

2019

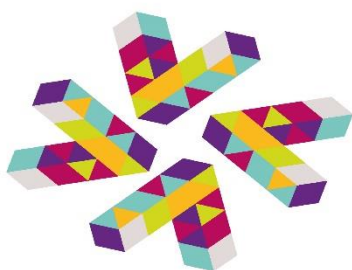
*Good Practice Guide for designing,  
implementing and monitoring  
apprenticeships*

*Benefits for Small and Medium Enterprises*

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*ROI of Work Based Learning and Apprenticeships*

*Project number: 2017-1-SK01-KA202-03537*



**ROI**

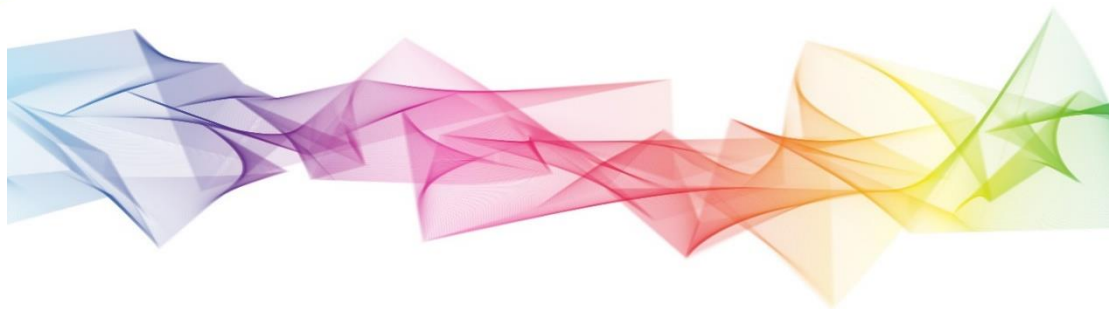
Return on Investment of Work Based Learning and apprenticeships



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“ROI of WBL and apprenticeships” project number: 2017-1-SK01-KA202-035375

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This publication was composed within the framework of the ROI project.


[Project N°: 2017-1-SK01-KA202-035375]


<http://roiwbl.eu/>


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## Preface

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The main objective of this Good Practices Guide is to engage more Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) into designing, implementing and monitoring profitable apprenticeship practices which can benefit the organisation, the apprentice and the entire society. We believe that this Guide will shed light to the benefits, including social benefits, that could derive through the involvement with apprenticeship schemes, while our general goal is to promote Work Based Learning (WBL) in all its forms.

From February to June 2019, partners from Slovakia, Greece, Spain, Portugal, Italy and Bulgaria, conducted interviews with SMEs engaged in apprenticeships, in order to identify good practices, which had a positive impact on all parties involved. This guide summarises the findings of our efforts and takes as on a trip across Europe. This guide is the proof that WBL can be applied in different contexts and that its benefits are universal.

After careful consideration, twelve stories were selected to be included in this Guide. SMEs whose stories were included, were also awarded the Apprenticeships friendly enterprise badge during the International Conference on Work Based Learning and apprenticeships, held in Athens, Greece, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of October 2019.

If you have any questions or would like to know more details about one of the stories presented, don't hesitate to contact the company directly.



## Contents

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1. Introduction.....	6
2. Benefits of Investing in Work Based Learning and Apprenticeships.....	7
3. Apprenticeships in Slovakia.....	9
3.1 The story of BUILDINGS CITY, Ltd.....	9
3.2 The story of Auto Gábríel, Ltd.....	14
4. Apprenticeships in Spain.....	19
4.1 The story of FORBRASS (part of MEK GROUP).....	19
4.2 The story of BIKUMA GLOBAL SERVICES SI.....	22
5. Apprenticeships in Bulgaria.....	26
5.1 The story of GABINVEST EOOD.....	26
5.2 The story of BIOMASHIN.....	29
6. Work Based Learning in Italy.....	31
6.1 The story of Eurocrea Merchant SRL.....	31
6.2 The story of Ca.Ve.Co. S.r.l.....	34
7. Apprenticeships in Portugal.....	36
7.1 The story of Gatelven, Lda.....	36
7.2 The story of Pinto & Cruz Gestão, Lda.....	39
8. Apprenticeships in Greece.....	43
8.1 The story of Scientific Centre for Physiotherapy, P. Kostoula.....	43
8.2 The story of ELVIK S.A.....	46



