



**Analysis and
comparison of
apprenticeship
schemes for young
persons with
disabilities in seven
countries**

**EUROPEAN
REPORT**

**Securing the transition to
labor market for persons with
disabilities through the
Supported Apprenticeship
Scheme**

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About this report

Each partner organisation in the project has been responsible for individual reports regarding the situation in their respective country.

The report covers the following topics for each partner country.

1. Overview on the history and organization of apprentice and the VET sector in each country.

- 1.1 Rate of employed apprentices in training centres and companies / unemployment rates with general focus on persons with disabilities
- 1.2 Apprenticeship contracts: nature and length, possibility of ending the contracts, where to find offers, working hours and salary etc.
- 1.3 How are apprenticeship contracts generally funded?
- 1.4 What are the usual steps towards signing an apprenticeship contract (links with employers and training centres)
- 1.5 Possibility to get an official recognition of worker with disability.
- 1.6 Specific adjustments for persons with disability during an apprenticeship contract

2. Procedures in the support of apprenticeships contracts

- 2.1 Financial aids and stipends for work adaptations for people with disabilities
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Introduction

This report is an overview of the system of apprenticeship for persons with disabilities conducted in seven European countries – France, Greece, Belgium, Bulgaria, Spain, Italy, and Norway.

The report is an independent output of an Erasmus+ KA2 Project: Securing the transition to labour market for persons with disabilities through the supported apprenticeship scheme (SAS project.) The project has partners from the seven countries.

All partners in the project work with adapted workplaces, vocational training and / or consulting support for people with different spectres of disability, and each partner organization in the project has been responsible for individual reports reading the specific situation in their respective country.

The report gives an overview on the history and organization of apprentice and the VET sector in each country and describes the procedures in the support of apprenticeship contracts in each country. As an appendix to the report, we also provide an overview of the history and organization of apprentice and the VET sector in each country together with a summary of the different findings.

The report provides important insight into inequalities and differences between the seven countries.

Some countries have come further than others, and there are also major political and structural differences that need to be addressed in the further work to support people with disabilities on their pathway to participation into the labour market.

Through the work in the project, we want to explore best practice in each individual country, and thus form the basis for policy development, the development of new methods for guidance and general support for people with disabilities towards supported apprenticeship.

France

1. Overview on the history and organisation of apprenticeship and the VET sector in France

Work-study training has a long history in France. "On-the-job training" with master craftsmen was developed between the tenth and thirteenth centuries. Gradually, this type of training was organised on a work-study basis with work shadowing and mentoring which became mandatory between the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. It was later enshrined in law with:

- The Law of 4 March 1851, which set out apprenticeship rules and the duties of the apprenticeship supervisor: "treat the apprentice prudently and responsibly and oversee his conduct, either within the firm or elsewhere».
- The Law of 11 December 1880 created manual apprenticeship schools.
- The Astier Law of 25 July 1919 created mandatory professional courses for apprentices under the age of 18. Therefore, the beginnings of formal work-study programmes date back to the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries, with apprenticeships modernised primarily to meet the need for qualifications created by the Industrial Revolution.
- Against this backdrop, the Law of 13 July 1925 established the apprenticeship tax.
- Later, between 1971 and 1991 and under the pressure of a series of crises, there was a move towards promoting and formalising work-study programmes with mentoring to respond effectively to employment issues.

- Finally, the 2018 reform marked the removal of regional management of apprenticeships towards professional disciplines. The 2018 Law has incorporated the funding and support of apprentices with disabilities into ordinary law. This notable change has had a marked influence on professional practice.

1.2 Rate of employed apprentices in training centres and companies / unemployment rates with general focus on persons with disabilities

Unemployment rates:

- 14% for people with disabilities compared to 8% for general population
- In the first semester of 2021, 1 300 apprenticeship contract were signed thanks to the financial support of Agefiph (private sector), compared to 692 in the first semester of 2020, which is a raise of 82% in one year

According to a study, that access to employment for young people with disabilities appears to be longer and more complex. The average duration of the last job search was 7.6 months compared to 4.2 months in the control sample. One third of the young disabled people in employment indicated that their job search had lasted more than 7 months (32%), a proportion 16 points higher than that measured in the control sample.

Apprenticeship contracts:

Private sector

Agefiph (private sector) supported 2 500 apprenticeship contracts in 2020.

Qualitative data regarding apprenticeship contracts for people with disabilities financed with the support of Agefiph (private sector) in the first semester 2021:

- Part of women: 41% (+15% in one year)
- Average age: 26
- -18 years-old: 19% (-18% in one year)
- Graduates: 35% (+19% in one year)
- Mental disability: 9%
- Cognitive disability: 31%
- Companies over 20 employees: 36%
- Companies with less than 10 employees: 51% (-13% in one year)
- Employed in the service sector: 69% (+10% in one year)

Public sector

The FIFHFP (public sector) supported financially 1 385 apprenticeships for people with disabilities in 2020, which represents 5,7 million euros (the average cost to support an apprentice is 4 309€).

1.3 Apprenticeship contracts: nature and length, possibility of ending the contract, where to find offers, working hours and salary etc.

All young people aged 16-29 can enter an apprenticeship contract.

There are some exceptions to these age limits, primarily for people with disabilities and some company founders. Work-study training programmes provide some time in the training centre (usually an ATC) and some time in a working environment with a public or private sector employer. Therefore, any employer can recruit an apprentice, if they nominate an Apprenticeship Supervisor (see page AA5) who meets the necessary conditions, and that they comply with the apprentice quota for each Apprenticeship Supervisor.

Apprenticeships are open to public institutions (central authorities, regional authorities, public health institutions and chambers of commerce), public interest associations under the French 1901 Law and private companies, regardless of their articles of association. There are several specificities for the public sector, particularly in terms of remuneration.

Nature and length of the contract

Apprenticeship contracts can be entered into for a fixed term or on a permanent basis. For permanent contracts, the contract will begin with an apprenticeship period. During this period, the apprenticeship contract rules apply.

At the end of the apprenticeship period, the normal permanent contract (CDI) rules apply. The length of the apprenticeship contract is adjusted to the training cycle (usually to within about three months), which generally lasts for six months to three years. It is possible to extend or shorten the process in line with certain circumstances including academic level, disability, starting training under another status, etc.

Ending the apprenticeship contract

During their first 45 days with the company, the employer, or the apprentice (or their legal representative) may terminate the contract.

After this 45-day period, based on the date on which the contract was entered into, the contract may only be terminated: - by mutual agreement between the employer and the apprentice; - for serious misconduct, recurring breaches of obligations, being unfit for work,

force majeure, permanent exclusion of the apprentice from the ATC; - if the apprentice gains their qualification before the end of the term initially set, provided that they give one month's notice to the employer. The contract usually expires at the end of the term set.

Where can I find job and work-study offers online?

There are many specialist websites which provide apprenticeship vacancies. These websites all work in the same way. You start by browsing the job vacancies published by employers, then create a profile, and finally upload your CV for recruiters to look at. The main specialist websites include:

- The "1 jeune 1 solution" platform, where you can access thousands of jobs and workstudy offers selected by Pôle emploi (the French job centre);
- The "Portail de l'Alternance" (work-study portal) which lists vacancies for apprenticeship and "professionalisation" contracts.
- The Place de l'apprentissage et des stages (PASS) (apprenticeship and placement marketplace) website, which focuses on three public sector areas.
- The Pôle emploi (French job centre) website, which provides general job listings.
- TheAgefiph website, which has its own jobs area and lists many general job ads.
- The Place de l'emploi public website, the first jobs site to cover the three main public sector areas; - The website of the Executive employment agency (Agence pour l'emploi des cadres– Apec) which lists general job vacancies.
- The website of the Youth centre for information and documentation Centre d'information et de documentation jeunesse (CIDJ). The "Employment, jobs and placements" (Emploi, jobs et stages) section includes work-study placements.

The Cerfa FA13 form needs to be submitted to enter an apprenticeship contract. The FA13 form shown below is currently being adapted following the 2018 reform.

Specific features of the employment contract for an apprenticeship contract

Apprentices with an apprenticeship contract have employee status. They are therefore entitled to be paid a salary based on a percentage of the minimum wage (Smic). They also pay contributions towards their retirement and unemployment insurance. They receive social security cover and have the same number of paid holidays as other employees. They are also entitled to five days of leave to prepare for their exam.

Working hours

The apprentice's working hours are identical to those of other employees. However, the employer must let the apprentice complete professional theory classes during working hours,

and these will be paid. Working hours for apprentices under the age of 18 have been increased to up to 40 hours per week or ten hours per day for certain business sectors, with certain compensation conditions in place, compared with 35 hours per week/eight hours per day previously.

This provision applies to contracts entered from 1st January 2019 in the following business sectors:

- Construction
- Public works
- Creation, planning and maintenance of landscaped areas

Remuneration

The apprentice's remuneration varies based on their age. Moreover, remuneration increases in each new calendar year of the performance of their contract. The company's collective agreement may set out more favourable conditions. Finally, specific provisions apply in the event of a series of apprenticeship contracts, repeating a year or any adjustment to the length of the contract.

2021 salary table for the apprenticeship contract:

Year of apprenticeship contract	Age of the apprentice			
	15-17	18-20	21-25	26+
Year 1	€419.74 <small>(27% of minimum wage)</small>	€668.47 <small>(43% of minimum wage)</small>	€823.93 <small>(53% of minimum wage)</small>	€1554.58 <small>(100% of minimum wage)</small>
Year 2	€606.29 <small>(39% of minimum wage)</small>	€792.84 <small>(51% of minimum wage)</small>	€948.29 <small>(61% of minimum wage)</small>	
Year 3	€855.02 <small>(55% of minimum wage)</small>	€1041.57 <small>(67% of minimum wage)</small>	€1212.57 <small>(78% of minimum wage)</small>	

The monthly gross minimum wage on 1 January 2021 was €1554.58.

1.3 How are apprenticeship contracts generally funded?

While apprenticeships are financed by the compulsory contributions paid by companies for vocational training, the apprenticeship tax, and the supplementary apprenticeship contribution (for companies with more than 250 employees), the funding of the training, provided by the OPCO (Skills Operator) to which the employing company belongs, varies according to the type of apprenticeship contract.

Financing apprenticeships: the legal framework

An apprentice linked to a company and an apprentice training centre (ATC) by a training agreement, or an apprenticeship contract triggers an opportunity for funding, the level of which will be determined by the professional branch to which the training is linked and paid to the ATC via the OPCO to which the employer is attached, all under the supervision of France Compétences.

It should be noted that there is a possibility of an increase for people recognised as disabled workers in terms of the amount paid, up to a limit of 50% of the annual fixed amount, and a possibility of a reduction when the contract is partially funded by other public sources.

It is mainly the regions that participate largely in the financing of apprenticeships by paying for the operation of and investment in ATCs.

How is apprenticeship funding organised?

The OPCO of the company employing the apprentice is responsible for funding apprenticeship training. The level of funding for training depends on professional branch agreements or is set by France Compétences to meet the training needs of the job market. These levels therefore vary according to the training in question and the OPCO that finances it.

It is then the responsibility of the OPCO to calculate an annual amount based on the level of funding for the apprentice, which will be paid to the ATC according to the duration of the contract signed:

- For a contract of less than one year, the ATC in charge of training the apprentice under an apprenticeship contract will receive 50% of the sum within 30 days of receiving its issued invoice and the remaining 50% at the end of the contract. Please note that there is a 10% increase in the amount due if the duration of the contract is reduced.
- For a contract lasting more than one year, the ATC in charge of training the apprentice under an apprenticeship contract receives 50% of the sum within 30 days of receiving the invoice issued by the ATC, then 25% during the 7th month and again 25% at the 10th month.

In the event of breach of contract, the OPCO maintains the payments to the ATC until a new contract is signed or until 6 months following the breach without a new contract.

It is also up to the OPCO to pay for the additional costs associated with the training of apprentices under an apprenticeship contract, provided that they are financed by the ATC. These include, for example, accommodation costs (maximum €6 per day), catering costs (maximum €3 per meal) and the cost of teaching equipment for the necessary materials, up to a maximum of €500. Finally, it must manage the international mobility costs of apprentices, where applicable.

ATCs, on their part, can benefit from various forms of funding for apprenticeships:

- Investment grants from the regions, for a planned sum of €180 million,
- Financial support from OPCOs - limited depending on the type of OPCO contacted by the ATC.

ATCs may also retain the profits generated by their training activities to build up a self-financing portfolio.

The main sources of funding for apprenticeship

Since January 2019, the contribution of companies is composed of the vocational training contribution and the apprenticeship tax, which will be collected from January 2021 by the Urssaf and the Mutualité sociale agricole.

The apprenticeship tax must be paid by all companies carrying out a craft, commercial or industrial activity if they are subject to French law, have at least one declared employee and are subject to French tax (on companies or on income). There are exceptions: companies employing one or more apprentices and whose annual tax base does not exceed six times the annual minimum wage, companies, and legal entities whose sole purpose is education, nontrading non-trading companies and employers' groups made up of farmers or non-trading agricultural companies are exempt from the tax.

The supplementary apprenticeship contribution (CSA) must be paid by companies with at least 250 employees employing less than 5% of alternating students, if they are also liable for the apprenticeship tax; companies with at least 3% of alternating students in their workforce may be exempted from the CSA under certain conditions to be justified.

1.4 What are the usual steps towards signing an apprenticeship contract (links with employers and training centres)

1. Finding out about potential work-study courses with the ATC and employers

Initially, the future apprentice finds out about open days organised by the various ATCs in their employment area. They also look at local online resources. At the open days, they can meet different employers and set a date for a trial work placement.

2. Registration with the ATC: Find out about workshops and the apprenticeship framework.

To find out about ATC workshops, the applicant may:

- Obtain a placement agreement issued by the academic institution. The institution which the applicant is attached to sets up a placement agreement for an immersive experience with the ATC technical facility
- Register for an apprenticeship preparatory course (State Skills Investment Plan - funded by the Caisse des Dépôts et Consignation): The preparatory course is a good route into an apprenticeship, and offers:
 - a support path which enables the young person to identify their skills and knowledge, build the relationships that they need in advance and secure their place on the apprenticeship contract
 - support for the company taking on the young person with the administrative tasks required for the recruitment of work-study students. The preparatory course may take a few days or several months, depending on the young person's circumstances and plans.
- Obtain an agreement for a professional immersion period (PMSMP). PMSMPs are open to anyone who received personalised social and/or professional support, regardless of their status, age or support framework

3. Placement with an employer

4. Looking for an employer and an ATC

This search usually starts with statutory websites (apprenticeship grant) and local networks. Since the 2018 Law came into force, even if the apprenticeship applicant is unable to find an employer, they can still register with the ATC to do a six-month training course of their choice. The ATC has the final say on this, and may change their decision.

5. Negotiating an apprenticeship contract with the employer

The VIC provides an overview of funding, aids and grants (government, OPCO and Agefiph, FIPHFP) to ensure that apprentices with disabilities can receive support. These differ depending on whether the apprenticeship is with a private company or a public institution.

The employer must send the apprenticeship contract to their OPCO. According to the OPCO, the contract must be submitted either online via their website, or by post.

6. Administrative process

Once the future apprentice has reached an agreement with the training centre and the company, they must follow Registration with the ATC

The apprenticeship contract is a written private-law contract. It may be a limited-term contract (CDL) or a fixed-term contract (CDD). A permanent contract (CDI) will begin with an apprenticeship period. For the apprenticeship contract, you will need documents containing the requested information:

- Information about the company: SIRET (company registration) no. of the employer's business/establishment, supplementary pension fund, headcount of the employer's business/establishment.
- Information about the Apprenticeship Supervisor: qualifications, professional experience, and the number of apprentices and work-study students that they supervise.
- The apprentice's CV showing their previous career path and, if required, any previous apprenticeship contract.
- The company's collective agreement.

The employer registers the contract with the chamber of commerce responsible for recording apprenticeship contracts. Once the contract has been registered, the Chamber then sends the declaration into DREETS (see French Employment Code Art. R. 6223-4). Since 1st April 2021, DIRECCTE is now DREETS (Regional directorates for the economy, employment, work and the community – Directions régionales de l'économie, de l'emploi, du travail et des solidarités). They are the single regional point-of-contact for any issue regarding employment policy and the labour inspectorate.

The employer must send the apprenticeship contract to the skills operator with the support of the chambers of commerce, within five working days of the beginning of the contract (or apprenticeship period for a permanent contract). They can complete this submission online. The skills operator has 20 days to decide whether to cover the costs of the contract. If the OPCO fails to respond, the application is automatically rejected. Submission of the apprenticeship contract is free-of-charge.

1.5 Possibility to get an official recognition of worker with disability

Official recognition of a person's status as a worker with a disability (Reconnaissance de la qualité de travailleur handicapé – RQTH)

The RQTH is part of an administrative decision which enables people with disabilities to receive targeted assistance. It is an official recognition of a person's fitness to work, based on their disability and capabilities.

