5</sup> in your country. The questionnaire is prepared in a structured way – so that you are requested to provide short concrete answers with some commentary and explanation. For each key point some explanatory questions have been added clarifying what is being implied by each point – in order to avoid misinterpretation as much as possible. We expect short answers to save your time, developing in greater detail where you find it necessary to explain more! If necessary, please feel free to add additional lines or columns. Your input is much valued! Thank you very much!

#### 1. Types of VET institutions, ownership/ supervision, financing

1. What public VET providing institutions (e.g. VET schools, colleges) can offer WBL (initial VET at up to EQF level 4) in your country. Are they owned/ founded by, are under the supervision (and financing) of the national or regional/ local governments (please, specify)? Do they offer work-based learning? In case a relevant (national level importance) VET provider (providing formal state recognised VET qualifications) is private (or otherwise) based, please feel free to add this information in the context of your country.

Type of institution	EQF levels of the qualifications offered	Owner/founder	Supervision/ financing	Comments on the offer of WBL

#### 2. Which ministry/ ministries are responsible for the implementation of work-based learning (WBL) in your country?

Name of ministry/ ministries	Comments

#### 3. Existence of WBL legal framework – type and title of the document(s), date of adoption

Is the WBL regulated by a law, governmental regulations or other type of documents? Are there any other internal procedures, arrangements or guidelines at national, regional, institutional level?

Name and type (law, regulation etc.) of the document	Level (e.g. national, regional, institutional)	Year/ Date of adoption	Comments
E.g. Law on work based learning/ Act on VET (with an article on WBL etc.			

<sup>5</sup>To avoid terminological problems, by work-based learning in this questionnaire implies apprenticeship-type schemes/ programs (with VET school-company alternance periods) that offer a VET qualification (as opposed to training praxis in companies which is usually a shorter period and basically meant to strengthen particular skills)

#### 4. Financing of WBL

What are the sources for covering WBL costs? What financial mechanisms are in place to finance WBL? Are the costs covered/shared by the public budget, co-financed by EU, by companies, chambers, professional associations and other bodies?

	State budget	European Social Fund/ other European programs	Company/ chamber/ professional association	Comments
Sources for WBL costs (tick where appropriate)				
Describe shortly the financing mechanisms for WBL				
Other relevant information				

#### 5. WBL tutors and WBL tutors' training

Are there systemic approaches in place for training WBL tutors? If yes, are there specific programs or modules used for the purpose? Is there particular legislation or regulation regarding the requirements for WBL tutors in companies?

	Yes/No	Comments
Systemic approaches in place for training and support to WBL tutors		
Specific programs or modules used for the purpose		
Legislation or regulation regarding the requirements for WBL tutors in companies		
Has the maximum number of students per tutor in company been determined? If yes, in what way and by what documents.		

#### 6. Social dialogue and other relevant stakeholder involvement at national level regarding WBL developments

Is there a (relevant) social dialogue in place? In what form? What are other relevant stakeholders involved at national level dialogue and decision making (e.g. tripartite councils etc.).

	Yes	No	Comments
Existence of (relevant) social dialogue			
Form of social dialogue	E.g. Tripartite VET council		
	E.g. other formalised platform or mechanism		

## 7. Involvement of sector organisations, employers and their organisations

What sector organisations, associations or chambers are involved in supporting WBL developments?  
At what level? Through what mechanisms?

	Yes	No	Comments		
Are sector organisations, associations or chambers involved in supporting WBL developments					
<b>Name/ type/ role of organisation</b>	<b>E.g. Sector expert councils</b>		<b>Comments on the role</b>		
	<b>E.g. Employers' Confederation</b>				
	<b>E.g. Chamber of trade and commerce</b>				
<b>Other relevant comments</b>					

## 8. Company involvement and contractual arrangements

What is the contractual basis for WBL? What are the contractual parties and the tasks, rights and responsibilities of the parties?

Contractual party	Tasks and responsibilities	Rights	Comments
<b>E.g. VET school</b>			
<b>E.g. Student</b>			
<b>E.g. Company</b>			
Is the companies' suitability/ competence for WBL provision being assessed/ monitored? In what way? By what documents or regulation?			
<b>Other relevant comments</b>			

## 9. National, regional, local aspects

Is the (labour force) planning being done at national, regional and also local level? Are long/ medium/ short term labour market forecasts being taken into consideration?

	Description	Comments
Planning at national, regional and also local level		
The role of long/ medium/ short term labour market forecasts		
<b>Other relevant comments</b>		

### 10. Autonomy of VET institutions

How free are the VET institutions in determining their choices as to the participation in WBL, offer of particular programs in WBL mode etc.?

**Please, describe the level of autonomy of VET institutions**

### 11. Incentives at national, institutional and individual level

What type of incentives exist at national, institutional and individual level to promote/ implement WBL? How effective these have proved to be so far?

Type of incentive	Level (national, institutional, individual)	Comments
<b>Other relevant comments</b>		

### 12. Publicity

Is there publicity (promotion) on WBL in place? What type of publicity? What are the key target groups? How effective has the publicity events or approaches been?