## 1. Introduction

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Small and medium-sized companies are Europe's motor for growth and employment and the backbone of the European economy and they contribute strongly to the training of the future work force through their involvement in apprenticeships. Apprenticeship schemes offer great value not only to the SME and the apprentice but also to the entire society.

By documenting and sharing good practices, SMEs turned this knowledge into action and developed their capacities to respond more quickly and effectively to different changes that arise. The purpose of documenting these good practices is to avoid mistakes to be repeated, to not let successful examples be forgotten and to show opportunities for improved practices. This collection of good practices presents different ways to facilitate the involvement of SMEs in apprenticeship schemes. They serve as a standard to promote knowledge sharing, collaboration, increase efficiency and enhance Work Based Learning (WBL) and apprenticeship supply.

One could wonder what a good practice is. The answer to this question is that a good practice is not only a practice that is good, but a practice that has been proven to work well and produce good results. It is a successful experience, which has been tested and which deserves to be shared so that a greater number of SMEs can adopt it. A good practice is proven to be successful, is relevant and presents the most effective way in achieving the objectives set at the beginning of the apprenticeship. It also has a positive impact, not only to the organisation and the apprentice, but also to society. Lastly, a good practice is sustainable and feasible. It meets the needs of the actors involved and it is easy to implement. Furthermore, it is easy to replicate and can be adapted in varying situations.

We hope that you will find inspiration from the stories presented in this guide and you will adapt them and implement them in your company's context. We also hope that through this guide new good practices will emerge, which prove that apprenticeships have a major impact on the companies and society as well.



## 2. Benefits of Investing in Work Based Learning and Apprenticeships



# THE BENEFITS OF INVESTING IN WORK BASED LEARNING & APPRENTICESHIPS

### FOR SOCIETY:



#### SCHOOL RETENTION

WBL reduces early school leaving while developing more relevant and integrated curricula



#### INCLUSION

Reduced welfare costs and increased wage return



#### SKILLED WORKFORCE

WBL increases employability providing more effective preparation

### FOR SMEs:



#### EASIER RECRUITMENT

Apprenticeships policies facilitate training, recruitment and employers retention, reducing costs



#### FASTER INTEGRATION

In-company trained employees need less supervision, increasing productivity



#### FLEXIBILITY

Students can cover several positions, reducing time spent on ongoing training

WANT TO KNOW MORE?  
VISIT:

<https://bit.ly/2TCwbGc>

<http://roiwbl.eu/>

(The data provided are related to the researches done by the project partners during the ROI project development)



Erasmus+

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication [communication] reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. "ROI of WBL and apprenticeships" project number: 2017-1-SK01-KA202-035375



Work-based learning (WBL) is directly linked to the mission of education to help learners acquire knowledge, skills and competences which are essential in working life. Work-based learning is an example of a win-win situation, and notably when the learning takes place in a company, as with apprenticeships. As presented in the infographic above, there are benefits from this type of learning for all parties involved, beginning with the learner and the company which hosts the learner, the VET school/institution and up to the broader level of society. The ROI project's aim is to highlight the benefits of Work-based Learning and apprenticeships especially for SMEs and the society.

When SMEs invest in Work-based learning, they gain access to easier means of recruitment of new employees. Apprenticeships policies facilitate training, recruitment and employee's retention while reducing costs. Furthermore, apprenticeships foster faster integration of new employees. In-company trained employees need less supervision, while time saved increases productivity of the SME. Lastly, apprenticeships offer flexibility to the company. Students can cover several positions, reducing time spent on ongoing training.