This official recognition of a person's status as a worker with a disability (RQTH) enables employees, including apprentices, to claim any assistance awarded for their disability, which can help them both to find a job and to keep it. RQTH status is granted for a period of up to ten years, or in some cases indefinitely. RQTH is granted to anyone aged 16 or over whose

ability to find or keep a job is effectively reduced due to a physical, sensory, mental or psychological impairment.

The purpose of RQTH is to provide access to a range of measures implemented in order to help people with disabilities access the workplace.

RQTH provides access to:

- workplace integration initiatives (including rehabilitation and re-education placements, apprenticeship contracts, etc.);
- adjustments to working hours and workstations.
- special job search support through services such as the Réseau Cap Emploi network.
- public sector roles, either through an adjusted competitive application process, or through specific contractual recruitment.

Who grants RQTH status?

RQTH status is granted by the Commission for the rights and independence of persons with a disability (CDAPH). The length of the decision-making process may vary depending on which French department you are located in. You must provide a medical certificate from the past 12 months.

If RQTH status is not granted, the Commission (CDAPH) may conclude either that the person in question will not be able to access a job at all, or that they will be access a job in the usual way (no recognised disability).

Existing contractual provisions such as the apprenticeship contract are adjusted in a specific way for workers with RQTH status.

Ideally, the application should be submitted before signing the contract, i.e., during phase 1. However, an apprenticeship contract or apprenticeship period as part of a permanent contract is often the first work experience that the person has as an employee. Consequently, the application is not always planned in advance and is submitted, without prejudice to status, only after the apprenticeship contract is signed.

Where to submit the application?

The application should be submitted to the Support centre in each French department for persons with disabilities (MDPH). Each centre has a multidisciplinary team responsible for assessing the person's needs based on their life plans. The team includes professionals with a range of complementary skills including doctors, occupational therapists and psychologists, as well as social workers and support workers.

There is an MDPH in each French department which can provide any information you need on the process. The MDPH is a hub where people with disabilities and their families can find help, information, support, and advice. Contact your departmental board (Conseil départemental) services for contact details of your nearest MDPH.

Based on the assessment, the team will make recommendations which are formalised in a personalised compensation plan (PPC). RQTH status is granted by the Commission for the rights and independence of persons with a disability (CDAPH) through the MDPH and is based on the PPC.

RQTH status is granted for a set or indefinite period, and it is up to the beneficiary to renew the request if required. Decree no. 2018-850 of 5 October 2018 extends RQTH status to the next decision, to avoid situations in which entitlements are lost on renewal, and more generally so as not to impose processing deadlines. During the Covid-19 pandemic, entitlements have been extended until the end of the state of emergency.

On the MDPH application form, the "professional direction" ("orientation professionnelle" or ORP) refers to the mainstream working environment.

1.6 Specific adjustments for persons with disability during an apprenticeship contract

Specific rights of apprentices with disabilities, obligations of ATCs and companies

- The age limit of 29 years or over does not apply to the entry into apprenticeship of persons who are recognised as disabled workers (article L.6222-2 of the Labour Code).
- The ATC must propose the adaptations necessary for the proper conduct of the apprenticeship contract for training at the ATC and in the company. The ATC must support the search for an employer (Article L6231-2 of the Labour Code).
- A specific arrangement of the pedagogy of the training at the ATC is possible. It is also proposed that a person who cannot follow a training course in a ATC, because of his or her disability, can follow it at a distance or can follow a training course or practical and theoretical instruction equivalent to that provided in the centre. In all cases, these adjustments are implemented by the disability officer, after the opinion of the attending physician or the MDPH physician (Article R56222-50 of the Labour Code).
- The teaching provided in the ATC may be spread over a period equal to the normal apprenticeship duration of the training plus a maximum of one year (Article R6222-47 of the Labour Code). The duration of the apprenticeship contract is then extended by up to one year (Article R6222-48 of the Labour Code).
- The maximum duration of the apprenticeship contract may be extended to four years, as opposed to three years in the general case (Article R6222-46 of the Labour Code)

- The measures relating to educational adjustments and the increase in the duration of the apprenticeship contract are also applicable to apprentices who are recognised as disabled workers during their apprenticeship (Article R6222-49).
- The occupational physician may propose an adjustment to working hours. He must inform the ATC's and the company's disability referent (article R6222-49-1 of the Labour Code).
- A disability officer is appointed in each ATC (Article L6231- 2 of the Labour Code).
- ATCs may enter into agreements with educational establishments, training organisations or companies whose organisation and teaching methods are adapted to people with disabilities. "They contain the necessary adjustments to take account of the specific nature of the training courses" (Article R6222-51 of the Labour Code).
- The principle of an increase in the level of funding for apprenticeship contracts is provided for in Article L6332-14 of the Labour Code, for apprentices recognised as disabled workers (the levels of funding paid to ATCs by the OPCOs may be increased to a maximum of 4,000 euros - Decree No. 2020-1450 of 26 November 2020).
- An information and prevention visit before hiring is provided for underage workers (Art. R 4624-18 of the Labour Code).

2. Procedures in the support of apprenticeships contracts

2.1 Financial aids for work adaptations for people with disabilities

For private sector employers:

Agefiph grants are in addition to statutory grants. Their primary purpose is to fund any additional costs linked to the compensation of the disability. Companies recruiting for workstudy, apprenticeship or "professionalisation" contracts may be eligible for grants. The amount depends on the length of the contract signed.

The primary purpose of Agefiph's services and funding is to secure the career paths of people with disabilities, and above all to compensate for the disability when working. Agefiph offers people with disabilities and private companies financial help and support for:

- their projects
- their preparation, access, maintenance and development processes ● their jobs

Agefiph's apprenticeship contract signing grant is available to any employer that recruits a worker with a disability under an apprenticeship contract for a minimum of six months. To be eligible, the apprentice with a disability must work at least 24 hours per week (unless there is a legal or contractual exception which means that this can be reduced to 16 hours per week).

The maximum amount of the apprenticeship contract signing grant is €3,000 per company, pro-rated based on the length of the employment contract and paid from the sixth month of performance of the contract.

The grant may be extended if the student must repeat a part of the process, or if they decide to prepare for an additional study option. It may also be renewed if the work-study student is preparing for a higher-level qualification. Grants under this scheme can be received alongside other Agefiph grants, and alongside government and regional employment and access to the workplace grant schemes.

Agefiph is increasing its apprenticeship support in line with the government's recovery plan announced in 2020. Agefiph grants can be received alongside grants from the government "one young person, one solution" ("1 jeune 1 solution) plan and other Agefiph help. Awards have been revised upwards from €500 to €1,000 based on the length and type of contract. The basic grant of €500 to €3,000 has therefore been increased to €1,000 to €4,000, depending on the length and type of contract.

Other one-off grants can be claimed if advised to do so:

- Hosting, integration, and professional development grant (Aide à l'accueil, à l'intégration et à l'évolution professionnelle): maximum of €3,000.
- One-off grant for setting up remote working (Aide exceptionnelle à la mise en place du télétravail): maximum of €1,000.
- Training equipment grant (Aide équipement pour les formations) €500.
- Travel grant (Aide aux déplacements): maximum of €100 per day.
- Operational support grant (Aide soutien à l'exploitation): grant of €1,500.

For public sector employers

The purpose of the Fund for the integration of persons with disabilities into the public sector (Fonds pour l'insertion des personnes handicapées dans la fonction publique) is to help people with disabilities find jobs in the public sector or helping them to keep working by compensating for their disability.

In keeping with this aim of helping people to find a job and keep working, the FIPHFP provides personal funding for materials and technical equipment, human resources and even training. It also helps public sector employers to develop policies for staff with disabilities. Disability policies should gradually work towards achieving the 6% minimum employment rate, and above all offer suitable and sustainable working conditions for people with disabilities.

In 2021, the FIPHFP covers the following items for the apprenticeship contract:

- Training costs of up to €10,000 per year (including registration costs and additional costs). Applications should be submitted no later than two months before the training date and should include a quote.
- Travel, accommodation, and subsistence costs, with other funding deducted, up to a maximum of €150 per day for all costs.
- The FIPHFP also helps to cover the costs of targeted social and learning support for apprentices with disabilities, capped at an annual ceiling of 520 times the gross minimum hourly wage. This grant can be claimed once a year for the duration of the contract.
- The FIPHFP covers, with other funding deducted, up to 80% of the gross remuneration and employer's costs (with any financial aid that the employer receives for this job having been deducted) for each year of the apprenticeship. This grant can be claimed throughout the apprenticeship contract.
- Via the public sector employer, the FIPHFP will pay the apprentice a lump sum of €1,525 to cover the costs of the beginning of the apprenticeship. This grant can be claimed once for each qualification.
- If, at the end of the apprenticeship contract, the employer gives the apprentice a permanent position, the FIPHFP will pay an additional integration payment of €1,600. This grant can be claimed once.

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- In addition to the grants set out above, and within the limits of the applicable cumulation rules, the FIPHFP offers the following targeted grants:

Adjustments to the work environment grant: €10,000 over three years;

- Funding for visual sign language interpretation equipment covering up to 60% of the expense incurred, up to €6,000 per year, including buying the equipment, subscription, maintenance, training, and the cost of the service.
- Grant for commuting costs.
- Equipment grants for training courses: €500.

Stipends for apprentices

2021 salary table for the apprenticeship contract:

Year of apprenticeship contract	Age of the apprentice			
	15-17	18-20	21-25	26+
Year 1	€419.74 (27% of minimum wage)	€668.47 (43% of minimum wage)	€823.93 (53% of minimum wage)	€1554.58 (100% of minimum wage)
Year 2	€606.29 (39% of minimum wage)	€792.84 (51% of minimum wage)	€948.29 (61% of minimum wage)	
Year 3	€855.02 (55% of minimum wage)	€1041.57 (67% of minimum wage)	€1212.57 (78% of minimum wage)	

The monthly gross minimum wage on 1 January 2021 was €1554.58.

2.2 Financial participation for training centres welcoming apprentices with disabilities

The financial support provided by Agefiph and FIPHFP is always to the employer.

A disability office is appointed in each ATC. It is the apprentice's main contact. As coordinator of the training programme, this officer ensures the link with the apprenticeship supervisor.

2.3 Support for employers welcoming apprentices with disabilities. Focus on differences between public / private sector.

See 2.1 "Financial aids for work adaptations for people with disabilities"

2.4 Where to find key information?

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- 2009 Qualification et insertion professionnelle des apprentis handicapés Utopie ou réalité ? (Qualification and professional integration of apprentices with a disability: Utopia or reality?) Daniel Bredoux - La nouvelle revue de l'adaptation et de la scolarisation – no. 48, Quarter 4 2009

2009 Enquête (Survey) 2 APH ONISEP Apprentissage adapté (adjusted apprenticeship) Tugdual Ruellan
- 2010 surveys adjusted apprenticeship schemes in France Revue readaptation, February 2010
- 2020 S. Kerbourc'h, "L'apprentissage aménagé d'apprentis en situation de handicap au sein du dispositif Grafic" (Supported apprenticeships for apprentices with disabilities through the GRAFIC scheme), investigation report for LADAPT Brittany Ouest, November 2020.

Websites:

- The "1 jeune 1 solution" platform, where you can access thousands of job and workstudy offers selected by Pôle emploi (the French job centre);
- The "Portail de l'Alternance" (work-study portal) which lists vacancies for apprenticeship and "professionalisation" contracts.
- The Place de l'apprentissage et des stages (PASS) (apprenticeship and placement marketplace) website, which focuses on three public sector areas.
- The Pôle emploi (job centre) website, which provides general job listings.
- The Agefiph website, which has its own jobs area and lists many general job ads.
- The Place de l'emploi public website, the first jobs site to cover the three main public sector areas.
- The website of the Executive employment agency (Agence pour l'emploi des cadres– Apec) which lists general job vacancies;
- The website of the Youth centre for information and documentation (Centre d'information et de documentation jeunesse– CIDJ). The "Employment, jobs and placements" (Emploi, jobs et stages) section includes work-study placements.
- 2APH
- French Ministry of Labour website: <https://code.travail.gouv.fr/fiche-ministeretravail/handicap-contratdapprentissage-amenage>
- <https://www.monparcourshandicap.gouv.fr/>
- <https://www.cap-metiers.pro/Fiches-techniques/FAQ/447/Contrat-apprentissagesecteur-public/>
- <https://www.asp-public.fr/aide-pour-le-recrutement-des-apprentis-par-lescollectivites-territoriales>

- - <https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F167340>
 - <https://travail-emploi.gouv.fr/formation-professionnelle/entreprise-etalternance/aide-exceptionnelleapprentissage>
 - <https://www.asp-public-.fr/laide-unique-pour-les-employeurs-qui-recrutent-enapprentissage-0>
 - <https://www.cnsa.fr/outils-methodes-et-territoires-mdph-etdepartements/evaluation-des-besoins-despersonnes-handicapees-et-reponses/legeva>
- <https://handicap.gouv.fr/presse/communiques-de-presse/article/developper-lapprentissage-des-personneshandicapees>
- <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/eli/decret/2020/11/26/MTRD2014305D/jo/texte>
 - <https://jobirl.co>

2.5 Which administration is responsible?

As the apprenticeship contract is a working contract, apprenticeship is organised and managed by the Ministry of Labour.

2.6 Any other relevant information or source?

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Greece

1. Overview on the history and organisation of apprenticeship and the VET sector in Greece

- The Manpower Employment Organization (OAED) has successfully implemented the system of Apprenticeship in Greece since 1952.
- Law 1346/1983 (Gazette 46/A/14.04.1983) established the educational apprenticeship units of Manpower Employment Organization (OAED, the Greek Public Employment Services) and enabled OAED to be actively involved in the decisions concerning the type and duration of apprenticeships, qualifications of students, duration of schooling, teaching hours per specialty, labour remuneration, method of recruiting students and professional rights of graduates.
- Law 1566/1985 (Gazette 167/A/30.09.1985) placed OAED's apprenticeship schools in secondary education and the degrees granted were equivalent to those of the Technical Vocational Schools (TES).
- Law 2640/1998 (Gazette 206/A/03.09.1998) fully integrated Apprenticeship Schools into the institutional framework of Secondary Education.
- According to Law 2009/1992 (Gazette 18/A/ 14.02.1992), apprenticeship took the form of intensive semester during the Second Cycle Studies to deepen theoretical learning and learning in workshops.
- Technical Vocational Schools will be replaced by the Vocational Lyceum (EPAL) and Vocational Schools (EPAS) with the enactment of Law 3475/2006 (Gov. Gazette 146/A/13.07.2006).
- Law 4186/2013 (Gazette 193/A/17.09.2013) regulates, inter alia, non-formal vocational training [1], and established the 'Apprenticeship year' at EPAL and the Vocational Training Schools (SEK). The 'Apprenticeship year' at EPAL was not implemented from 2013 to 2016.

- Joint Ministerial Decision 1320/D5.1/2014 (Gazette 134/B'/2014) “Establishment and Operation of Experimental Vocational Schools” in Kalamaki of Attica region and Heraklion of Crete defined the operation of experimental SEK.
- By Law 4386/2016 (Gazette 83/A/11.05.2016) formal vocational non-compulsory Secondary Education is provided mainly in Vocational Lyceums (EPAL), which offer two-cycle courses of study:
 - The (pre-existing) upper secondary cycle course of study in EPAL which concerns all three classes of the lyceum (Classes A, B, and C) and
 - The Post-Secondary ‘Apprenticeship year’ class which lasts for about 9 months and is optional for upper secondary EPAL graduates (originally foreseen in Law 4186/2013).
 - By Law 4386/2016 (Gazette 83/A/11.05.2016), the operation of non-formal level Schools of Vocational Training (SEK) was abolished. The specializations offered by SEK were incorporated in the Institutes for Vocational Training (IEK). By the same law, IEK should offer one semester of internship or apprenticeship (in a total period of 3-5 semesters training period).
- According to the Strategic Plan for VET and Apprenticeship of 2016 for the needs of the application of apprenticeship on a large scale, but also under Law 4386/2016 (Gazette 83/A/11.05.2016), EPAS apprenticeship will continue to be provided by OAED (Greek Manpower Employment Organization) apprenticeships schools (level 4 degree of the National Qualifications Framework), with their existing institutional framework, until school year 2020-2021.

In the national context, the formal education system includes the system of primary, secondary and tertiary education, and regarding VET, reserves the term ‘formal vocational education’ for programmes at upper secondary level (EPAL) that allow access to higher education through national exams. Non-formal education includes initial vocational training, continuous vocational training and general adult education through different providers. In practice though, non-formal education may lead to formally recognised qualifications, which are included in the National Qualifications Framework and are linked to the European Qualifications Framework.

