

EUROPEAN APPRENTICESHIP AMBASSADORS

SUMMARY

Short description of the action

« European Apprenticeship Ambassadors » is the name of a consortium of 31 vocational training centers, located in 10 different countries of the European Union (Croatia, Denmark, Spain, Finland, France, Hungary, Italy, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia), beneficiaries of the European Commission's support under the call for proposals VP/2016/010 « *A European framework for mobility of apprentices* ».

Launched in September 2016 this projects aimed to develop the long-term mobility of apprentices and post-apprentices (graduates under 12 months) by:

- the implementation of training courses including a mobility of 6 to 12 consecutive months – mobilities systematically organized in a combination of work and training scheme in the host country.
- the identification of obstacles and the search for solutions to lift constraints to the long mobility of these publics, to go beyond this experimental framework and to perpetuate this type of pathway.

Since March 2015, the « European Apprenticeship Ambassadors » consortium, originates from the initiative of French Vocational and Educational Training centers (VET) federated to work together on ways to meet the ambition of European Deputy, Jean Arthuis, to give the opportunity to any apprentice to live, during its training, a period of long term mobility in another country of the European Union as well as students in higher education system.

To these VET, European vocational training centers (VTC) have been partnering for several years on mobility projects under Leonardo and since 2014 under Erasmus +.

Also, with the validation by the European Parliament of this pilot project called "A European framework for the mobility of apprentices" and with the support of the European institutions, these VTC took the opportunity to co-build training courses between European VTCs, to initiate major work to remove the main obstacles to the long mobility of apprentices (responsibility of the employer of the country of origin, status of the apprentice during mobility, validation and recognition of learning outcomes on return , etc.) and thus "shift the lines".

With the participation of 55 apprentices and post-apprentices, the partners were able to capture and enhance rich experience feedback, would undoubtedly serve to learn from it and better understand the operational realities faced by the VTC engaged in mobility actions for apprentices.

Main objectives of the action

The main objective of this project was to develop the long mobility of apprentices and post-apprentices (graduates under 12 months) in Europe: to allow equal access of apprentices and students to long international mobility and equal recognition of apprenticeship training versus university training.

More specifically, the objectives of the action were:

- Experiment learning paths during which apprentices and post-apprentices continued their training alternately for 6 to 12 months in another European country. In order to ensure the implementation of quality actions, optimal monitoring and their durability, various tools have been developed, aimed at:

- providing a framework for mobility in order to secure training courses when the national framework does not allow it,
 - detailing each of the training courses implemented ,
 - identifying the difficulties encountered and the solutions / proposals tested at each step of the action,
 - evaluating the main benefits obtained by the target audiences and, on the other hand, the main difficulties, in order to extract best practices and possible improvements,
- promoting apprenticeship by including the possibility for young people in education and vocational training to continue their education in another European country, like the opportunities available to students in higher education,
 - developing the sense of belonging to the European Union of the different stakeholders (apprentices, companies, professional organizations and social partners, staff of training centers) and their professional and personal networks,
 - seeking with the regional, national and European organizations the necessary means for a large-scale deployment of the long mobility of apprentices,
 - formulating proposals to the European Commission and the European Parliament as well as to the Member States of which the members of the consortium belonged for:
 - developing apprenticeship training based on feedback from training centers and companies that have hosted a young person as part of the project,
 - removing the difficulties for the long mobility of apprentices in Europe starting from the solutions that have been tested with the pilot project and taking into account the proposals made by the consortium,
 - contributing to building a European framework for apprenticeship by identifying best practices experienced by the actors in the field

Key results

The "European Apprenticeship Ambassadors" project has enabled 55 young people, apprentices in training or young people who have validated vocational training in the last 12 months, to continue their training in a vocational training center (VTC) located in another European country. The departures took place between August 2016 and October 2017. All the young people have integrated a training course alternating periods in CFP and periods in company built jointly by the hosting training center and the sending training center.

The follow-up questionnaires sent to the youth at each stage of their mobility and to the host companies have revealed the main benefits of each of these parties, as well as the main difficulties they encountered.

The questionnaire sent to young people after their return confirms that this experience has enriched them professionally, socially, linguistically and culturally. On the other hand, the main difficulties faced by young people were linguistic and budgetary. Companies, for their part, have appreciated to open-up to Europe, especially the transmission of knowledge across borders and the cultural enrichment they have benefited from the fact of welcoming a young European. On the other hand, the language barrier and the administrative procedures are among the greatest difficulties encountered.

The scoreboard supplied by the members of the consortium identified 49 obstacles to the long mobility of apprentices, whether at local, national or European level. 30 tested solutions or proposals were put forward.

The main obstacles faced by the co-beneficiaries concerned the following topics:

- Financing youth mobility

- Research of companies ready to welcome young Europeans
- Selection, integration and monitoring of young people
- Building viable partnerships between training centers
- Adaptation to administrative and legislative constraints
- Validation of skills in the host and home country

The "European Apprenticeship Ambassadors" project has benefited from a strong political backing in France thanks to the support of Jean ARTHUIS, the latter having in particular been commissioned by the French Minister of Labor, Muriel PENICAUD, in July 2017 for the identification of obstacles to the long mobility of apprentices and the formulation of recommendations for action at national and European level.

This report, submitted on 19 January 2018 by Jean ARTHUIS to the Minister of Labor, has already made it possible to remove a number of legislative obstacles in France.

At European level, the European Commission wanted to make the long mobility of apprentices one of its priorities by highlighting the ErasmusPro action in the Erasmus + 2018 call for proposals. It intends to devote an envelope of 400 million euros reserved for 50,000 apprentices for mobility of 3 to 12 months by 2020.

The « European Apprenticeship Ambassadors – Go Further ! » project, launched in July 2017 following the call for proposals VP/2017/007 allows the consortium to continue its actions and in particular:

- accompany members of the consortium located in a country other than France to the removing of their national obstacles - political support and media coverage being for the moment less significant in other countries. To this end, the tour of Europe undertaken by Jean Arthuis since February 2018 will, we hope, bring to the attention of political leaders in other countries the added value of building bridges between European vocational training,
- focus on issues of validation and recognition of training in the host country, for graduation in the country of origin

In order to communicate widely about the pilot project and to raise awareness among both the general public and the institutions about mobility issues for apprentices, the consortium members created the EuroApp' association and developed a website: www.euroapp.eu. Beyond presenting the actions implemented and inviting everyone to sign the call for the development of apprentices mobility, many testimonials from participants are available.