On the other hand, apprenticeships and Work-Based Learning offer benefits to the local community and society as a whole. They help with school retention since WBL reduces early school leaving while developing more relevant and integrated curricula. Moreover, apprenticeships promote inclusion, they reduce welfare costs and increase wage return. Lastly, work based learning and apprenticeships lead to a more skilled workforce. They increase employability providing more effective preparation.





### 3. Apprenticeships in Slovakia

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The government has recently introduced a 'dual' Vocational Education and Training (VET) scheme. It is inspired by apprenticeship in German speaking countries, but Slovakia's approach has unique features. Companies take responsibility for attracting young people and for the on-the-job part of the scheme based on contracts with individual learners and their VET schools. The quality of training offered by companies will be crucial to success. It will require reliable quality assurance procedures and monitoring of learning outcomes. Another key ingredient for effective feedback between VET and the labour market is skills needs anticipation, an issue that is high on the Slovak government's education agenda.

In 2015, a new VET Act (61/2015) was adopted. The act supports closer school-company partnerships and encourages the shift to labour market demand-driven VET. In this new approach, companies take responsibility for training provision. They find learners and sign individual training contracts that must be complemented by an institutional contract between the company and a VET school. This contract describes the partners' roles and responsibilities. Companies are not obliged to offer future employment to contracted learners. In contrast to traditional apprentices, learners in dual VET in Slovakia are students and not employees of a company that provides training. Companies can even partly (up to 40%) delegate the training back to schools. For 2015/16, 117 companies were certified to offer training in 37 dual VET programmes and 1 438 training places; 469 students have signed learning contracts with companies, complemented by 78 school-company contracts.

#### 3.1 The story of BUILDINGS CITY, Ltd

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<b>Name of the SME:</b>	BUILDINGS CITY, s.r.o.
<b>Name of the SME in English</b>	BUILDINGS CITY, Ltd
<b>Address:</b>	Južná trieda 117 040 01 Košice, Slovakia
<b>Date of foundation:</b>	5.11.2009
<b>Number of employees:</b>	25-49
<b>Sector:</b>	Tertiary
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.hotelrocakosice.sk/">www.hotelrocakosice.sk/</a>

#### History of the enterprise's experience related to apprenticeships/ work-based learning

BUILDINGS CITY, Ltd provides Work Based Learning since 2015. During 2019, six students studied there in work-based learning.



## Introduction

This case study highlights the main problems and opportunities that led to the introduction of WBL in the company.

Through the history of WBL deployment in the company between 2015 -2019, we point out the individual steps of the process, the obstacles, the challenges and the subsequent solutions.

## How it started

The main problem and challenge which BUILDINGS CITY tried to solve was the problem of getting qualified staff in positions of cook and waiter due to low interest in these job positions.

*“Work-based learning is necessary and important in Slovakia because it provides the opportunity for companies to educate future employees.”*

BUILDINGS CITY did not participate in WBL before 2015 and did not cooperate with secondary vocational schools. The first step in implementing WBL was to obtain the certificate needed to provide WBL and to communicate with the State Institute of Vocational Education. The company was mainly interested in students who

are trained in being cooks and waiters/waitresses, so they started to communicate with secondary vocational schools, which provide the opportunity to study in these fields. It resulted in cooperation agreements signing with two schools in relevant areas of training.

Since school year 2015/2016, when WBL was legally regulated in Slovakia, the company, has introduced the WBL in order to get the chance to prepare and train future employees. BUILDINGS CITY tried to motivate and prepare students in such a way that they want to stay in the company after graduation. Different benefits are provided to them, such as financial rewards, travel allowances, and meals.

## What were the next steps?

Very important for providing a quality WBL was the development of a curriculum for education in collaboration with the schools. The company and schools also agreed on a timetable for students. The first year, three students entered dual education (two waitresses, one cook).