- By Law N.1976/91 article 14 paragraph 5, the non-paid apprenticeship for PWD was defined. The employers in that case contribute to insurance against accidents and occupational diseases.

1.2 Rate of employed apprentices in training centres and companies / unemployment rates with general focus on persons with disabilities

General population: In 2019-20, 5,500 students were in apprenticeships, there are no data for PWD.

The unemployment rates for the general population in the same year was 17% (for people under 25 was 37, 5%)

The unemployment rates for PWD (not including people whose disability certification has the term “incapable of any livelihood”)

- 20-24: 83,7%
- 25-29: 72%
- 30-34: 55,5%

1.3 Apprenticeship contracts: nature and length, possibility of ending the contract, where to find offers, working hours and salary etc.

Apprenticeships are a specific type of contract still regulated by the labour code.

Apprentice is a specific status.

Apprentices receive wage by employers that is in principle taxable.

In practice, the subsidized part of the wage (now paid directly to the apprentice, not through the company) is tax-free, reducing the taxable part below the taxation thresholds.

The remuneration of the apprentice amounts to 75% of the daily minimum wage (as determined by the National General Collective Labour Agreement/EGSEE)

The employer’s contribution to the social security of the apprentice is set as the 37.78% of ½ of the actual wage the apprentice receives.

For PWD there are only short-term unpaid apprenticeships, which are declared to ERGANI the Greek employment database.

1.3 How are apprenticeship contracts generally funded?

In general, apprenticeship contracts are funded from the state (Manpower Employment Organization OAED). Contracts for people with disabilities are not funded.

1.4 What are the usual steps towards signing an apprenticeship contract (links with employers and training centres)

For people with disabilities, the supported employment steps are followed in order to have an apprentice 's placement.

For the general population, the training centres are responsible of finding the companies and the employers.

1.5 Possibility to get an official recognition of worker with disability

The Disability Certification Centre (KEPA) is the organisation responsible for the certification of disability. KEPA examines those who apply for an invalidity pension, welfare benefits or the issuance of the degree of disability to receive social benefits and facilitations such as tax exemptions, travel card for the forms of public transport, favourable working hours etc.

KEPA also provides PWD an "unemployment card for people with disabilities". The benefits for the holders of the unemployment card are that it enables:

- To benefit from the provisions of Law 2643/98, ie for employment in the public sector.
- To participate in employment programs whether they relate to part-time employment, or the strengthening of entrepreneurship aimed at persons belonging to the Special Social Groups.
- Participate in training programs aimed at individuals belonging to the Special Social Groups.

1.6 Specific adjustments for persons with disability during an apprenticeship contract

There are no specific adjustments for persons with disability during an apprenticeship contract.

2. Procedures in the support of apprenticeships contracts

2.1 Financial aids for work adaptations for people with disabilities

No financial aids because the Supported apprenticeship is not officially regulated in Greece.

2.2 Financial participation for training centres welcoming apprentices with disabilities

The remuneration of the apprentice amounts to 75% of the daily minimum wage (as determined by the National General Collective Labour Agreement / EGSEE for all four semesters. The wage remains the same for each of the four semesters.

2.3 Support for employers welcoming apprentices with disabilities. Focus on differences between public / private sector.

The Training Centres are funded by the Manpower Employment Organization (OAED).

The training centres does not have a disability officer. For organisations like Theotokos, the supported employment methodology is implemented, and the job coaches are the mediators between apprentices and employers.

Enterprises participating in the program are subsidized for their apprentices. As of 1/2/2019, each apprentice is paid 21.78 € / day (75% of the wage) and the subsidy is 14.5 € while the employer pays the remaining amount and insurance contributions.

2.4 Where to find key information?

OAED the Greek Public Employment Services (www.oaed.gr) and EOPPEP the National Organisation for the certification of Qualification and Vocational Guidance (www.eoppep.gr).

2.5 Which administration is responsible?

Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs.

2.6 Any other relevant information or source?

Belgium

1. Overview on the history and organisation of apprenticeship and the VET sector in Belgium

Belgium is a federal State comprising three Regions (Flanders, Wallonia, and Brussels) and three language Communities (Flemish, French, and German-speaking Community). Citizens can access three different vocational education and training (VET) systems: Flemish, French-speaking and German-speaking. In the Brussels Region both systems, Flemish-speaking, and French-speaking, coexist.

Since the 6th State Reform in Belgium (2014), all remaining competences regarding employment and vocational training measures have been transferred to the regions and/or communities. The financial or logistical support measures for VET are organised by the regional authorities (public vocational training and employment services) and involving the social partners by joint committees via sector covenants. This also means that all legislation concerning VET and apprenticeships now is on sub-national level.

The Belgian 2017 National Reform Programme defines common goals for all three language Communities: 1) reducing early drop-out from education and training; 2) increasing lifelong learning participation; 3) increasing access to and value of qualifications; 4) reducing inequalities within each Region. At all levels, i.e., regional, community and federal, VET policies involve social partners in a tradition of social dialogue.

The Flemish, Walloon and Brussels Regions oversee vocational training and employment. Four regional public training services (VDAB, Bruxelles Formation, FOREM and ADG for Flanders, Brussels, Wallonia, and the German-speaking community) regulate vocational training provisions. This sharing of competences requires close and regular intergovernmental cooperation with formal and non-formal agreements, to ensure the consistency of the system.

VET programmes in Belgium are provided by two systems: 1) education system – which provides secondary compulsory and upper secondary education with technical and vocational programmes (full-time and part-time), vocational training for learners with special education needs; adult education; associate degrees, higher education with vocational bachelor programme; 2) training providers – which offer apprenticeships for young people and entrepreneurial training and adult vocational training for unemployed workers.

Full-time education is compulsory up to age 15 and followed by compulsory part-time education until age 18. VET starts at age 14 (secondary technical and professional programmes

and vocational training for learners with special education needs). Until age 15, only schools under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education of each Community provide VET. From age 15 onwards VET programmes can also be delivered as programmes combining company and school-based learning, the so-called “part-time education” or “apprenticeship-type programmes”. The apprenticeship-type programmes are either a) organised by schools and based on a contract with the company involved or b) organised by the regional public training centres. From age 18, learners can decide to 1) remain in the education system, 2) enter the labour market or 3) go to any public or private vocational training provider.

In the French-speaking part/institutions operating in French, vocational secondary education consists of four years, between the ages of 14 and 18. It is divided into two phases of two years each. The learners have the choice to follow one of three pathways: 1) technical secondary education, the so-called “transition education” with general, technical and artistic streams, i.e., outside VET programmes; 2) full-time vocational secondary education, the so-called “qualification education”, i.e., technical or artistic programmes which are school-based or dual with 60% of work-based learning; or 3) part-time vocational secondary education (dual system) as from age 15, again called “qualification education” which are as for pathway 2) school-based or dual with 60% of work-based learning. During two days per week and in a total of 15 hours, the students follow a programme at school. The remaining three days are spent on work-based learning in a company. It is organised by a centre – *Centres d’éducation et de formation en alternance / Centra voor deeltijds beroepsonderwijs / Teilzeitunterrichtszentren* – that usually depends on a technical and vocational school. The programme is based on a common work contract. Dual learners are followed by a mentor who comes from the school. In French it is named “l’accompagnateur” (accompanying person) and is the bridge between the employer, the trainee, and the school. They are paid according to a scale fixed by law that is based on the age and the grade they are enrolled in. The latter two pathways are VET pathways at ISCED 3 level. In 2015, the function of sectorial coaches was created in Wallonia to strengthen the role and accountability of the professional sectors (sectorial funds) in the field of dual learning.

The purpose was also to ensure the quality of the way young people are being mentored whilst being trained within a company. These coaches are employed by sectorial funds and work in collaboration with the mentors, who continue to play a central role as primary contacts with contractual parties and as the persons in charge of the youngsters’ training. At the end of the dual learning, the apprentice obtains a Certificate of Apprenticeship which enables her/him to either directly enter the labour market (by finding a job) or to continue her/his training or to become an independent worker (i.e., one own’s boss). Some training courses lead to a Certificate of Apprenticeship corresponding to the Certificate of Qualification in Full-time Education.

Beyond the secondary education system, i.e., at post-secondary level, there are three additional VET pathways: 1) a 1-year technical and vocational follow-up programmes – either school-based or dual with 60% of work-based learning at ISCED 4 level, 2) a 3-years complementary degree in nursing at ISCED 4 level and 3) a range of 3-years to 4 years

professional bachelor programmes at ISCED 6 level. They are school-based, include an end-of-studies internship, and can be followed by a 1-year bachelor specialisation programme.

In the Dutch-speaking part/institutions operating in Dutch, formal upper secondary education starts at age of 14 and ends at the age of 18, i.e., lasts four years and is offered in two branches, general education, and VET. The latter comprises: 1) technical school-based programmes, the so-called “full-time education”, which combine technical-theoretical classes and practical lessons. They lead to an upper secondary education diploma including a VET qualification; 2) vocational programmes that are more practice-based and aim at direct employment. These can be delivered as school-based programmes, again called “full-time education”. In apprenticeship-type programmes, learners follow general and technical courses at school (with 60% work-based learning) or at a SYNTRA training centre (with 80% work-based learning), one or two days per week. The other days (three or four days), they do work-based learning in a company. Graduates receive a vocational qualification and an upper secondary education diploma. These programmes are also accessible to young adults up to 25 years old.

After successful completion of an additional year, the so-called “follow-up vocational programme”, an upper secondary education diploma at ISCED level 4 is awarded (already as part of the post-secondary education system). At the same level, an upper secondary education diploma is necessary to enter tertiary education, except for 2-year short-cycle programmes with 33% of work-based learning which can be accessed by VET programme graduates. Professional bachelor programmes of 3-years duration at ISCED level 6 are another profession-oriented programme offered, too (as in the French-speaking part/institutions operating in French, see above) and a 3-years complementary degree in nursing, here, however, at ISCED 5 level.

Since September 2021 a new apprenticeship pathway, the so-called “dual learning” has been fully implemented in Flanders. It has replaced the two existing apprenticeship schemes and encompasses selected professional fields which are now covered in technical and vocational upper secondary education programmes.

In Belgium, four organisations provide training in the field of apprenticeships for young people: SYNTRA Vlaanderen in Flanders and Brussels for the Dutch-speaking apprentices, SFPME/EFP in Brussels for the French-speaking apprentices, IFAPME in Wallonia and IAWM in the German-speaking Community. These structures are public bodies with a management committee composed of the regional social partners (sectorial and inter-sectorial) and Government commissioners. Only the SFPME is an integrated service within the French Community Commission administration in charge of vocational training for French-speaking trainees living in Brussels. The training centres are mostly non-profit organisations. They all work with sectorial and professional representatives to keep in touch with the world of self-employed people and enterprises. Apprentices are allowed to enter and to remain within this system if they are between 15 (after completion of the first two years of secondary education) and 25 (and up to 30 in the German-speaking Community).

In the French-speaking part/institutions operating in French, outside the formal VET programmes offered by schools, regional dual training services organise apprenticeship programmes to learners aged 15 to 25. These programmes follow the alternation scheme of one day or two days in the training centre under the umbrella of regional apprenticeships and entrepreneurial training providers where they receive general, technical, theoretical and practical courses and three or four days in a company based on a contract.

In the Dutch-speaking part/institutions operating in Dutch, adults over 18 can choose among a wide range of programmes offered by the formal adult education system and by public and private VET providers, such as the training centres of SYNTRA. On other features it is very similar to the system in the French-speaking part/institutions operating in French.

Outside the formal education system, too, the adult education system offers formal education programmes at all levels and includes the same qualifications as in the “regular”, i.e., formal education system. It also offers specific qualifications which are only available in this system. Programmes follow a modular approach and courses offer a flexible time schedule. The adult education system is accessible to all adults irrespective of initial educational career and so is the main reskilling, upskilling and second-chance mechanism of the formal education system.

From age 18, too, qualifications may be validated through a skills centre to obtain a qualification certificate. Certified apprentices can progress to entrepreneurial or to leading and coordinating training programmes offered by regional dual training services to adults from age 18 onwards. Validation of adults' prior learning (formal/ informal/non-formal) is well developed in Belgium and offered to job-seekers and workers, as well as to adult and higher education learners.

Within the public VET provider structures of all Communities, specific needs can be addressed, and appropriate implementation decisions taken, e.g., in view of specific training pathways or targeted activities.

1.1 Rate of employed apprentices in training centres and companies / unemployment rates with general focus on persons with disabilities

In 2019, 56% of pupils in upper secondary education in Belgium were enrolled in vocational education. On average across Belgium, within vocational education, the share of apprentices was just over 6%.

Number of students in secondary vocational and part-time system education (2014-2015): Dutch-speaking: Total VET students: 172,026; Technical: 89,119; Vocational: 74,100; Part-time system: 8,807 – French-speaking: Total VET students: 121,117; Technical: 54,531; Vocational: 57,406; Part-time system: 9,180 – German-speaking: Total VET students: 1,623; Technical: 910; Vocational: 713; Part-time system: 38

Number of young people enrolled in apprenticeships and with entrepreneurship training providers (2010/2011 vs. 2014/2015): Flanders and Brussels/Dutch-speaking: a) Apprenticeships: 4,229 vs. 3,227; b) Entrepreneurial training: 28,924 vs. 34,683 – Wallonia & Brussels/French-speaking a) Apprenticeships: 5,238 vs. 5,043; b) Entrepreneurial training: 7,772 vs. 16,484 – German-Speaking Community: a) Apprenticeships: 4,229 vs. 3,227; b) Entrepreneurial training: 984 vs. 1,487.

Rate of employed apprentices in training centres and companies (2014/2015): On the basis of both data sets above this rate can be estimated to 21,8% in of those in Dutch-speaking, 17,5% of those in French-speaking and 74% of those in German-speaking VET institutions/systems or enterprises compared to all of those in one system/form of VET. In 2016/2017, in Wallonia & the French-speaking institutions in Brussels, approximately 6.4% of learners in upper secondary vocational education and 13% of learners in vocational training are in “formation en alternance”. In Flanders and the Dutch-speaking institutions in Brussels this share was below 10% in the same school year.

Unemployment rate for those below 25 years (2015): Belgium: Total: 22.1%; Male: 23.8%; Female: 20.0% – Flanders: Total: 15.2%; Male: 16.5%; Female: 13.5% – Wallonia Total: 32.2%; Male: 34.4%; Female: 29.2% – Brussels: Total: 36.2%; Male: 38.4%; Female: 33.5%. These rates are considerably higher than the unemployment rates for the population in working age (15 to 64 years) which in 2015 was 8.6% for Belgium, 5.2% for Flanders, 12.0% for Wallonia and 17.5% for Brussels.

In December 2021, the unemployment rate of those aged 15 to 24 in Belgium was 14.8%.

Unemployment rate of PwD: In 2018, 9% of 15-64-year-old persons in Belgium have a disability or health problem that severely limits their daily activities. 23% of them have a job. 51% of these jobs are adapted to their specific needs. The employment rate of people with disabilities (aged 20-64) stood at 31.6%. The type and volume of tasks required is adapted for one third of severely restricted workers (34% and 32% respectively), 13% receive assistance from colleagues and 9% have adapted equipment. More than one in four (27%) non-employed people with disabilities indicated that they would be able to work if they had some accommodation for the type of work (hence the importance of publicising reasonable accommodation with sanctions in case of non-compliance). In the sub-category of severely disabled unemployed workers, 57% felt that the type of tasks should be adapted to them for them to find a job.

A third thought that the amount of work should also be adjusted so that they can work again. 79% of those who are severely restricted had a recognition of their status by an official body. In 2021, the unemployment rate of PwD aged 15 to 64 was 7.3% compared to the general unemployment rate of 5.6%. However, only 28% are employed whereas the vast majority (72%) of people who are severely restricted in their activities are inactive. This means that they do not have a job, are not looking for one and/or are not available for work.

1.3 Apprenticeship contracts: nature and length, possibility of ending the contract, where to find offers, working hours and salary etc.

Apprenticeship in Flanders, Brussels, Wallonia, and the German-speaking Community is available to young people as of the age of 15 years.

In Wallonia and French-speaking institutions/systems in Brussels, learners have the status of apprentice and receive a wage indexed to the minimum wage. The guaranteed monthly minimum wage in Belgium on 1 March 2022 is 1,725.21€. In the dual system (i.e., for apprentices with a “*contrat d’alternance*”) the wage is set at 17% (293.29€), 24% (414.05€) and 32% (525.07€) for the skill levels A, B and C (see below, next paragraph). For those in an industrial apprenticeship, the wage level varies between 64% (15 years) and 100% of the guaranteed monthly minimum wage, going up by 6 percent points each year (i.e., achieving 82% or 1,104,12€ at the age of 18, e.g., and in a full-time apprenticeship and half of this amount – as for all other years, too – for those apprentices in a part-time apprenticeship).

