

PRESS RELEASE

Erasmus for apprentices is underway... But it's a long way to go

Since 2015, under the drive and supervision of the European Deputy Jean ARTHUIS, a new ambition was born: to open the doors of Europe to apprentices.

The stakes are well known, **to combat youth unemployment by raising apprenticeship training programmes to the height of excellence:**

- **Apprenticeship has proved its worth** in successfully integrating young learners into the workplace; curiously, apprenticeship systems are losing ground in France and even in Germany, a learning system hardly developed or inexistent in European countries;
- **International apprenticeship training programmes** largely contribute to changing the image of apprenticeship as a second-rate educational choice, by giving them the same value and advantages as those courses provided by further and higher education.

Following Jean Arthuis' example, European training centres have followed suit and taken up the challenge.

Amongst them, 36 training centres from 12 European countries, federated by the *Compagnons du Devoir et du Tour de France*, have created the Euro App' consortium.

EURO APP' embodies the promise of an ERASMUS for apprentices

The confederated training centres of Euro App' demonstrate de diversity of apprenticeship training solutions in Europe; there are as many forms of apprenticeships as there are European countries. Whatever the system, these centres share the same desire: to open the doors to Europe to their learners.

The European Pilot Project "A European framework for mobility of apprentices" has given them the opportunity of taking action. Launched in 2016 and renewed in 2017, the pilot project has enabled European training centres to finance the experimentation of apprenticeship mobility, for durations of 6 to 12 consecutive months, in another European country. Euro App' had fixed its objective at 150 apprentices for 2016 and near to 65 for 2017.

To this day, through Euro App', 80 learners have continued their vocational training for 6 to 12 months in another European country: other apprentices will benefit from the programme up until the start of the next academic year. However, the initial objective in terms of numbers will not be attained. What can we retain from this experiment two-thirds into the project?

1. **Apprentices are just as keen to discover the world as higher education students;** apprentices dispel the popular beliefs that only students have the supposed capabilities of studying abroad; Euro App' apprentices prepare diplomas of levels no higher than level 6 in the European Qualifications

Framework.

2. **The obstacles to achieving long-stay mobility are even greater than the training centres had imagined!** No less than 60 serious obstacles have been identified, from the absence of ERASMUS grants at the start of the experiment upto the illegal status in some European countries of learners that don't follow the whole 2-3 year programme on their soil.
3. **Despite the difficult context, companies accepted to participate,** either by 'releasing' their apprentice to go abroad or by welcoming a foreign learner for one semester or one academic year.

We can truly say that the Euro App' training centres, along with the apprentices and their employers, have shown real adventurous spirit. Should we be discouraged by a path laden with pitfalls? At the birth of Erasmus in 1987, there were little more than 3000 'pioneer' students. Today there are almost 300 000 per year!

All hopes are permitted as the European Union and France are committed to real equality in the treatment of both apprentices and students that seek experience through Erasmus programmes.

The framework is shifting to open up Erasmus to apprentices

- **The ERASMUS PRO programme:** without waiting for its evaluation, the European Commission has decided to fully integrate the pilot project into the general programme and providing a financial envelope of 400 million euros for the "Erasmus Pro" grants, reserved for 50,000 apprentices that wish to experience mobility for more than 3 months, for the years between 2018-2019-2020.
- **The strong will of the French government is at work:** a list of proposals were presented by Jean Arthuis to Muriel PENICAUD last January, in order to remove obstacles to a successful mobility; a majority have been adopted definitively by the French Senate. They solve some major issues such as employer responsibility, financial resources and social cover for French apprentices and the apprenticeship contract has been adapted to allow for the welcoming of foreign learners during their training course.

...but there is still a lot to do

Just like France has done, other European countries will have to initiate internal reforms in order to host or let learners go abroad during their apprenticeship course...**however this commitment is still lacking;** the Euro App' training centres feel alone and isolated with little support from their own national institutions to tackle the problems they face. The Voice of Europe still seems discrete.

Recognition of the training time abroad, by the country of origin, is at a deadlock:

Erasmus for students has grown through the intrinsic need for harmonisation of the European learning systems, which resulted in the Treaty of Bologna: each Teaching Unit that validates each semester is translated into credits that can be capitalised and transferred between all European universities.

The European Commission has launched a new process called "of Sorbonne" with the perspective of a mutual recognition, by 2025, of all secondary and higher education courses on a European scale. The road remains long and uncertain. The French training centres hope that their government will take practical steps to recognise experience gained abroad during the training course. They hope to have the same ease in terms of recognition of equivalences as those that exist for students; the Apprenticeship Reform in progress should take into consideration this crucial point.