## How is the recruitment process done?

Students are admitted in collaboration with two secondary vocational schools in Košice with which a cooperation agreement has been signed. WBL in BUILDINGS CITY is regularly presented at secondary vocational schools and students and their parents also have the opportunity to participate in open door day at the company, where they can become familiar with the working environment and the activities the company is engaged. Those of them who are interested in WBL are invited to individual interviews with the person responsible for dual education in the company. The purpose of the interviews is to get to know the candidates and to verify their personality and motivation to work in the company in the positions of cook and waiter. The company seeks to select students who are strongly interested in such kind of job positions and who want to stay in the company after graduation.



## How it works now? What processes have been set up?

At present, there is a person responsible for the WBL system in the company. The job position includes communication with the schools, accepting students and communication with employees who supervise students. The selected employees of the company are trained and then they become responsible for the students and their training (e.g. the chief cook is responsible for the students in the position of the cook; the main waiter is responsible for the students at the waiter's position).

Students' convenience and knowledge about working processes in the company are the very important factors that contribute to the successful implementation of WBL. Therefore, students admitted to the WBL are thoroughly familiar with the business and the working environment. They get acquainted with the equipment of the company and get to know other employees.

*"We want to motivate students who study in our company in work-based learning and to show them the benefits of such study programme."*

Students learning is carried out gradually. They begin to perform simpler tasks and are supervised by the relevant company employees responsible for them. The involvement in the working process is done step by step. In the beginning, simple tasks are assigned to them and they receive feedback from supervisors. After mastering the basic work tasks, new tasks are added to their work responsibilities. Aim of the company during the preparation of trainees is to ensure that students at all positions are able to work independently and without the supervision of other employees. The company seeks to integrate trainees in WBL as much as possible into the operation of the company and requires them to adapt to all work processes and business rules fully.

BUILDINGS CITY tries to motivate pupils through financial rewards, allowance for transport and meals, while it seeks to attract future employees through the above-mentioned benefits.

## What are the results and/or benefits?

The company has partially achieved its goal by applying the procedures and the processes as mentioned earlier. One graduate of WBL was employed in the company in 2019. The main benefit of WBL in the company is the employment of graduates who already know the working environment and all work processes in the company. By employing a WBL graduate, the company also reduces recruitment costs. By engaging and implementing WBL, the company has gained new experience and knowledge in this form of education and has learned about the benefits of WBL.

## Pitfalls and difficulties

BUILDINGS CITY faced the following obstacles in implementing WBL:

- Lack of students in the field of cook and waiter;
- Low student interest in WBL;
- The insufficient motivation of students to work at the company in WBL;
- The absence of the ability to verify student work skills before joining to WBL;
- Students do not want to stay in the company after graduation.



## Impact

The impact of introducing WBL in the company was trifold.

Most importantly, students working at the company received support, either financial (corporate scholarship and salary) or non-financial (free meals for students). They also had access to better practical experience than at school, they gained experience and work habits and they were motivated to learn.

Furthermore, the company prepared future high-quality employees, who were familiar with the working environment. In 2019 one student was employed by the company after his graduation.

The implementation of WBL learning in the company had also a social impact, since it helped students develop skills based on the need of society.

## Success Factors

By implementing the practices of this good practice, you can get:

- Sufficiently qualified staff;
- Possibility to participate in the development of future employees;
- Important knowledge for the successful implementation of WBL in your company;
- A good cooperation with schools.

For successful implementation of WBL in the company it is necessary to create a good working environment for students and to have a certificate for WBL provision (based on national legislation). Moreover, you need to ensure appropriate professional supervision for students (staff who have experience and the necessary communication and management skills to work with students), to know how to motivate students and to adopt an adequate number of students so that you can be dedicated to them. Lastly, you need to insure technical and material equipment.