In addition, her/his parents are entitled to family allowances up to the age of 25 of an apprentice (if her/his remuneration stays below a maximum monthly amount, as of 1 January 2022 687.68€). After the successful completion of the first year of apprenticeship the company receives a bonus of 750€ from the public authority, after the successful completion of the apprenticeship the apprentice receives a bonus of 750€. This type of apprenticeship leads to qualifications which will be at EQF levels 3 and 4 once the harmonisation with the Belgian National Qualifications Framework is being concluded.

The contract lasts in general three years. It is accompanied by a training plan which includes information on the content, the program as well as objectives related to the skills to be acquired. Three levels of qualifications are foreseen (A, B and C), reflecting progression of the apprentice throughout her/his training. The learners involved in dual training receive an allowance from the company in which they are trained. The amount is progressive, in view of the level of qualifications reached. The remuneration to which apprentices are entitled is stated in the contract, determined by reference to skill levels A, B or C.

In 2015 a reform was enacted to simplify, harmonise and to ease the apprentices’ mobility. It introduced a new common contract – “*contrat d’alternance*” – that ensures equal treatment of all apprentices whatever the training operator may be (in terms of rights and obligations, wages, etc). This was completed with the reforms at federal level on the common status for apprentices and the precise definition of what an apprenticeship and apprentices are. It refers to any person who, in the context of a work-linked training course, is bound to an employer by a contract and meets 6 conditions:

the training consists of a part carried out in the workplace ('work') and a part carried out within or on the initiative and under the responsibility of an educational or training establishment

(study). These two parts together aim at the execution of a single training plan and, to this end, are mutually agreed and alternate regularly.

1. the training leads to a professional qualification.
2. the work part provides, on an annual basis, for an average working time of at least 20 hours per week, without considering holidays and holidays.
3. the study part comprises, on an annual basis at least 240 hours of instruction for young people subject to compulsory part-time education and at least 150 hours for young people who are no longer subject to compulsory schooling.
4. Both parts (work/study) are carried out within the framework of and covered by a contract to which the employer and the young person are parties.
5. The contract provides for a financial remuneration to be paid by the employer, which is to be considered as remuneration.

In Flanders (and the Dutch-speaking institutions/systems in Brussels), depending on the contract they sign, apprentices may have the apprenticeship status and an Alternation Training Contract receive and receive allowance or have the status of an employee and receive a salary. In the latter case the amount is fixed by collective agreements. In the first case it is a share of the guaranteed monthly minimum wage at 29% for year 1 (on 1 January 2022: 500.30€), 32% for year 2 (552.06€) and 34.5% for year 3 (595.20€). The financing of the remuneration (for those acquiring work experience in companies, not as part of training projects provided by public training services) is provided by both the employer and sectoral funds, but tax reductions and subsidies are available through sectoral funds and government provisions. The calculation of the company's profit for tax purposes may be reduced by 20% of the salary costs of the apprentice. Employers also receive 500€ annually in the first and second year of the dual learning and 750€ in the third year. Finally, specific social security contribution reductions apply to mentors/supervisors of apprentices. This form of apprenticeship leads to qualifications at ISCED levels 2, 3 and 4. The rhythm is a minimum of 20 hours per week in the company if the apprentice has a so-called "alternation training contract" and a maximum of 20 hours per week if the apprentice has a so-called "alternation internship contract".

Since 1 September 2016 there are but two kinds of agreements for pupils in the current system of learning and working and future system of dual learning: (a) the agreement alternating training applies to all youngsters who are trained at the workplace for at least 20 hours a week. It determines the rights and duties of the parties involved, the way in which an agreement can be terminated, liability, remunerations, and holidays; (b) the agreement alternating internship applies to all youngsters who are trained in a company for less than 20 hours a week. The modalities are like the agreement alternating training, except for holidays and remunerations.

In the German-speaking Community, the apprentice signs a contract that gives her/him the employee status. As such, the apprentices receive a progressive bonus fixed by the government. The financing of this remuneration is provided by both the employer and sectoral funds. The minimum hourly rate of presence in the company is 24 hours per week. At the end

of the successful completion of the training, the apprentice receives a certificate of level ISCED 4 in the Belgian national certification framework, the so-called “apprenticeship certification” (“*Gesellenzeugnis*”).

1.3 How are apprenticeship contracts generally funded?

Funding of apprenticeship contracts

See also below for the financing of the training system and for the remuneration by the employer.

Funding of vocational training

In Wallonia and French-speaking institutions/systems in Brussels, the financing of vocational training is provided by the budget of the Walloon Region, contributions from the European Social Fund and contributions from companies to training costs. The French Community bears the overall costs for the schools. It pays for teachers’ salaries and provides operating grants to the subsidised schools. Funding is based on the number of regular registered students and number of training units; educational aspects are also supervised. The funding formula is the same in both technical and vocational as in general education. However, it includes a variable that favours the qualifying over general education. The level of funding per learner thus varies from 25% (technical education) to 15% (vocational education). 10% of the operating expenses are allocated based on the learners’ socioeconomic characteristics.

In Flanders (and the Dutch-speaking institutions/systems in Brussels), the funding of vocational training is provided by the by the Flemish government and employee contributions. A part of the operational resources education budget is first of all used to fund the objective differences between the schools; a further share is allocated based on the pupils’ social characteristics, as is the case in Wallonia and French-speaking institutions/systems in Brussels with the principle of positive discrimination of schools in deprived areas. The subsidies allocated to training providers in the field of adult education are based on the number of hours spent on training hours. These grants range from 0.75 euros to 1.90 euros per hour of trainee training. The trainees cover the costs of their training themselves by paying registration and/or training fees to the providers. However, they may benefit from reimbursement from the government.

In the German-speaking Community, the funding of vocational training is provided by the by the community government. The subsidies allocated to training providers depends on the number of learners enrolled and the duration of their training. The equipment of these schools is partly or fully financed by the public authority. The VET centres for the on-the-job-trainees are partly publicly funded (according to the number of students and duration (number of training hours) and partly self-funded by fees for trainings (entrepreneurship) and LLL programmes for self-employed / independent workers.

1.4 What are the usual steps towards signing an apprenticeship contract (links with employers and training centres)

In principle, the candidate/young person who wants to sign an apprentice contract must find a training company that is willing to take her/him.

She/he, however, can also ask for help from the mentor (*“délégué a la tutelle”*, literally “guardianship delegate”) of a training centre of the small and medium-sized enterprises. The role of the guardianship delegate/supervisory officer is to inform, guide and supervise the person who wants to conclude an apprenticeship contract. As an intermediary for any apprenticeship contract or traineeship agreement the mentor takes care of the administrative aspects, such as compiling the parties' files, documents for family allowances, etc.

The mentor in charge of your vocational training centre draws up the apprenticeship contract, has it signed by you and the company and informs you of your respective rights and duties. In addition to the apprenticeship contract, the mentor asks the apprentice to sign a training plan, i.e., a sort of guide listing all the skills the apprentice will/must acquire throughout your training for the chosen profession. It is important because it will enable the mentor and the tutor/supervisor for the apprentice in the company to assess the development of her/his skills and therefore the remuneration category of the apprentice.

1.5 Possibility to get an official recognition of worker with disability

In the employment/labour market context, a person can apply for a certification of incapacity to work of at least 33% at the Public Employment Service which is determined by a doctor and approved by the approved by the Public Employment Service.

To encourage the employment of workers with disabilities, the Walloon Government has adopted decrees concerning the obligation to employ disabled people in the public services, namely 2.5% of their workforce as of 31 December of the previous year.

In order to get this recognition for benefits from the social security system, an online questionnaire needs to be filled in. Support can be asked by a social worker. The family doctor/specialist physician is requested by the responsible administration to share relevant medical data to evaluate the level and form of disability. The impact of the disability on the ability to carry out daily activities ('independence') is evaluated alongside six categories/activities: 1) getting around; 2) cooking and eating; 3) grooming and dressing; 4) maintaining your home and doing household chores; 5) assessing and avoiding danger; 6) maintaining contact with other people. The maximum number of points per criterion is 3: 0 points = no difficulties; 1 point = little difficulty; 2 points = great difficulty; 3 points = impossible without help from others.

1.6 Specific adjustments for persons with disability during an apprenticeship contract

What is clear that there is a range of support measures/services for the apprentices with a disability and for their employers available. It is thus likely that, as in France, certain rules of the apprenticeship contract are/can be adapted (such as the duration of the contract, course of the training, adaptation of the workplace and of equipment, etc.)

2. Procedures in the support of apprenticeships contracts

2.1 Financial aids for work adaptations for people with disabilities

In case the cost for a “reasonable accommodation” implies financial difficulties/burdens for the company/organisation, the employer can turn to the competent public authorities which offer advice and inform about financial support measures according to the adaptation needs. The general conditions for a “reasonable accommodation” also apply for apprentices/apprenticeship contracts.

In Belgium, there is an obligation for the employer to provide for a “reasonable accommodation” which includes adaptations, material or organisational, to enable workers to carry out their tasks. This obligation applies also for the recruitment process where the law again requires that reasonable accommodations be made to ensure that disabled applicants are treated equivalent to the other applicants. These adaptations can be made with support from a prevention adviser or by an (internal or external) prevention service.

2.2 Financial participation for training centres welcoming apprentices with disabilities

The employers can get the following financial support measures: 1) Financial support to cover the additional costs related to the disability of a worker/apprentice for an adaptation of the equipment and the workplace; 2) Compensation Premium (see below); 3) Tutoring Bonus (see below); 4) Integration premium (for max. one year): Reimbursement of 25% of the remuneration of a worker to be paid by the company for a disabled worker who has not worked for at least six months in the previous nine months. These interventions can be cumulated with aid granted by other public authorities (e.g., reductions in social security contributions).

Employers can also get a tax reduction of 40% for the learning compensations (considered as work-related expenses) paid to the apprentice.

Professional/vocational rehabilitation (beyond apprenticeships): Those in training can receive training allowances in accredited centres for training and socio-professional integration preparing for 30 professions.

Taking the example of Wallonia and the French-speaking institutions in Brussels, the “*Centre d’Education et de formation en Alternance*” (CEFA) employ within a multidisciplinary team an “Special Education Officer” (“*Agent d’éducation*”) to accompany and support beneficiaries of the service in the training centre, work environment and life by promoting their personal development and/or their social adaptation. The job is carried out for different target groups, including young PwD, adolescents needing social support in the framework of the child and youth welfare, outside-school support and adults needing special support.

2.3 Support for employers welcoming apprentices with disabilities. Focus on differences between public / private sector.

N.B.: The following information concerns only Brussels (and there French-speaking part only, i.e., institutions and programmes operating in French). It focuses on the offers of the Public Employment Services. Similar information for the other regions – i.e., Flanders and Wallonia, but also for the services offered and the provisions in place for the public Employment Service of the German-speaking Community (ADG) – would need to be researched and checked. Information on the support measures which employers offering VET to apprentices with disabilities can get still need to be researched/found.

Offer by the Public Employment Services

The Brussels Qualification Plan 2020 (“*Bruxelles Plan Formation 2020*”) for the period 2014-2020 foresees a doubling of the number of people with disabilities in training or in validation of a qualification. Since 2018, the *Handstreaming Project* for the training and support of people with disabilities is being implemented.

It covers several aspects/initiatives: 1) Raising awareness and communicating with training professionals on the issue of people with disabilities; 2) The design and implementation of a process for dealing with requests and needs for reasonable accommodation in the training pathways in order to ensure a secure pathway for this group; 3) Improving the accessibility of training centres for people with reduced mobility; 4) Reinforcement of the “trampoline system/service” (*système/service tremplin*), providing specialised support by the disability sector and dedicated staff for the adaptation of test procedures, ongoing adaptations, the follow-up of those in training; 5) Increasing the offer accessible of vocational training to people with disabilities.

To implement this project, different working groups have been set up and meet regularly: 1) Awareness raising; 2) Communication; 3) Disability Network; and 4) Training the trainers. The latter has a) worked on an inventory of existing training offers, b) contacted different actors in the field of training for people with disabilities to collect their experiences and c) identified a resource person to design a training scheme adapted to the needs of PwD.

When it comes to the offer of vocational training for PwD, Bruxelles Formation acts on two fronts: on the one hand, it aims at making the "classic" VET offer more inclusive to enable a greater number of PwD to take part in these courses. On the other hand, it offers its support to operators working in the field of specific training for PwD. Since 2018, an additional call for to offer such trainings/VET has been launched for specialised operators.

A vocational training support project subsidised by the European Social Fund (ESF) carried out in partnership with other services started in 2012. It offers specific and personalised psychopedagogical support for people with disabilities before, during and after a vocational training course. The average duration of the support is 1.5 years and is provided by professionals of four support services working in close cooperation with the training centres and with the "trampoline system/service".

Support measures which employers offering VET to apprentices with disabilities can get

There are different support measures for employers: 1) Financial support to cover the additional costs related to the disability of a worker/apprentice for an adaptation of the equipment and the workplace; 2) Compensation Premium: An intervention in the wage cost is granted to the company to compensate for the possible additional cost of the measures it takes to enable the worker to perform his or her duties, if these measures are related to a disability/reduced working capacity. It is granted for a maximum of five years and is renewable; 3) Tutoring Bonus: A bonus of 750€ per quarter (for maximum two quarters) is granted to a company/organisation which appoints a tutor to welcome and support the new worker. However, the latter measure does likely not apply for apprentices, given its objectives and the focus of a recruitment of a new worker. These interventions can be cumulated with aid granted by other public authorities (e.g., reductions in social security contributions).

See "Are there financial aids for work adaptations for people with disabilities?"

2.4 Where to find key information?

For the vocational education and training system mainly on the webpages on the responsible administrations (see below), but also in publications of CEDEFOP and the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education. For the apprenticeship system(s) on webpages and in publications of the responsible national institutions or agencies (see also below).

2.5 Which administration is responsible?

The Flemish, Walloon and Brussels Regions oversee vocational training and employment. Four regional public training services (VDAB, Bruxelles Formation, FOREM and ADG for Flanders, Brussels, Wallonia, and the German-speaking community) regulate vocational training provisions.

2.6 Any other relevant information or source?

Information on funding of training measures for jobseekers in the framework of recognised vocational training programmes

Within the framework of a recognised vocational training programme (organised by the four competent public services for vocational training, i.e., VDAB, Bruxelles Formation, FOREM, ADG), jobseekers receive free training, they continue to receive unemployment benefits, and in certain instances a training allowance and reimbursement of some travel costs and childcare costs during the training period

An individual vocational training agreement within a company (called, e.g., in Brussels, “*Contrat de Formation Professionnelle Individuelle/FPI*”) is offered to jobseekers that benefit from practical training within a company, by signing a tripartite agreement with the regional employment service and the employer. The term is between one and a maximum of six months, with a possible extension of up to 12 months being granted for young underqualified people. The employer is obliged to recruit the trainee at the end of the training programme, under a contract for a term that is at least equal to the duration of the FPI.

Bulgaria

1. Overview on the history and organisation of apprenticeship and the VET sector in Belgium

Definition in Bulgaria: Apprenticeship implies a course of training in the workplace, in which the apprentice undergoes training for a fixed duration of the contract, where he or she acquires specific skills necessary for a particular trade and profession. In apprenticeship training, the trainee learns and earns at the same time. The training can be part-time or fulltime, depending on the terms of the contract. Apprenticeship training is a part of vocational education and training.

In Bulgaria, vocational education and vocational training can also be carried out through training, through work (dual system of training), which is organized under the terms and conditions of the Vocational Education and Training Act. "Learning through work" is a concept legally defined in the Vocational Education and Training Act. The VETA also defines the conditions that employers must meet, through which the dual system of training is implemented, as well as other conditions in connection with the employment contract with a condition for training during work.