Jean ARTHUIS is forever fighting for a European apprenticeship

Supported by a committed President of France, Jean Arthuis is battle-ready to build the foundations for a Europe engaged in apprenticeship:

- **Tour of the European capitals**, with a first stop at Sofia 14th and 15th February. Objective: through the experience of Euro App', to convince people of the power of apprenticeship and European mobility in reducing youth unemployment;
- **Launch of a movement in promoting twinning between European training centres**. Objective: by means of a quality charter, to implement the conditions for mutual recognition of the experience abroad and diplomas;
- **Preparation of the next pluriennial financial framework** for the European Union, with two priorities to be envisaged:
 - To triple the Erasmus credits. Only one out of two demands are satisfied today due to lack of financial credit
 - To create a specific European programme "professional and apprenticeship training", financed through cohesion funds (ERDF, ESF) to help countries that envisage structural reforms in order to enhance their level of excellence and reduce youth unemployment levels

To learn more about the pilot project Euro App', please visit : www.euroapp.eu

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Euro App' in a few words

Key figures

- 2 pilot projects
- 12 countries committed : Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, Spain, Finland, France, Hungary, Italy, Portugal, Czech Republic, Rumania, Slovakia
- 35 training centres, of which 16 in France and one intermediary body
- 80 learners sent abroad between August 2016 and January 2018
 - 40 French apprentices sent abroad, 40 hosted in France
 - 9 learners sent abroad during the course of their apprenticeship studies at the moment of departure, of which 2 French learners
 - 8 under-aged learners sent abroad
- Field of study (from the most represented to the least):
- Hotel-Restaurant, Bakery/Pastry making, Interior fittings and Finishes, Metalwork/Industrial sector, Building construction, Agriculture, Hairdressing, Sales & Retail, Tourism

Nestlé supports Euro App'

At Nestlé, apprenticeship is considered a route to high achievement for training tomorrow's talent.

In 2014, Nestlé launched *Alliance For Youth* – an Alliance for young learners, a European group of 200 companies fully committed to the training and employing of youth workers under 30 years of age. Although the 3 year objective for career opportunities is 115 000 – employment, apprenticeship, work placements – there are already 90 0000 opportunities for 2016-2017 alone.

In a social climate where the European youth sees unemployment as the main difficulty for the next 10 years, apprenticeship is a “win-win system”, according to Cécile Delestre, Director of Talent Attraction at Nestlé. “It’s a route to high achievement which is a valuable aid to the apprentice and to the company. [It’s the] first benefit of a complete training programme, applying their knowledge in the world of work, and it necessarily beneficial to the company to have access to young learners having already acquired professional experience and are rapidly operational”, she explains.

Nestlé France has launched a Tour de France, starting on 20th November 2017 on its Vittel site, to meet and exchange with its 600 apprentices. Next stop: 12th March 2018 in Pontarlier at its Nesquik site.

In France, Nestlé has announced that it will recruit 325 youth workers under the age of 30 years and train on average 800 trainees or apprentices every year.

List of Consortium Partners

Apprenticeship Training Centres in France

1. CFA Compagnons du devoir d'Angers
2. CFA Compagnons du devoir de Toulouse
3. CFA Compagnons du devoir de Bordeaux
4. CFA Compagnons du devoir de Tours
5. CFA Compagnons du devoir de Marseille
6. CFA de la Faculté des métiers de Rennes
7. CFA de la Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie du Maine et Loire
8. CFA du Bâtiment de Loire Atlantique
9. CFA des Maisons familiales rurales de Vendée
10. CFA des Villes de la Mayenne
11. CFA de la Ville de Tours
12. CFA de l'Ecole Supérieure d'Agriculture d'Angers
13. CFA de la Chambre de Métiers de Charente Maritime
14. CFA Maisons Familiales Rurales de Fougères
15. CFA Maisons Familiales Rurales de Montfort
16. CFA Maisons Familiales Rurales de Lesneven

Professional Training Centres in Belgium

17. Institut du Patrimoine Wallon

Professional Training Centres in Croatia

18. Klesarska škola

Professional Training Centres in Denmark

19. EUC Syd

Professional Training Centres in Spain

20. Centro Formación en Edificación
21. Institut Pere Martell
22. Centro Superior Hosteleria Mediterraneo
23. Escola del Treball

Professional Training Centres in Finland

24. PKKY - North Karelia Municipal Education Training Consortium
25. Hämeen Ammatti Instituutti

Professional Training Centres in Hungary

26. Lycée professionnel de Csonka
27. Lycée professionnel de Krudy
28. Lycée professionnel de Moravárosi
29. Szent Istvan University

Professional Training Centres in Italy

30. Centro Edile per la Sicurezza e la Formazione
31. Centre de Formation Professionnelle de la Province de Como
32. CFP ZANARDELLI

Professional Training Centres in Portugal

33. Centro de Formação Profissional da Indústria da Construção Civil e Obras Públicas do Sul

Intermediary Body in Czech Republic

34. Agentura Educo

Professional Training Centres in Rumania

35. Association American European Education

Professional Training Centres in Slovakia

36. Spojena Škola Nitra