## Lessons Learned

- It is vital to raise awareness on WBL and to inform schools, students and parents how WBL works;
- Before introducing WBL in a company, it is necessary to prepare own employees to be sufficiently qualified to work with students;
- Students need to be appropriately motivated;
- Study program should be interesting for students;
- By providing professional supervision for students, the company will support their development and improve their working habits and results;
- The company should determine the optimal number of students to be enrolled in WBL so they can be thoroughly adequately addressed.

## Successes and opportunities



The main factors contributing to the success of the BUILDINGS CITY in WBL are:

- Good cooperation and communication with secondary vocational schools in developing curricula for students;



- A thorough selection of pupils in the WBL (the company tries to recruit students who enjoy working in the required positions and who are interested in remaining in the company after the graduation);
- The company provides suitable working conditions and the necessary equipment and professional supervision;
- The employee responsible for WBL has an education and hands-on experience in the field of study which enables them to manage and customise the WBL system in such a way that it works efficiently and brings benefits to both students and company;
- The company provides many benefits for trainees; they motivate them in their education and take care of them in such a way that they are interested in staying in the company after completing dual education.

Opportunities for the future:

- To improve the WBL system based on the experience gained over four years of WBL;
- To increase interest in WBL in the company;
- To reduce recruitment costs;
- To improve awareness about the company.



#### Pitfalls and difficulties

The development of WBL is hampered by the following items:

- Lack of students in some fields of study;
- It may not be possible to take as many students as planned into WBL in a company;
- Low interest in WBL by students;
- The insufficient motivation of students to work in the company in WBL;
- The absence of the possibility to verify students' work skills before entering them in WBL;
- Students do not want to stay in the company after graduation.

*"The problem in this field in Slovakia is the low interest in such a form of education and the lack of students' motivation to study and practice in the company."*



### 3.2 The story of Auto Gábiel, Ltd

**AUTO GABRIEL**  
S nami ste stále v pohybe ...

<b>Name of the SME:</b>	Auto Gábiel, s.r.o.
<b>Name of the SME in English</b>	Auto Gábiel, Ltd.
<b>Address:</b>	Ul. osloboditeľov 70, 040 17 Košice, Slovakia
<b>Date of foundation:</b>	13.3.1997
<b>Number of employees:</b>	140
<b>Sector:</b>	Tertiary
<b>Activities:</b>	Car sales and service
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.gabriel.sk/">www.gabriel.sk/</a>

#### History of the enterprise's experience related to apprenticeships/ work-based learning

Auto Gábiel, Ltd. provides Work Based Learning (WBL) since 2015. During 2019, six students studied there in work-based learning.

#### Introduction

This case study focuses on preparing future employees through WBL. In the case study, we point out the issue of developing cooperation between a company and a secondary vocational school with the aim of providing high-quality training in the field of car sales and service for students and their employment opportunities in the company after graduation. The case study describes the collaboration with the school, the beginning, progress and results of Auto Gábiel in the field of WBL between 2015 and 2019.

#### How it started

In 2005 the first three students were trained in the company. The main challenge and problem that Auto Gábiel tries to solve, is the development of cooperation with secondary vocational schools and obtaining qualified employees for the positions of mechanics, tinsmiths, painter and autotronics, as there is a lack of graduates in these fields at the labour market.

The main reason for joining the WBL was to develop a previously established collaboration with a secondary vocational school, to gain the chance to prepare future employees, to increase interest in the field of study required by the company, and to obtain government support for preparation of the students. The company provides students the work clothes, work aids, food allowances, and a suitable working environment. In this way, the company tries to motivate students to stay in the company after graduation.

Auto Gábiel cooperates with school counsellors in the selection of students who are suitable for dual education. They also inform students about the possibility to take part in the WBL. The company also regularly participates in an open-door day at a secondary school where they present WBL. Students can obtain information about the company and WBL on the company website as well. The company enables representatives of primary and secondary schools and their educational advisors to



come and see the workplace directly in the company. Through these activities, the company raises awareness among pupils, parents and educational advisors about WBL.