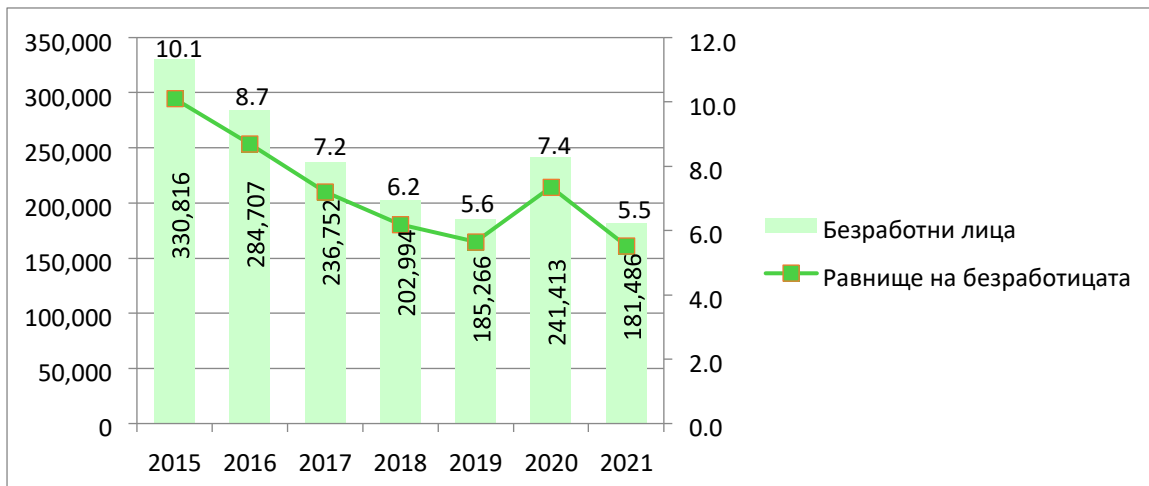
1.1 Rate of employed apprentices in training centres and companies / unemployment rates with general focus on persons with disabilities

In 2021, the employment programs and measures implemented by the Employment Agency, subsidized by the State Budget or the ESF, provided employment to 3,226 unemployed persons with disabilities, and another 3713 were employed through the direct assistance and mediation of the employment offices, labour at the Employment Agency.

Unemployment rates: general and focus on people with disabilities:

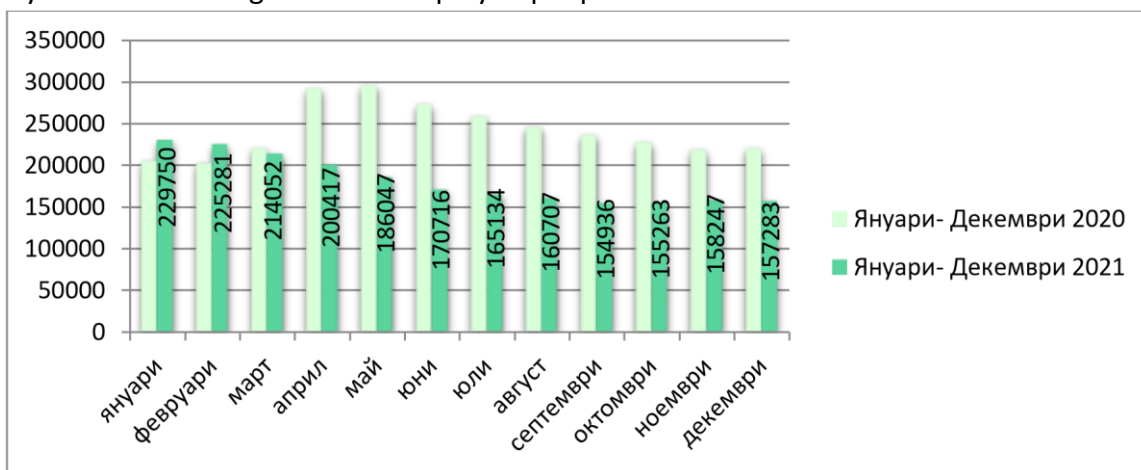
Data from the administrative statistics of the Employment Agency for 2021 show that the number of registered unemployed and the unemployment rate are declining throughout the country. The achieved average monthly unemployment rate for the period January - December 2021 is 5.5% (compared to 7.4% for the period January - December 2020) and is historically the lowest reported average monthly level on an annual basis.

Number of registered unemployed and unemployment rate for the last seven years.



The average monthly number of registered unemployed („Безработни лица“) in the directorates "Labor Office" (LBT) for the period January - December 2021 is 181 486, and compared to the same period last year, there is a decrease in absolute number, expressed in 24 , 8%.

Dynamics of the registered unemployed people.



The comparison with the same period of 2020 shows that for 2021 there is a tendency to reduce the average monthly number of registered unemployed in all observed vulnerable groups in the labour market.

In 2021 the average monthly number, on an annual basis, of the registered unemployed in the Employment Agency with established type and degree of disability is 11,996 persons, compared to the same period in 2020 their number decreases by 432 persons, or the decrease is by 3.5%. At the same time, their relative share in the overall structure of the unemployed reported an increase of 1.5 percentage points. compared to the period January-December 2020, settling at 6.6% of the total population of registered unemployed. The table below presents the data on the dynamics of the average annual number of registered unemployed and unemployed with disabilities for the last 5 years. It shows that with a decrease in the total number of registered unemployed, the share of registered people with disabilities increases.

This can be explained by the slower and lower employment transitions of people from this target group due to the existing barriers to their integration into the labor market.

Average annual number of registered unemployed and unemployed persons with disabilities for the last 5 years

Indicators	Year				
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Average annual number of registered unemployed people	236 752	202 994	185 266	241 413	181 486
People with disabilities	13 466	13 628	11 873	12 428	11 996
Share of people with disabilities %	5,7	6,7	6,4	5,1	6,6

1.3 Apprenticeship contracts: nature and length, possibility of ending the contract, where to find offers, working hours and salary etc.

Apprenticeship contracts, according to the labour legislation, are employment contracts under the Labour Code, which also regulates the possibilities for grounds, type, duration and other parameters. The closest in essence is the employment contract under Art. 230 of the Labour Code - Employment contract for training during work, through which the employer is obliged to train the employee in the process of work in a particular profession or specialty, and the employee - to master it. With the contract the parties also determine the term during which the employee is obliged to work for the employer after the successful completion of the training, and the employer - to provide him with work in accordance with the acquired qualification. This period may not exceed 3 years.

Provision by the Employer to the Employer of funds from the State Budget for each job created where he is employed for apprenticeship under full-time or part-time employment for a period of not less than 6 months, directed by the Employer unemployed person, under the conditions of Art. 55 of the EPA.

The announcements are public, through the Employment Agency, according to Article 55 of the Employment Promotion Act for: Encouraging employers to hire unemployed persons with primary or lower education and no qualification for apprenticeship.

1.3 How are apprenticeship contracts generally funded?

The Employment Promotion Act subsidizes the employment of unemployed persons, including those with permanent disabilities, through several programs and measures to promote employment, some of which are in practice different forms of apprenticeships, as they provide on-the-job training under the guidance of a mentor, apprenticeship / work under the guidance of a mentor or parallel work and training for qualification. For example:

Art. 41a of the EPA - Encouraging the employment of unemployed young people with primary and lower education and without qualification for apprenticeship under the guidance of a mentor by providing funds for wages, social and health insurance, covering the costs of salaries and insurance for up to 6 months for the unemployed and up to 12 months for mentors; In 2021, this measure provided employment to a total of 26 young people with disabilities.

Art. 46a of the EPA - Encouraging the creation of jobs for training through work (dual system of training) by providing funds for wages, social and health insurance, funds for vocational training and funds for mentoring, funding training, salaries and insurance to the employee and to the mentor for the time of parallel work and training, but not more than 36 months; In 2021, this measure provided employment to a total of 80 unemployed people with disabilities;

Art. 55d of the EPA - Encouraging employers to create apprenticeships by providing funds for wages, social and health insurance to the unemployed person for a period of 6 months and to the mentor - up to 12 months. In 2021, this measure provided employment to a total of 58 unemployed, 3 of whom with permanent disabilities.

1.4 What are the usual steps towards signing an apprenticeship contract (links with employers and training centres)

The apprenticeship contract is concluded based on the provisions of the Labour Code.

Provision by the Assignor to the Employer of funds from the State Budget for each job created where he is employed for apprenticeship under full-time or part-time employment for a period of not less than 6 months, directed by the Employer unemployed person, under the conditions of Art. 55 of the EPA.

1.5 Possibility to get an official recognition of worker with disability

The Regulation on the Procedure for Reporting, Registering, Confirming, Appealing and Reporting Occupational Diseases determines the procedure for reporting, registering, confirming, appealing, and reporting on occupational diseases.

1.6 Specific adjustments for persons with disability during an apprenticeship contract

An employer who maintains the employment of the unemployed person hired for apprenticeship for an additional period equal to the subsidy period under item 3 shall be provided with funds under item 2 for the mentor and for the additional period during which the mentor continues to train the apprenticed person.

The funds under item 1 shall be paid monthly for each person employed by the Employer for apprenticeship under the conditions of Art. 55 years of EPA, for the time during which he was at work, but for not more than 6 months. The employment of the persons involved is financed until the acquisition of the right to a pension for insurance length of service and age or to an occupational pension for early retirement.

The funds under item 2 shall be paid monthly for the training performed by the mentor to the person hired for apprenticeship, but for not more than 6 months, and under the conditions of item 2.1 - for not more than 12 months.

Annually with the National Action Plan for Employment the funds under para. 1 and their amount under the individual programs and measures for promotion of employment, which may be different for parts of the period of employment subsidies.

2. Procedures in the support of apprenticeships contracts

2.1 Financial aids for work adaptations for people with disabilities

<https://www.mlsp.government.bg/natsionalna-programa-za-dostpna-zhilishchna-sreda-ilichna-mobilnost> - employment programs for people with disabilities

National Employment Program for People with Disabilities

Every year, the Agency for People with Disabilities / AHU / announces a competition under a national employment program for people with disabilities, according to Article 44, paragraph 1 of the Law on People with Disabilities.

This program aims to encourage and support employers from a normal working environment to create employment conditions for people with permanent disabilities, including the fulfilment of quota obligations; it is aimed at people with permanent disabilities, as employment in a normal work environment leads to the fastest socialization of people with permanent disabilities.

This program provides funding for the following areas of action, tentatively called components:

1. Ensuring access to existing or new jobs created for people with permanent disabilities of working age.
2. Adaptation of existing jobs for people with permanent disabilities of working age.
3. Equipping new workplaces for people with permanent disabilities of working age, corresponding to the nature of their illness.
4. Qualification and re-qualification, respectively training for professional and professional development.

2.2 Financial participation for training centres welcoming apprentices with disabilities

"Learning through work" is a concept legally defined in the Vocational Education and Training Act. The VETA also defines the conditions that employers must meet, through which the dual system of training is implemented, as well as other conditions in connection with the employment contract with a condition for training during work.

According to the rules of art. 17a, para. 1 of the VETA training through work (dual system of training) is a specific form of training for acquiring professional qualification, which is organized based on partnership, including on the basis of a contract, between one or several employers and:

1. an institution in the system of vocational education and training, with the exception of information and vocational guidance centres, or
2. secondary school, profiled high school or theological school, when they provide professional training.

On-the-job training (dual training system) includes:

1. practical training in a real work environment, and
2. training in the respective institution under art. 17a, para. 1, item 1 or 2 of the VETA.

Training through work (dual system of training) is organized and carried out in accordance with this law, the Labour Code and an ordinance issued by the Minister of Education and Science in coordination with the Minister of Labour and Social Policy.

According to the new provisions of Art. 17a1, para. 1 of the VETA, the practical training with an employer in a real work environment, is conducted in the enterprise under the guidance of a mentor appointed by the employer.

2.3 Support for employers welcoming apprentices with disabilities. Focus on differences between public / private sector.

There is an annual support - with the National Action Plan for Employment the funds under para. 1 and their amount under the individual programs and measures for promotion of employment, which may be different for parts of the period of employment subsidies.

2.4 Where to find key information?

At the official web page of MLSP <https://www.mlsp.government.bg/khora-s-uvrezhdaniya>
Employment Agency: <https://www.az.government.bg/>
People with Disability Agency: <https://ahu.mlsp.government.bg>

2.5 Which administration is responsible?

The Employment Agency

The Ministry of Economy has created and maintains an information database for the employers who meet the requirements under Art. 17a3, for participation in partnerships for implementation of training through work (dual system of training).

(2) The information database under para. 1 is publicly available through the website of the Ministry of Economy.

2.6 Any other relevant information or source?

Spain

1. Overview on the history and organisation of apprenticeship and the VET sector in Spain

Official definition of apprenticeship in Spain

In Spain, the term used for “apprenticeship” is “dual vocational education and training” (Formación Profesional Dual). It is defined in legislation as “training actions and initiatives, combining employment and training, that aim at workers’ professional qualification in a regime that alternates work activity in a company and vocational education and training delivered by the education system or the employment system”, i.e. respectively the Ministry of Education (central o region departments) or the Ministry of Employment (central o region departments).

The scheme Dual VET in Spain can be implemented through two sub-schemes:

- The “apprenticeship” contract in VET or in the employment system for occupational qualifications (called professional certificates in the country and scheme fiche of this database), where learners have the status of employees, with a salary.
- A “cooperation agreement” between a company, training centre and the learner, only in the education system. Learners are not considered employees and they only receive a grant, allowance or scholarship.

Legal basis for apprenticeships in Spain

Royal Decree 1529/2012, of November 8, on the apprenticeships contracts and laying out the foundations of the dual vocational training system. This Royal Decree established a framework for the development of projects of dual vocational training. Dual vocational training as such did not exist until that year, and it has been since then progressively introduced through projects developed by the Autonomous Communities (regions). The 2012 Royal Decree regulates key aspects of Dual vocational training such as (not a complete list):

- The basic content of the training programme: curriculum, training activities, their length, evaluation and grading criteria.
- The minimum number of hours to be spent in a company.

- The minimum information that needs to be included in the agreement between the training centre and the company (training programme, number of participants, allowance, number of hours and distribution of training hours between company and training centre, etc.).

This Royal Decree also regulates the ‘apprenticeship contract’ which can be used in dual vocational training.

A different regulation (Order ESS/2518/2013) regulates aspects only related to the schoolbased learning period that is mandatory for the apprentice in order to obtain the qualification.

Autonomous Communities further regulate dual vocational training in their territory.

The regulations mentioned above apply to all dual vocational training.

Legislation has been introduced at national level creating dual VET and as such the scheme can be considered a mainstream initiative. However, programmes based on the dual model have been implemented by the different Autonomous Communities (<http://todofp.es/sobrefp/informacion-general/formacion-profesional-dual/proyectos-fp-dual-espana.html>)

Organisation of the apprenticeship scheme in Spain

Vocational education and training (VET) is mainly the responsibility of education and employment authorities, and Apprenticeship VET is part of the Spanish VET. The national system for qualifications and vocational training is the umbrella for VET programmes, leading to formal qualifications awarded by either the education or employment authorities. The General Council for Vocational Training is the national government advisory body on VET policy; it comprises representatives of national and regional public authorities as well as the social partners (enterprises and trade unions). Stakeholders are involved in designing and updating VET qualifications in line with labour market needs. They develop occupational standards in all sectors of the economy, which make up the national register (CNCP) and are used as reference for designing and updating VET programmes and qualifications.

VET qualifications can be acquired through dual VET.

Since 2014 all the Autonomous Communities (Regions) have programmes delivered in this modality.

The background to the development of Apprenticeship VET (the ‘apprenticeship contract’ and the cooperation agreement) includes:

- A previous regulation on qualifications (Organic Act 5/2002, of June 19 on qualifications and vocational education and training) that indicates the need to further promote the cooperation of companies with the qualifications and VET system, by facilitating professional

practical learning of learners in companies. It also calls for the development of mechanisms to allow public funding to be allocated to education centres or directly to companies through agreements or other procedures.

- A previous regulation on Education (Organic Law of Education 2/2006 of 3 May) also included a work-based learning period in a company in regular VET programmes.

- A previous regulation to promote youth employment (Royal Decree-Law 10/2011, of August 26). This legislation modified the formerly called 'training contracts' to the current 'apprenticeship contract'. This type of contract aims at promoting young people's access to employment and training through an alternance scheme.

It should be noted that all VET programmes foresee an on-the-job learning period anyway.

Sources:

- Royal Decree 1529/2012:
- www.boe.es/boe/dias/2015/10/24/pdfs/BOE-A-2015-11431.pdf
- Ministry of Education and VET: - estadisticas.mecd.gob.es/EducaJaxiPx/Datos.htm?path=/Educacion/Alumnado/FP/2016-2017RD/Dual//I0/&file=Dual12.px&type=pcaxis
- Public Service for Governmental Employment (SEPE): www.sepe.es
- Ministry of Education and VET:
- www.educacionyfp.gob.es
- www.educacionyfp.gob.es/servicios-al-ciudadano/estadisticas/nouniversitaria/alumnado/formacion-profesional/2016-2017.html
- Cedefop and Refernet Spain:
- www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/4168_en_es.pdf
- todofp.es/sobre-fp/informacion-general/formacion-profesional-dual/proyectos-fpdual-espana.html

1.1 Rate of employed apprentices in training centres and companies / unemployment rates with general focus on persons with disabilities

Regarding the share of apprentices enrolled in the apprenticeship scheme in relation to all VET students for the corresponding educational level, data is available only for students with a cooperation agreement in the education system. Beneficiaries of apprenticeship contracts are also outside the VET system (for occupational qualifications at sectoral level).

During 2016/2017 school year a total of 791.385 students were in the “VET system” (where apprenticeship contracts are used) and in the “education system” (where cooperation agreements are used).