Type of publicity	Main target groups	Comments
<b>Other relevant comments</b>		

### 13. Student support for WBL – a) information and guidance

How are students being informed and encouraged to get involved in WBL? What organisations/ agents are involved in it? Are the occupation guidance measures in place?

Type of student encouragement/ support	Organisations/ activities/ procedure to provide/ obtain support	Comments
<b>E.g. information support</b>		
<b>E.g. career guidance</b>		
<b>Other relevant comments</b>		

**14. Student support for WBL – b) individual approach and practical issues**

To what level individual approach to students in WBL is being implemented? Do they get practical support? How is the practical support to WBL students organised?

Type of activity	Organisation/ procedure to provide/ obtain support	Comments
E.g. Individual approach		
E.g. practical support for travel expenses to the company offering WBL, accommodation, meals, means of individual protection, insurance etc.		
Please, feel free to use separate lines for any type of practical support you find relevant		
Other relevant comments		

**15. Parent involvement**

Are parents being seen as an important target group to encourage students' involvement in VET/WBL? In what way does it manifest?

<b>Please, describe the approaches to parents' involvement and their actual role and involvement</b>

**16. Standards/ curriculum/ program, individual plan, other relevant supporting documents, guidelines**

Who is responsible for what? How are the responsibilities shared?

Type of document	Responsible stakeholder	Comments
E.g. Standards		
Other relevant comments		

**17. Time/ percentage spent at the company in WBL**

What is the percentage/ (compulsory) time spent at the company within a WBL program? What legislation or document (procedure) stipulates this?

<b>Please, describe the approach in your country</b>
<b>Document stipulating the requirement</b>

**18. Remuneration of students for work during WBL?**

Are students being remunerated for their work at a company during WBL? In what way and amount?  
What legislation (document) stipulates this?

<b>Please, describe the approach in your country</b>
<b>Document stipulating the requirement</b>

**19. Follow-up on employment of WBL graduates/ graduate tracking**

Are there a follow-up procedures on employment of WBL graduates in place? What are the indications/ results so far? Are any legal documents / procedures in place for graduate tracking?

<b>Please, describe the approach in your country</b>
<b>Document stipulating the implementation of the procedure</b>

**20. WBL in the lifelong learning context**

Is WBL used only in initial or also in continuing VET?

<b>Please, describe the approach in your country</b>
<b>Documents or procedures in place</b>

**21. Existence of databases, mapping tools or studies on WBL**

Are there any databases, mapping tools or studies on WBL existing and available in your country?  
What type and for what purpose? Are there any legal documents or procedures in place?

<b>Please, describe the approach in your country</b>
<b>Documents or procedures in place</b>

**22. Digitalisation in WBL**

Are there any digital approaches or solutions in place in WBL (e.g. applications etc?)

<b>Please, describe the approach in your country</b>
<b>Document stipulating the requirement</b>

**23. National and EU funded projects and international co-operation in WBL**

Are there any national and/ or EU funded projects in place? Are there any relevant international co-operation developments in WBL, e.g. regarding co-operation agreements, mobilities, and peer-learning?

Name/ type of the project	Responsible stakeholder for implementation	Funding source	Comments
<b>Other relevant comments</b>			

**24. Has your country been the object of a particular study on WBL in your country by EU or international organisations or bodies (e.g. CEDEFOP, European commission, OECD etc.)?**

If yes, what are these studies? Are there any conclusions or recommendations drawn by these studies? Do you find them relevant or useful for your further work (if applicable)?

Name/ Type of study	Organisation that implemented the study, year of study, web reference, if applicable	Conclusions or recommendations from the studies
<b>Other relevant comments</b>		

**25. Statistics on WBL implementation at national level (most recent)**

Is any formal statistics or indicative informal information available regarding the numbers of VET students, VET institutions, and companies involved in WBL. How many programs and / or qualifications are being offered in WBL form? Which are the 5-6 most popular sectors or programs/ qualifications

	Formal/ Indicative	Comments
Statistics/ information on VET students involved in WBL		
Statistics/ information on VET institutions involved in WBL		
Statistics/ information on companies involved in WBL		
Programs and / or qualifications are being offered in WBL form		

	Formal/ Indicative	Comments
What is the (approximate) percentage of students participating in WBL against the total number of VET students?		
Where data available – what is the percentage of all students participating in WBL (=100%) according to the sector (e.g. 25% of automotive sector, xy% of agriculture and food sector etc.).		
Where data available – what is the percentage of students in selected sectors that are participating in the dual education system (example: number of students in ICT sector = 100%, students in ICT sector participating in WBL = 30%)?		
<b>Which are the 5-6 most popular sectors or programs/ qualifications?</b>		
<b>Are there any policies in place to promote certain programs/ qualifications for WBL provision (e.g. in STEM domain or other)? What are these policies? Please, describe briefly.</b>		

<b>Please, feel free to highlight additional relevant topics that you feel have not been included in this questionnaire – either specific to your country or at broader international level</b>	
Topic	Comment



Erasmus+ project No. 2019-1-SK01-KA202-060776



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