### What were the next steps?

Auto Gábrriel started officially providing WBL in the school year 2015/2016. In that year, first secondary school students joined the company in WBL. A great advantage was that the company had been cooperating with this school since 2005 when three secondary vocational school students were prepared for the first time. Therefore, the company already had some experience with the practical preparation of students at their workplace and had some background for providing vocational training.

*"WBL is a renewal and reform of the previous concept that has been implemented in Slovakia before 1989 when pupils/apprentices had practical training in companies."*

The first step in providing the WBL in the company was the establishment of a cooperation agreement, a curriculum and a timetable for students. The curriculum contained a list of activities and knowledge that students should acquire at school and in the company. Another important step was to prepare employees of the company to work with students. The staff of the company had received documents that contained a list of activities and knowledge that they were asked to teach the students. As it was mentioned before, the company took a great advantage from the fact that the employees of the company already had experience in working with students. An adequate working environment, all tools and other materials needed for students had been arranged by the company. The safety measures were introduced as well. After finishing these preparatory phases, three pupils joined the WBL in the company in 2015.

### How is the recruitment process done?



Promotion of Auto Gábrriel and WBL in an open door day at the Secondary Vocational Automobile School in Košice

The entire agenda for the WBL in the enterprise is the responsibility of a WBL-experienced staff. This includes e.g. communication with the schools, recruiting students to the WBL, supervising and communicating with staff who supervise students. The designated employees of the company are responsible for the students, while one person is responsible for only one student. As part of dual education, the company offers jobs such as mechanic, plumber, lumberjack, and autotronic.

Auto Gábrriel strives to provide quality WBL and practical training. Therefore, it is also important for the company that students who are interested in particular jobs and possess personal qualities for this education enter the WBL. Before students are admitted to WBL, the company conducts personal interviews with all students interested. After selection, separate contracts with students are concluded. These contracts set out the rights and obligations of students and incentive allowances for them.



## How it works now? What processes have been set up?

The students start in the company with simpler tasks like sawing and grinding. After mastering these basic skills, they are gradually moving to more challenging tasks such as changing tires and then working with engines. The students in upper grades are able to work independently, but the employee of the company who is responsible for them still supervises them. Six pupils are practiced in the company within the WBL in 2019. This year, the company also began to cooperate with electrical engineering secondary school. Auto Gábríel is trying to integrate pupils into the company as much as possible, creating appropriate working conditions and motivating them in such a way that they are interested in staying in the company even after completing dual education.

## What are the results and/or benefits?

Applying the above procedures to the implementation of WBL, Auto Gábríel succeeds in achieving its goals to prepare future employees. The company employed two pupils who were trained there in 2015.

*"WBL is necessary element of training and fulfils the purpose for which it was introduced in Slovakia."*

One WBL graduate was employed in the enterprise in 2018. By employing these dual education graduates, the company has acquired employees who are already familiar with all business processes in the company and know the workplace and other employees, thereby significantly reducing the time required to adapt the worker to the work environment. This represents the most significant benefit of WBL for the company.

## Pitfalls and difficulties

Auto Gábríel faced the following obstacles in implementing WBL:

- Inability to verify pupils' abilities before joining WBL in the company;
- The company must conclude a contract with the pupils during the 1<sup>st</sup> school year and there is no probationary period during which the company can decide whether they accept the student in WBL or not;
- Insufficient tax incentives for the company;
- The government support came too late - the company received government subsidies for WBL after three years since they started providing WBL;
- The subsidies are mainly intended for students and the company is not sufficiently supported;
- Low interest of students to study fields that the company needs - especially the painter;
- Low interest of student to study at secondary vocational school.

## Impact

Students receive financial support and meal vouchers. They become more responsible in learning and have a higher motivation to practice and gain new skills and experience. They also have the possibility of training in the field of their interest and have access to information and knowledge - instructional videos and lectures.