- Basic VET: 69.528
- Intermediate VET: 343.920
- Higher VET: 377.937

With this data, 2.6% of learners were in dual VET from the total of learners in VET in the education system for the 2016/2017 school year.

According to the information published by the Servicio Público de Empleo Estatal (SEPE), during 2017 and 2018, a total of 121.120 “apprenticeship” contracts were signed between companies and young workers.

According to the information published by the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training in 2016/ 2017 school year there were 20.357 students in dual VET in the educational system in Spain.

- Basic VET: 414
- Intermediate VET: 7.422
- Higher VET: 12.521

Although Dual Vocational Training already exists in Spain since 2012, it has not yet had a great development, much less applied to people with disabilities. The success in other countries invite us to be optimistic about Dual Vocational Training though. In the Autonomous Communities where it has been launched, it also has high rates of employability, 70% in Catalonia and 80% in the Basque Country, for example. Even presenting these magnificent results, in Spain only 4% of students practice this modality, compared to an average of 17% in OECD countries.

Therefore, it is an enormous challenge to improve the employability of people with disabilities through this training modality. The business sector must overcome the barriers and limiting beliefs when it comes to hiring people with disabilities, and Dual Vocational Training is indeed one of the key tools of employability for people with disabilities.

Sources:

- Public Service for Government Employment (SEPE): www.sepe.es
- Ministry of Education and VET: <http://www.educacionyfp.gob.es/servicios-alciudadano/estadisticas/no-universitaria/alumnado/formacion-profesional/2016-2017.html>

1.3 Apprenticeship contracts: nature and length, possibility of ending the contract, where to find offers, working hours and salary etc.

Duration of the contract

All Dual VET training in education or employment system (cooperation agreement or apprenticeship contract) must be linked to a VET qualification programme (VET diploma or professional certificate).

The “apprenticeship” contract last between 1 and 3 years.

Types of contracts

There are two types of contracts: Apprenticeship contract or Cooperation agreement between training centres (schools) and companies.

- Apprenticeship contract: it is included under the Labour Code under formative contracts.
- Cooperation agreement between the school and the company: this is a formal agreement, not a labour contract.

The apprenticeship contract needs to be submitted to the public employment service at the Employment Office.

The cooperation agreement between the training centre (e.g., school) and the company must be authorized by the education authority (government of the Autonomous Community, or ministry of education in case of companies involved in a training project in several Autonomous Communities).

Minimum age to sign a contract

Apprenticeship training in Spain targets learners of minimum 15 years of age (who have turned or will turn 15 by the end of the year).

As a rule, the ‘apprenticeship contract’ can be signed with young people from 16 to 25 years old. However, the age limit (minimum and maximum) is not applicable in the case of people with disabilities, at risk of social exclusion, or in the case of learners participating in certain training programmes organised by the Public Employment Services under active labour market policies.

Students of Apprenticeship VET programs under a cooperation agreement in the education system must be 15 years old for enrolment (to start the training), but without a maximum age limit.

According to the information published by the Servicio Público de Empleo Estatal (SEPE), during 2017 and 2018 approximately half of the total of 121.120 “apprenticeship” contracts were held with young people, aged between 16 and 24 years old.

Nature of the contractual arrangement

Apprenticeship contract: it is included under the Labour Code under formative contracts.

Cooperation agreement between the school and the company: this is a formal agreement, not a labour contract.

Source Labour Code, Art. 11 Formative Contracts. Available at:

Signing of the contract

The company, training centre, or a body that the competent Spanish education or labour authority designates must sign the vocational training and apprenticeship contract and the relative annex to the training activity agreement to impart training and the worker. When the company directly provides the training, only the worker needs to sign the vocational training and apprenticeship contract. The vocational training and apprenticeship contract as well as the relative annex to the training activity agreement must formalize in the official forms that appear in electronic format on the Spanish Public Employment Service website (www.sepe.es).

Registration of the contract

Apprenticeship contract: the contract needs to be submitted to the public employment service at the Employment Office.

Cooperation agreement between the training centre (e.g. school) and the company: this agreement must be authorized by the education authority (government of the Autonomous Community, or ministry of education in case of companies involved in a training project in several Autonomous Communities).

Status of the learned as stated in the contract

Apprenticeship contract: employee.

Cooperation agreement between the training centre (school) and the company: student (trainee).

The spent on the training activity

The vocational training and apprenticeship contract must occur on a full-time basis, allocating part of the time to performing paid employment and the other part to receiving training related to the job position the worker occupies.

The time spent on training activity cannot be less than 25% during the first year or 15% during the second and third year of the maximum workday hours prescribed in the collective agreement or, in its absence, the maximum legal workday hours. The annual workday hours, not including vacation days, will serve as a reference to calculate the time spent on training activities.

When the parties agree to concentrate the training activity in fixed periods during the contract's enforcement, they must expressly state so in the training activity agreement.

Content of the training activity

The training activity of the vocational training and apprenticeship contract must be programmed according to the royal decrees that regulate each professional certificate or training cycle when the training activity is necessary to obtain an intermediate or superior vocational qualification diploma or a professional certificate, or, where appropriate, academic certification or partial cumulative accreditation.

When the training is for attaining a level 2 or level 3 professional certificates or vocational qualification, the training activity agreement must contain a relative declaration that the worker meets the requirements of access to the training as established in the corresponding regulation or legislation. This may be subject to verification through the competent public authorities that monitor and control the training activity.

In addition to the points expressed in the previous paragraph, the training activity may include complementary training associated with the needs of the company or the worker. This complementary training activity is not work, and the competent SPEE must authorize the start of the complementary training activity so that it may appear in the training activity agreement. This complementary training is not subject to public funding through reductions.

Sources:

- Refernet Spain:

cumulus.cedefop.europa.eu/files/vetelib/2019/Vocational_Education_Training_Europe_Spain_2018_Cedefop_ReferNet.pdf

1.3 How are apprenticeship contracts generally funded?

Apprenticeship contract between a company and an apprentice

Companies pay for the learner working hours. Pay is established by collective agreements and adjusted to the number of hours worked.

The public employment service finances training by:

- Providing training in its own training centres (National Reference Centres-Centros Nacionales de Referencia) or covering training costs of private authorized training centres.
- Reimbursing training costs for companies, in case training is provided by companies. The maximum costs are calculated by multiplying the number of training hours (25% of the work period in the first year and 15% in the second and third years) by 8 Euros (regular training) or 5 Euros (distance learning). There is also a reimbursement of costs concerning the tutoring hours of the company's tutor (1.5 euros per student and tutoring hour, with a maximum of 40 hours per month and learner). Reimbursement is done through reductions in companies' social security contributions.
- Allocating funds to Autonomous Communities and the ministry of education for training activities delivered by schools that fall under apprenticeship contracts.

Cooperation agreement between the school and the company

- The ministry of education funds the training provided by schools.
- The company covers the costs of the training provided at the company (e.g. tutoring time at the company).
- Companies can pay an allowance or a scholarship to the learner/student.
- Government and the Autonomous Communities can pay an allowance or a scholarship to the learner.
- Other entities can pay an allowance to the learner ('other entities' are not further defined).

Regardless of the instrument to implement dual VET (apprenticeship contract or cooperation agreement), EU funding can be allocated to training providers implementing dual education

projects. As an example, the Autonomous Community of Castile and Leon allocated funds from the European Social Fund and the Spanish ministry of education to grant-aided private schools developing different innovation projects in VET, including dual VET projects.

In the case of an “apprenticeship contract”, time devoted to work cannot be higher than 75% in the first year, and 85% in the second and third years, of the working hours established in the collective agreement or, if there is no such agreement, of the legal maximum working hours.

In the case of a “cooperation agreement” a minimum of 33% of the total of training hours established in the VET Diploma (Basic, Intermediate or Higher) are to be spent in a company. This percentage may be extended depending on the characteristics of each professional training module and the participating company.

Sources:

- Royal Decree 1529/2012; Order ESS/2518/2013; Order ESS/41/2015.
- Order EDU/926/2015 of October 26 (Castile and Leon).
-

1.4 What are the usual steps towards signing an apprenticeship contract (links with employers and training centres)

Authorizing the Start of the Training Activity

Before the signing of the vocational training and apprenticeship contract and its extensions, the Spanish Public Employment Service Office (SEPE) (in the autonomous community where the company’s workplace is located or where one company has several workplaces in more than one autonomous community) must authorize the start of the training activity. For this purpose, the company or the training centre that signs the training activity agreement must directly make the request, which must accompany the training activity agreement (in the Order, references to the company includes temporary work agencies).

The request processes through the Electronic Registry of the SEPE when the competence to grant authorization corresponds to the SEPE and the authorization does not come from the corresponding SEPE in the autonomous community. However, the authorizing of the start of the training activity is not necessary with contracts of this nature that subscribe to the framework of the actions and measures of Article 25.1 (d) of the Employment Act, which includes educational workshops, trade and employment workshops, and others subject to possible approval.

After the competent authority authorizes the training activity, either explicitly (within one month from the date of the agreement) or by administrative silence, the contract and the relative annex to the training activity agreement finalize. Both the company and the training centre must each have a copy of the agreement signed by both parties and available to competent supervising bodies.

According to the sixth additional provision of the Order, a complementing annex related to the training activity agreement is not required in contracts for vocational training and apprenticeship that subscribe to the framework of the actions and measures of Article 25.1 (d) of the Employment Act, which includes educational workshops, trade and employment workshops, and others subject to possible approval.

The company must communicate the formulization and finalization of the initial contract and its extensions to the corresponding Spanish Public Employment Service office within a maximum period of 10 days.

The Work Contract and Training Activity Agreement

The company, training centre, or a body that the competent Spanish education or labour authority designates must sign the vocational training and apprenticeship contract and the relative annex to the training activity agreement to impart training and the worker. When the company directly provides the training, only the worker needs to sign the vocational training and apprenticeship contract. The vocational training and apprenticeship contract as well as the relative annex to the training activity agreement must formalize in the official forms that appear in electronic format on the Spanish Public Employment Service website (www.sepe.es).

Source:

- Royal Decree 1529/2012

1.5 Possibility to get an official recognition of worker with disability

Through the apprenticeship contract sub-scheme, the learner/worker can obtain the following qualifications:

Educational Qualifications (Education system)

- Compulsory Secondary Education – Basic VET Programmes- Qualification: Basic Professional Diploma
- Upper Secondary Education-Intermediate VET programmes – Qualification: Technician Diploma

- Upper Secondary Education (Tertiary Level)- Higher VET programmes – Qualification: Higher/Advanced Technician Diploma

These qualifications are officially recognised as formal VET qualifications allowing access to the next education level. The pathway could be: Basic Professional Diploma-Technician Diploma-Higher Technician Diploma. Once the learner/worker has reached a “Higher Technician Diploma” he can continue to tertiary level, with Bachelor Programmes (University)

Occupational Qualifications (Employment system)

VET provided by labour administrations lead to Professional Certificates

- Professional Certificates Programmes-Level 1
- Professional Certificates Programmes –Level 2
- Professional Certificates Programmes –Level 3

These qualifications are officially recognised as formal VET qualifications allowing access from one level of a certificate to a superior one.

The educational qualifications can be obtained through school-based VET programmes, and the professional certificates can be obtained through training provided by labour authorities.

It should be noted that these programmes include an on-the-job training period (‘workplace training module’ in VET programmes under the education system; and ‘practical training module’ in Professional Certificates). In dual VET, the in-company training module is partially or totally replaced by the alternance training.

Source:

- Royal Decree 1529/2012.

1.6 Specific adjustments for persons with disability during an apprenticeship contract

The following adaptations can be done in Apprenticeship involving people with disabilities:

1. Pre-employment training:

Prior training for the establishment of job skills, personal and social aspects necessary for adaptation to the work context that facilitate the choice of the professional profile of people with disabilities through vocational guidance from the practice of one or several professional

activities. With a duration that can range from 6 months to 1 year, it is especially addressed to young people who have just completed the compulsory school stage or people who require a definition of their professional profile. It is the main route for people with disabilities to enter the dual training cycle, as it is considered the first phase of the process.

Therefore, it will be necessary to ensure its viability either through the adaptation of the programs of basic vocational training, occupational positions or as part of the training and apprenticeship contract.

2. Duration of the training programs:

The training programs have a standard length of 3 years. In the case of people with disabilities, the regulations, both in dual and basic professional training, allow adaptations in time (through a fourth year of contract in the case of dual training or programs of variable duration depending on the demands of the target group in basic vocational training) and in training programs (through the inclusion of specific training contents that responds to the needs of the group as a complement to accredited technical training).

Considering these adaptations, the professional training model is configured in a 3-year training program with the possibility of extending it to 4 exceptionally in case the person requires it, in which level 1 technical skills will be worked on together to cross-training adapted to content based on core competencies (linguistics, logical-mathematical and technology digital) and personal development skills (social and citizenship, autonomy and initiative, selfknowledge and willingness to learning and work and healthy habits).

The training program is of equal duration to that of other people but will require, an adaptation of learning time, especially for the reinforcement of skills techniques since, by not being able to make significant curricular adaptations that affect to objectives related to the given training program, it is needed to expand the hours of training so that the person with disability can acquire them.

3. Distribution of the training and work percentage (support in 100% of the apprenticeship):

As noted, the main adaptation required by the person with disability is the extension of training time for the proper acquisition and consolidation of both technical and transversal competencies. That is why, the total hours of the contract is considered learning time and, as such, it must always count on the presence and accompaniment of a trainer, either with professional profile or the guiding tutor.

The division between training time and work time is diluted since the person will train the skills 100% of the time thanks to the continuous support of the professional in any of the contexts (whether in the classroom or at work).

4. Complementary training for personal and social development:

We seek an integral training of the person, not only that learning the technical skills of a profession, but also the acquisition of autonomy to develop and integrate both in the work and social context. The training program to work on transversal skills will be based on the contents of the training speciality "Social and personal skills for people with disability".

5. Learning by doing:

Thanks to the adaptation that the training and apprenticeship contracts allow for persons with disabilities, most of the learning can take place in the workplace (80%) compared to 20% of the hours of training taught in the classroom. This means that, out of a 38.5-hour week, the apprentice with disability spends 31.5 hours in the work context, learning functionally from real practice, avoiding excessive theoretical content and simulated environments.

6. Ongoing evaluation:

The progression of apprentices with disability are assessed continuously for supervision of the acquisition of both technical and transversal skills and the adjustment of the necessary supports. It is focused on the direct observation of the apprentice's performance through the collection of daily information. Every six months, special attention is put in the analysis of said information in order to determine at what point the apprentice is in reference to his learning process and assess the need to maintain or modify the objectives/contents of the training program, as well as the specific supports that the person will receive in the next period. At the end of the entire process, a training evaluation is carried out in the different professional competencies of the certificate for its accreditation.

7. Professional team for the integral training:

The program includes a team of trainers who, besides teaching a profession, work on the personal and social aspects and accompany the apprentice throughout the process guiding him in the different stages. The professional team includes a training competent to teach the profession and a labour tutor/counsellor (pedagogue, teacher, or educator, with training experience and accredited as a teacher) in charge of delivering the training based on personal and social aspects and to accompany the apprentice during all the training itinerary as well as having the responsibility of doing the evaluation and the necessary adjustments.

As an adaptation, almost the double of professionals is required for the training of persons with disability, compared with apprentices not having a disability. The ratio of 10 apprentices per trainer with a professional profile and 24-32 (4 groups of 6 to 8 trainees) per counsellor/tutor, compared to the ratio 15/1 and 60/1 for persons without disability. In addition, other professionals are offered to support personal and social adjustment services for persons with disabilities working at Social Companies, as stated in Royal Legislative Decree 1/2013, of 29 of November, approving the Text Consolidation of the General Law of Rights of people with disabilities and their social inclusion.

8. Social Companies as learning environments:

The sheltered work context makes it easier for the apprentice to receive the necessary support throughout the entire training process while developing a real work activity without generating situations of mock practices. It is thus valued the functions established in art. 43 of the Royal Legislative Decree 1/2013, of 29 of November, approving the Text Consolidation of the General Law of rights of people with disabilities and their social inclusion, for the Social Companies as environments of rehabilitation, therapeutic and integration that provide the worker with personal development and improve their social adaptation; playing a fundamental role in the labour integration of the person and being a step to take the leap to the future insertion in an ordinary company.

2. Procedures in the support of apprenticeships contracts

2.1 Financial aids for work adaptations for people with disabilities

Considering that the person with a disability can be trained in the workplace, 100% of the working day is a training process and, therefore, they must receive the necessary support throughout the day. Each region values the cost of the apprentice support service (cost per hour of the company tutor) per year per apprentice.

2.2 Financial participation for training centres welcoming apprentices with disabilities

In the Apprenticeship contract there are reductions in companies' social security contributions and bonuses for the training, provided that the company complies with the obligations related to training activity and those set out in the contract. If the company does not comply with these obligations, it will have to reimburse the applied bonuses.

In the cooperation agreement, it is possible or not, that financial incentives to companies that host students exist in the different Autonomous Communities (Regions)

There could be no financial incentives for companies that have students under a cooperation agreement umbrella (depending on the Autonomous Region).

Source:

- Royal Decree 1529/2012

For both, apprenticeship contract and cooperation agreement, companies are obliged to designate a tutor (disability officer). While the legislation does not establish that this tutor should provide training as such, it does determine that he or she should monitor the cooperation agreement and support the employee during working periods to assess the development of the training programme and establish training support when necessary. The company tutor also needs to cooperate with the tutor at the training centre to evaluate learning.

2.3 Support for employers welcoming apprentices with disabilities. Focus on differences between public / private sector.

The Regional Governments launch public calls, in a competitive concurrence regime, that offer financial support to companies participating in dual training projects authorized by the Ministry of Education and financed by the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training. The aim is encouraging and increasing the collaboration of Social Companies in attracting apprenticeships studying at educational centres that teach initial vocational training, in the dual modality.

2.4 Where to find key information?

Each region develops Dual Vocational Training through its own projects and regulations. In the following directory you can access the specific information of each one of them, with the access requirements, qualifications, and current agreements:

https://loentiendo.com/formacion-profesional-dual-fp/#Como_obtener_informacion_en_cada_Comunidad_Autonoma_sobre_la_Formacion_Profesional_Dual

Besides, general information about apprenticeship schemes in Spain is to be found here:
<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/de/tools/apprenticeship-schemes/country-fiches/spain>

2.5 Which administration is responsible?

Vocational education and training (VET) are mainly the responsibility of education and employment authorities, and Dual VET is part of the Spanish VET. The national system for qualifications and vocational training is the umbrella for VET programmes, leading to formal qualifications awarded by either the education or employment authorities.

The General Council for Vocational Training is the national government advisory body on VET policy; it comprises representatives of national and regional public authorities as well as the social partners (enterprises and trade unions).

Stakeholders are involved in designing and updating VET qualifications in line with labour market needs. They develop occupational standards in all sectors of the economy, which make up the national register (CNCP) and are used as reference for designing and updating VET programmes and qualifications.

2.6 Any other relevant information or source?

Relevant information that is essential to understanding the specificity of apprenticeships in the country

Vocational education and training (VET) is mainly under the responsibility of education and employment authorities. The national system for qualifications and vocational training is the umbrella for VET programmes, leading to formal qualifications awarded by either the education or employment authorities.

- a) Education authority VET offers upper secondary (basic and intermediate) and higher VET qualifications. All programmes last two years (2 000 hours) and include workbased learning in a company and at a VET school:
 - basic VET programmes (ISCED 353) are available in the last year of compulsory education, to learners aged 15 or 16
 - intermediate VET programmes can begin at age 16, after the end of compulsory education. These lead to technician qualifications at ISCED 354.
 - at tertiary level, higher VET programmes (ISCED 554) lead to an advanced technician qualification.

- b) Employment authority VET offers programmes to obtain a professional certificate corresponding to an occupational profile. These programmes may include an “apprenticeship” contract. No formal access requirements apply for entering level 1 professional certificate programmes (ISCED 254) and learners can move on to the next level in the same field. Level 2 (ISCED 351) and level 3 (ISCED 453) programmes are also accessible to those having completed, respectively, compulsory and upper secondary, or equivalent, level studies to learners older than 16 years the possibility to obtain a professional certificate corresponding to an occupational profile.

It is possible to acquire any VET or educational qualification through dual VET (apprenticeship contracts or cooperation agreement).

Relevant information about the role of chambers, employers’ and employees’ representatives, sectoral councils in shaping apprenticeship content, as per regulation

Social partners were consulted during the drafting of legislation on dual VET, as well as in the process of design of the National Youth Guarantee Plan.

Also, there is an ongoing reflection process on dual VET involving the government, the Autonomous Communities (regions), employer's representatives, and representatives of education and training providers. The objective is to assess the ongoing experiences and agree on what should be regulated in more detail in the future.

Social partners are also consulted when designing the curricula of VET programmes, through the 'VET General Council' and the 'State School Council' (government advisory bodies), which include representatives of employers' and employees' organizations, among other entities.

In the case of dual VET through cooperation agreement between the training centre and the company, in many cases agreements are pre-signed with the Chambers of Commerce, as interim commitments with the companies. Chambers search and encourage participation of companies. They also provide materials, training and information to the enterprises and to the company trainers.

The National Council of Chambers of Commerce is cooperating with the ministry of education by offering help to SMEs with bureaucratic aspects related to work-place training and the development of training of in-company trainers.

Source:

- Royal Decree 1529/2012; Order ESS/41/2015; ReferNet Cedefop articles on apprenticeships.

Italy

1. Overview on the history and organisation of apprenticeship and the VET sector in Italy

In Italy, the apprenticeship institute has long played an important role within the Italian working context, since it is the bearer more than any other type of contract, of the growth and training of young people, considered by the most, to be a strategic tool aimed at increasing the skills and at developing the professionalism of those entering the world of work for the first time, also getting employment and economic improvement in the country.

To reach the first regulation of the apprenticeship contract it was necessary to wait for R.D. 21 September 1938, n. 1906, converted into law 22 June 1939, n. 739. This regulation was integrated by the rules of the Civil Code, through articles 2130-2134, where the essential traits of the apprenticeship were shaped, defining it as a “working- studying” tool in which the young person was recognized the right to carry out the work related to his professional specialty and - at the same time - to attend professional training courses.

It was also envisaged that at the end of the internship the worker had the right to obtain a certificate of the completed internship. With the entry into force of the Constitution in 1948, the subject of work and education obtained a central role thanks to the introduction of two articles: in art. 35, the Italian Republic takes care of the "training and professional development of workers", while in Article 4 all citizens were recognized the right to work along with the promotion of the conditions that make this right effective. These new formulations allowed the apprenticeship to gain greater prominence and made clear the need to implement a reform that specified the rules of the institution in more detail, to reflect the requirements of the second paragraph of art. 35 of the Constitution. In this sense, law no. 25 on 19 January 1955, in which for the first time a clear discipline of the case was outlined, describing the apprenticeship as "a special employment relationship by virtue of which the entrepreneur is obliged to impart or to have the hired apprentice impart employed by him, the necessary teaching so that he can achieve the technical capacity to become a qualified worker, using his work in the company itself. "

1.1 Rate of employed apprentices in training centres and companies / unemployment rates with general focus on persons with disabilities

For the rates of employed and unemployed, please see the benchmark (doc. 3)

1.3 Apprenticeship contracts: nature and length, possibility of ending the contract, where to find offers, working hours and salary etc.

See page 8 - 9 Report analysis.

1.3 How are apprenticeship contracts generally funded?

Benefits for employers which hire a worker under an apprenticeship contract have an economic nature, and more precisely, they are related to social security contributions. The obligation to pay social security contributions to the national social security institution named INPS is equal to 10% of the gross taxable contribution. All this upon the national legislation which is working throughout the whole territory of the Italian Republic. In addition to that, the legislation of each Italian Regions may provide for economic benefits which will be working only within the region borders and exclusively for the period indicated by the regional legislator.

1.4 What are the usual steps towards signing an apprenticeship contract (links with employers and training centres)

To enter an apprenticeship, contract the employer and the employee such address to a VET Center or to “Centri per l’Impiego” (that is to say Employment centres). The CPIs are public structures coordinated by the Regions or autonomous Provinces (Trento e Bolzano). They try to link (and to smooth the meeting) between employers and employees and this way they promote active labour and policy interventions. They also carry out administrative activity such as this one of apprenticeship contract.

1.5 Possibility to get an official recognition of worker with disability

See page 15 - 16 Report analysis.

1.6 Specific adjustments for persons with disability during an apprenticeship contract

Italian Law says that disabled workers can ask the employer for reasonable accommodations. In fact, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities introduces the concept of reasonable accommodation that refers to changes and adjustments, that put in place to ensure that people with disabilities can enjoy human rights on an equal basis with others.

How does it work in Italy? The accommodations can be identified in two stages: during the job interview and during daily activities. When a candidate has a job interview and then joins the company, the employers and worker may decide to modify the work environment, for example to make it accessible or the times and duration of work (typically part-time contracts are preferred, perhaps with personalized work times).

Most of the changes, however, are directly determined during employment, when the employee must cope with an unexpected situation or a problem that makes it difficult to perform the tasks. In such cases, the accommodations cannot be planned beforehand but are worked out during an ongoing negotiation. During workplace activities, there are three types of adjustments: procedures to complete the tasks required, use of aids and assistive technologies, and the presence of a company tutor. In terms of the factors that lead to a decision to grant or refuse an accommodation the fundamental fact is that the request always follows the onset of a problem.

In other words, the arrangement can be requested only after direct observation of the need to tackle an unforeseen circumstance within the workplace. In these cases, the decision to introduce an accommodation, however, is mainly based on trial and error. In practice, the accommodation identified is experienced directly in the field; if the outcome is positive, then the accommodation is integrated into the organization's work policy, otherwise it is abandoned.

Employers stated that one of the decisive factors in choosing an accommodation is precisely the type of change required. It is easier to grant an accommodation that relates just to the employee (e.g., special keyboard), without the involvement of the organization, rather than one that requires changes that also involve colleagues.

The workers and service providers underline that when the arrangement involves colleagues, these colleagues may be more reluctant to accept it and then the disabled worker may feel discriminated against. Secondly, the culture of the organization seems to play a decisive role. Employers and service providers say that if the values shared within the company are based on equality, it is more difficult to grant an accommodation, because it could be seen as unfair to the other employees. Conversely, when the values are based on fairness, it is easier for an arrangement to be seen as reasonable and, therefore, to be positively accepted. Disabled workers also noted the importance of the culture of the organization because it orients the attitudes of other employees and determines the treatment that the employee receives. The

third important element is instead to the perception of the usefulness of the accommodation and there may be a disparity between the views of the employers and the employees. Employers may consider unnecessary those accommodations.

Conversely, disabled workers may be paid a little attention to their needs and a lack of unwillingness on the part of the organization to support them. In this case, the role played by representatives of the support services who seek to protect the worker and to accompany him/her during the experience are very important.

2. Procedures in the support of apprenticeships contracts

2.1 Financial aids for work adaptations for people with disabilities

Financial aids on reasonable accommodations are not donated by the Italian central State. This kind of funding are on the responsibility of the individual Regions that periodically issue calls to let the employs request the reimbursement of the expenses incurred for providing reasonable accommodation.

2.2 Financial participation for training centres welcoming apprentices with disabilities

It depends on the collective contract such as crafts, agriculture, trade, engineering, professional and so on. Example of an apprentice contract in the engineering sector of industry. The calculation basis is the gross salary of the D2 level, which since 01.06.2021 is equal to 1,651.07 euros. The gross salary of the apprentice, according to the CCNL, is equal to 45% in the 1st year, therefore approximately 743 euros, therefore a worker with an apprenticeship contract stipulated in 2021 the monthly net salary is approximately 700 euros, plus any deductions and paycheck bonus.

2.3 Support for employers welcoming apprentices with disabilities. Focus on differences between public / private sector.

The instrument used centrally is the "Fund for the right to work of the disabled". For the current year, the loan amounts to 74.5 million euros. The Funds are operationally managed by INPS. The Fund was established in 1999 by law no. 68 has two objectives:

1. Encourage the hiring of disabled people and
2. finance the experimental projects of work inclusion for the same subjects One of the tools used is the exemption from contributions for employers who make these hires (as defined by article 5, paragraph 3-bis of the same law). Financial support for employers welcoming is provided also by Regions that periodically issue calls to encourage the employs to welcome apprentices with disabilities

2.4 Where to find key information?

Official page edited by "Minister of Labour and Social Policies" at the following link:
<https://bit.ly/3rmyMHR>

2.5 Which administration is responsible?

Official page edited by "Minister of Labour and Social Policies" at the following link:
<https://bit.ly/3rmyMHR>

2.6 Any other relevant information or source?

Norway

1. Overview on the history and organisation of apprenticeship and the VET sector in Norway

In Norway adult education is regulated by The Adult Education Act (1976) and The Education Act (1998). The right to free education for adults up to and including upper secondary is guaranteed by law. The responsibility is divided between municipalities and counties.

Adults who need primary and lower secondary education have a statutory right to such education. Adults also have a statutory right to upper secondary education. This applies to adults who have not already completed an upper secondary education.

Under the Adult Education Act, the provision of courses is the responsibility of the respective public education authorities at the various levels of education. The Education Act regulates primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education for all, including adults.

This policy related to adult education has been clarified and elaborated upon in the recent Norwegian Strategy for Skills Policy 2017-2021 (Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research, 2017) which was signed by the Norwegian Government, the main employer and employee organisations, the Sami Parliament, and the Norwegian Association for Adult Learning in 2017.

The main headline in the strategy is that a national skills policy is the overall policy for development, mobilisation, and utilisation of skills in the entire Norwegian society and labour market. The strategy partners have agreed to:

- contribute to making informed choices for the individual and society.
- promote better learning opportunities and effective use of skills in the labour market.
- strengthen the skills of adults with poor basic skills, poor Norwegian and little formal education.

It is also important to mention the White Paper “The Skills Reform : Lifelong learning” (2019-2020) (Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research, 2020), <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dokumenter/report-no-14-to-the-storting-20192020/id2698284/>, which builds on the Government’s national skills policy from 2013 to the present, including the Norwegian Strategy for Skills Policy 2017-2021.

The Skills Reform was established and presented by the Norwegian government in 2019. The Skills Reform was implemented during the period 2013–2018, whereby the Government gave priority to adults with poor basic skills and persons who have not completed upper secondary education. Several measures have been initiated to better adapt the education system to adults who need lower secondary education, vocational education and training, basic skills training, or Norwegian language tuition.

The aim of The Skills Reform is that the Government will continue its efforts to provide adults with little formal education or poor basic skills better access to flexible education, and to upskill and reskill the workforce.

It has two main objectives. The first is that no one's skills become obsolete. Everyone should be given an opportunity to renew and supplement their skills to enable them to work longer. The second objective is to close the skills gap, i.e., the gap between what skills the labour market needs and what skills the workers have.

The labour market in Norway is changing rapidly, and the need to constantly renew one's skills is becoming more and more important. This is a special challenge for employees with low basic competence and who, due to changes in working life, need formal competence in the form of a trade certificate.

There are some claims that we can track the apprenticeship all the way back to medieval times, where in some larger cities, the training was formalized by different guilds in order to ensure a quality standard on the work delivered.

During the industrial revolution, this scheme was disbanded and had fewer regulations, amongst other the end of the journeyman test. At the end of the 19th century there was a need to reintroduce the formalized education within craftsmanship, and a new law regulating craftsmanship was the starting point of a law regulating the apprenticeship. This law was passed and adopted in 1950, also including industrial apprenticeships. Through this law all apprentices had to go through what then was called the apprentice school, and companies had to give them time off from work to go to school.

This was not an immediate success, as the law was not administered by one central agency, and not a nationwide scheme, but only in the municipalities that wanted to. Also, many of the companies viewed the scheme as too rigid and with little flexibility.

In 1980 a new law on vocational education in the labour life was approved, and this led to a nationwide scheme, also with the educational authorities in each county as responsible for all vocational education and training. Furthermore, through what was called the Council for Vocational Education in Labour life, the companies gained more influence. Also, the grant for the companies was raised to a substantial amount. From this moment on more vocational fields were included in the scheme, but this also led to an increased need for more companies willing to accept apprentices.

The problem now was that company's real interest in hiring apprentices was influenced by conjunctures in economy and the need for labour force, and not a mere interest of offering an educational training for the students.

This led to a reform in 1994 where all students gained a right to at least three years in upper secondary school level that should lead to either a qualification for higher education or work after a trade or journeyman's test. From this point most VET programmes followed the main 2 + 2 model, with two years in upper secondary school and then two years of training and productive work in a company. (The Norwegian Government.)

From the school year 2020/21, upper secondary VET in Norway covers 10 education programmes that lead to more than 180 different trade or journeyman's certificates. During the two years in school, the VET student is given a general introduction to the vocational field and an opportunity to specialise in a chosen craft or trade. The teaching focuses common core subjects (Norwegian, English, mathematics, physical education, natural sciences, and social sciences), and common programme subjects which cover trade-specific theory and practice.

During the first year (Vg1-upper secondary level 1) these subjects offer a general introduction to the vocational field. During the second year (Vg2-upper secondary level 2) these subjects become more specific as VET students decide which trade they want to pursue. The apprenticeship period gives the apprentice an opportunity to gain in-depth knowledge in a vocational field and prepare for the trade or journeyman's test.

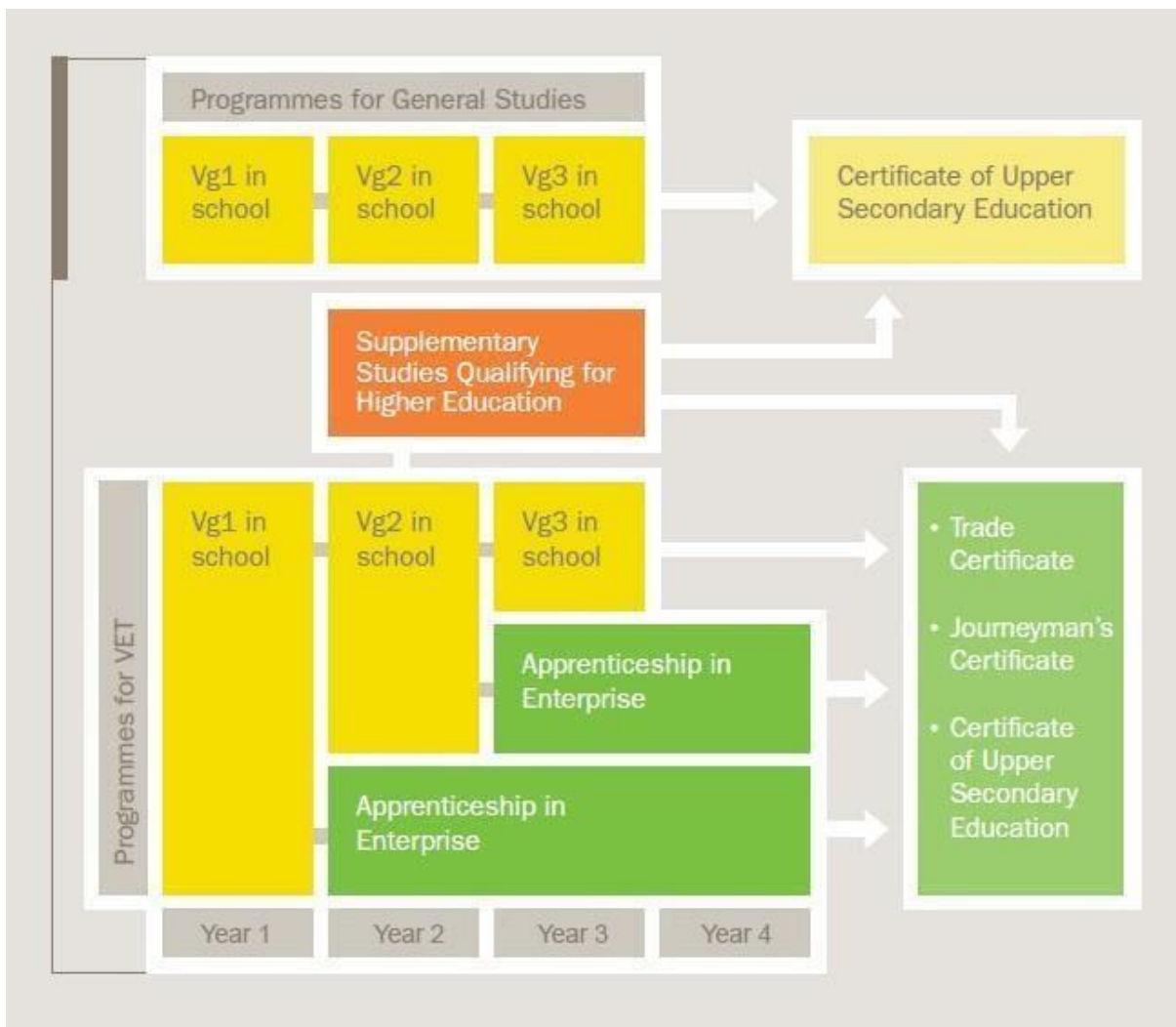
The two-year apprenticeship is formalised through a signed contract between the apprentice and the training enterprise. The county authorities have an overarching responsibility for all aspects of public upper secondary education and training, including apprenticeship training. Thus, the apprenticeship contract must be approved by the county authorities.

Social partner representatives from business, industry and the public sector hold most of the seats in all advisory bodies in the decision-making system for upper secondary VET. Close dialogue with the social partners is important in anticipating skills needs and in securing relevant provision of VET.

Thus, tripartite cooperation is important in both designing VET provision and in assuring relevance and quality in accordance with labour market needs. The social partners have been actively involved in the development of the new structure of available courses and apprenticeships which is in force from the school year 2020/21 and in the development of renewed VET curricula for all trades and crafts in accordance with labour market needs.

The new VET curricula has been implemented as of the school year 2020/21 (Udir).

Below is an illustration of the Norwegian VET-model:



1.1 Rate of employed apprentices in training centres and companies / unemployment rates with general focus on persons with disabilities

Number of apprentices in 2021:

- In total: 46.705 (24.535 of these were new in 2021)
- Private sector: 34.578
- Public sector: 12.056
- Unknown sector: 71

1.839 apprentices have a so-called training contract where they will receive a certificate of competence instead of journeyman's letter or a certificate of apprenticeship after ended

training period. This is a partial competence where they are not tested in all areas within the vocational field. This is usually for apprentices with disabilities, but not exclusive.

In the school year of 2020-2021 there were in total 29.548 journeyman's tests or a competency test. 19.456 of these were in the educational system and 9.747 were outside the educational system and took the journeyman's test as a private trainee.

This is an arrangement for people who have many years of experience, and without the need for two years in upper secondary education. There are no formal education or training for these group, but the exam and test can be adapted for people with disabilities.

The unemployment rate in Norway is now 3,2 percent. Among people with disabilities, it is 5,5 percent.

However, this are actively job seekers, and we see that persons with disabilities outside the work force is a stunning 60,3 % while in the rest of the population the same number is 18 %. It is likely that disabilities are making it extremely difficult to be part of the work force.

1.3 Apprenticeship contracts: nature and length, possibility of ending the contract, where to find offers, working hours and salary etc.

The typical model for vocational education in Norway is 2 + 2 years.

Two years in upper secondary education, and then two years in training with a company or training centre. This means that most apprenticeship contracts last for two years.

The first year is training, while the second year is more production. Formally, the apprentice only gets paid for the last year, but most companies spread this over the whole apprenticeship period. The usual model is 30 percent of a skilled worker's salary the first six months, then 40 percent the next six months, 50 percent the next six months and 80 percent the last six months.

Apprentices work regular working hours, as other employees, which is 37,5 working hours per week. But apprentices also can go to school and take courses needed for their qualification during working hours.

In some vocational fields the apprentice period is two and a half or three years, but the most typical model is 2 + 2 years.

In addition, every apprentice should have an employment contract, securing them the same rights as other employees. Normally, their employment contract ends the same day as their

apprenticeship contract ends, but many apprentices get job offers from the same company they have been apprentices at. This is a way of recruiting skilled workers.

There are strict rules regarding terminating an apprenticeship contract earlier than originally planned. The contract can be terminated if the apprentice breaches his part of the agreement, or if the company is not able to provide proper training. In many cases, the company is member of a training centre, and if this is the case, the contract is between the training centre and the apprentice, and not between the company and the apprentice. If the company cannot provide proper training, the training centre is responsible for trying to find another company for the apprenticeship.

When the contract is terminated, the company is responsible for documenting what learning goals the apprentice has achieved, and the educational authority in the county is responsible for making a competence certificate for the apprentice, formally documenting whatever competence achieved before the contract termination.

During the first two years in upper secondary education, all students have work placement weeks in companies where they later can get an apprenticeship. For most of the students, this is the main way into getting offered an apprenticeship. At the end of the second year in school, all students most register their wishes for vocational fields for their apprenticeships.

Some companies send out offers directly based on these wishes and through the educational authorities, but in most cases the student must apply directly to different companies for an apprenticeship. In recent years, an online site called “Finn læreplass” (Find apprenticeship) has grown into large database of available apprenticeships. Here students can see what vocational fields the company can offer training in, and if they have any availability. Also, many companies advertise through typical job seeker sites, as www.finn.no

1.3 How are apprenticeship contracts generally funded?

The educational authority in each county is responsible for financing apprenticeships, and they receive funding through national authorities.

For each apprentice, the authorities pay a grant for the training, and the amount depends on which rights the apprentice have. First, there is something called youth right. This applies to those who still have the legal right to go to upper secondary school. Companies or training centres with these apprentices receive a total amount of NOK 167.407 to cover for the whole apprenticeship period.

For apprentices over 21 years old and who no longer have the right to go to upper secondary school, the companies or training centres receive NOK 5.452 each month.

There is also an extra grant for companies taking on apprentices with disabilities. This is a grant that can cover one to six hours per week with additional training and follow-up for the apprentice. However, this is only for apprentices below 25 years of age.

The apprentice's salary, along with all other expenses for the employer, as insurance, pension and so on, is covered by the company. The idea is that the apprentice only gets paid for the last year of the apprenticeship when they have so much training that they can actually produce economic earnings for the company.

Norway has a strong principle of accessibility for everyone, regardless of mental or physical health. This also includes people with diverse learning needs and is fundamental in the Norwegian Education Act (2014).

One of the most important regulations in following up this policy is the *Permanently adapted work-programs* (VTA).

VTA is a state-oriented work-oriented measure that provides a job offer in a sheltered enterprise to people who have problems finding work within ordinary working life. Every municipality in Norway are obliged to offer these kinds of jobs. The purpose of VTA is to provide the participants with work that contributes to developing their resources through qualification and work tasks that are adapted to the individual's ability to work. The participants receive a customized job offer with facilitation and follow-up.

As part of the VTA-program the participants can also receive a specially adapted VET certificate.

1.4 What are the usual steps towards signing an apprenticeship contract (links with employers and training centres)

Most students in school have work placement with possible future employers during their first two year at upper secondary school. This is the first contact and link with the employers. If students make a good impression during the placement period, it is common that they get an offer for an apprenticeship.

In some cases, the training centres help with the recruitment process, but usually it is each company that does this themselves.

When the student has secured an apprenticeship, it is time to sign the contract. Both the company and the apprentice must sign this, and then it will be registered in the public system.

1.5 Possibility to get an official recognition of worker with disability

Through the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV) workers can get this, and then there is possible to seek financial support. For instance, employers can get support from NAV to pay for parts of the employee's salary to cover loss of income. Unfortunately, this is not possible for apprentices.

People with learning disabilities can also get a formal certificate of this, and then have certain rights in a work situation. Companies are obligated by law to offer possibilities to compensate for the disability if possible.

1.6 Specific adjustments for persons with disability during an apprenticeship contract

Apprentices with disabilities must normally follow same working hours and length of apprenticeship as others, but they can adjust their study plans and have fewer learning goals, and they receive a certificate of competence after ended apprenticeship. This is a partial competence in the relevant vocational field but is a formal certificate showing what the apprentices have learned through their training.

They can also receive extra follow up from instructors, teachers, or someone else that can give support for the apprentice, along with the possibilities for the company to receive a grant in order to pay a mentor for the apprentice.

Also, if needed and relevant, the apprentice can receive compensating aids for their disability if this can help them in the apprenticeship period.

2. Procedures in the support of apprenticeships contracts

2.1 Financial aids for work adaptations for people with disabilities

For apprentices there are the possibilities that the company receives an extra grant either for a mentor or extra follow up.

For regular employees, the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV) can support the companies in paying a part of the employee's salaries in order to cover for potential losses in income due to less effective workers. This normally covers 40 to 60 percent of the employee's salary.

Lånekassen is a public administrative body, under the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research, with a purpose to make education possible for everyone. They offer loans and stipends for students and apprentices. It is both a bank and a part of the welfare state. For apprentices living separately from their parents with at long travel distance, they can receive a stipend of NOK 4.709 each month to pay for living expenses.

Apprentices over 25 years of age does not receive stipends but can receive a student loan up to NOK 126.357 NOK for the full school year.

2.2 Financial participation for training centres welcoming apprentices with disabilities

Apprenticeship grants goes directly to the training centre, and in most cases, they redistribute a portion of the grant to the companies who have apprentices, along with support to the company and the apprentice.

In some counties there are training centres that specialises in work with apprentices with disabilities, and they receive a larger grant for each apprentice than other training centres, but this is not a national scheme.

In the previous mentioned counties, they have specialised training centres, in most regular training centres there are not a disability officer.

However, it is usual in the larger counties that the local education government have a counsellor with more responsibilities for the apprentices with disabilities.

2.3 Support for employers welcoming apprentices with disabilities. Focus on differences between public / private sector.

Most employers welcoming apprentices with disabilities will receive some sort of financial aid. Also, if member of a training centre they can receive support and guidance in how they best can train the apprentice. The local educational authorities also offer different courses in how to best support apprentices with disabilities.

In the public sector, there is a demand that they hire a percentage of employees with disabilities, but this does not necessarily apply to apprentices.

2.4 Where to find key information?

There are some important websites where most information can be found, but also each county has their own information distributed through their website.

Important websites are:

- www.utdanning.no
- www.vilbli.no
- www.udir.no

2.5 Which administration is responsible?

The educational authority at the county level is responsible for the vocational education.

2.6 Any other relevant information or source?

Relevant Policy

The Government desires the adult population to take an active part in the workplace and society. As part of the Competence Reform, several measures were initiated to build up the skills of the adult population. However, this has not led to an increase in participation amongst those who are in greatest need of such education and training.

The low participation in education and training amongst persons with a low education is due both to a lack of interest and a shortage of good training programmes adapted to adult's needs and life situations.

Today, there is an increasingly large group of young adults who do not have the right to upper secondary education. This also applies to a growing number of immigrants who have arrived in Norway too late to exercise the right of adults to education.

The measures articulated in *The Early Intervention for Lifelong Learning* are:

- Extend the right to upper secondary education for all adults (abolish the 1978 regulation)
- Increase grants for the Programme to promote basic skills in the workplace
- Strengthen educational and career guidance for adults

In relation to the strengthening educational and career guidance for adults, in recent years Norway has developed a *National Quality Framework for Career Guidance* [Quality in career guidance - Competence Norway \(kompetansenorge.no\)](http://kompetansenorge.no)

The framework is for those who work in career guidance, career learning or oversee career guidance services. The overall goal is for a quality framework to contribute to high-quality career guidance services in all sectors in Norway. A cross-sectoral quality framework is seen as an important cohesive measure in a comprehensive system for lifelong career guidance.

Quality and professionalism in career guidance are crucial for the services to provide the desired benefit, both for the individual and society. In addition to the 2016 White Paper, the OECD's (2014) *Skills Strategy Action Report for Norway* and the *National Competence Policy Strategy* (2017) are important reference points for the current focus on quality in Norwegian career guidance.

Summary

The number of unemployed people in general - and for people with developmental disabilities in particular - naturally varies a lot between the seven countries in the partnership. Some countries have relatively low figures (Norway) while other have significant higher (Greece.)

In general, it is – sad but unsurprisingly - clear to see that unemployment among people with different kind of disabilities is significantly higher than among people without.

On average, it is approx. 70% higher, but in some countries it is multiplied many times over. (Belgium and Greece.)

All countries represented in the partnership offer vocational training contracts for people with disabilities. For most countries, it is a standardized system with a duration of one to three years.

Some countries have a more fine-grained system - especially designed for young people up to 29 years of age. (France and Italy)

Most of the partner countries state that the vocational training contract is financed by the public sector. However, several countries offer combinations of public and private funding. (Greece, Bulgaria, and Spain.)

Spain has a system where companies pay but can seek reimbursement from the public sector afterwards.

When it comes to the formalization and signing (conclusion) of an apprenticeship contract, this is perhaps the biggest difference between the various countries.

In some countries, candidates are largely left to their own devices (Belgium), while other countries have fine-grained systems that guide candidates through the entire process (Norway.)

There are many different actors involved in this process and the difference between the various systems is large from country to country.

In some countries, the local employment service is heavily involved (Spain and Italy), while in other countries there is a large element of various industry associations and branch connected training offices (Norway and Greece.)

Formal approval of vocational training for people with developmental disabilities is important.

All countries in the partnership offer different forms of formal qualification.

In some countries there are arrangements for separate vocational certificates for people with disabilities (Norway, France, and Greece), while other countries to a greater extent incorporate vocational training for people with disabilities as part of the ordinary vocational training course.

Specific adjustments for persons with disability during an apprenticeship contract is of vital importance.

We are glad to summarize that most of the countries in the partnership offer various forms of adaptation or support for participants with developmental disabilities in a vocational training course. The only specific exception here is Greece, but this might be explained by a lack of relevant information in the report.

The specific adjustments can be various forms of support; different educational adjustments, special rules regarding adaptable contracts, adaption of workplace, funds for mentoring, extra follow up from instructors, teachers etc.