The company has the chance to train quality employees who can be employed after graduation. Graduates who will stay in the company already know the working team





and the working environment. Lastly, the company has direct and indirect government support - subsidies and tax benefits.

The school has also experienced an increase in attendance by students, who have better benefits in WBL.

### Success Factors

By implementing the practices of this good practice, you have the possibility to participate in the preparation of future employees, attract future employees and contribute to the operation of the company.

For successful implementation of WBL in the company it is necessary to provide technical and material support for students, suitable space for students to work and relax, ensure appropriate professional supervision for students, motivate students and cooperate with school, educational counsellors at primary and secondary schools.

### Lessons Learned

- For successful implementation and greater interest in the WBL, all stakeholders need to be well informed about it, and in this respect, it is important to spread awareness of dual learning among pupils, parents, schools and educational counselors at primary and secondary schools;
- A great advantage for a company wishing to engage in providing a WBL is previous experience with the practical preparation of students in the workplace;
- Before introducing WBL into a company, it is necessary to train their own staff to be ready to work with students;
- In order to keep the students' interest in working for the company after completing the WBL, it is necessary to motivate them as early as they start the practical training;
- For WBL to be successful, it is also necessary to provide qualified supervision of students, provide them with the necessary technical and material support and cooperate with the school, educational counselors at primary and secondary schools.



### Successes and opportunities

The main factors contributing to the success of the Auto Gábel in WBL are:

- Previous experience with vocational training at the workplace, staff of the company have worked with students since 2005;
- Long-term cooperation with a secondary vocational school in the field of practical preparation of students in the company;
- To focus on spreading the WBL awareness at primary and secondary schools and among school counsellors. The company also allows educational counselors to personally see the workplace where the pupils will practice;
- Company motivates students to learn and educates them in such a way that they are interested in staying in the company after graduation;
- To adapt practical education in such a way that one employee is always responsible for only one student;



- The company provides to students the possibility of additional training through access to practical information and lectures.

By providing WBL, Auto Gábril experienced:

- Reducing recruitment costs;
- Direct and indirect government support for the provision of WBL;
- The company has managed to employ three WBL graduates and they would like to employ more;
- Good relations with the secondary vocational school with which it cooperates;
- The company has gained further experience in working with students.

*"WBL is a good concept of learning mainly because students can be trained in the enterprise during secondary school studies."*

Opportunities for the future:

- Company spreads its reputation through communication with primary and secondary schools and with educational counselors, who can increase interest in WBL in the company;
- Development of cooperation with other secondary vocational schools;
- Modify the WBL system based on the experience gained during providing dual learning;
- Reducing the enterprise's dependence on the labor market in the case of hiring new employees.



#### **Pitfalls and difficulties**

The development of WBL is hampered by the following items:

- Lack of students in some fields of study;
- Low interest of students in WBL;
- Absence of the possibility to verify students' work skills before entering in WBL;
- Insufficient tax incentives for the company;
- Subsidies are mainly intended for students and not for the enterprise;
- Students who do not have formal/substantial will join the WBL.



## 4. Apprenticeships in Spain

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Dual system apprenticeships in the BASQUE Country can form part of 2 or 3 year programmes. Students can be contracted either on a traineeship contract, a work contract or a traineeship scholarship. Companies are supported by the traineeship VET tutor and the DUAL system coordinator for practical and logistical implementation of the training. This takes the form of regular communication and meetings. If a student is experiencing problems or underperforming (not meeting company expectations etc.) the VET tutor is always involved in decision making and which measures to take to deal with the problem.

At present, companies offering dual system traineeships tend to be larger SMEs and production or industrial companies. The need is for more SMEs to participate in dual training.

There is a perceived gap that company tutors have no formal competence, or possibly in some cases even experience of tutoring or training young apprentices. Company tutors often feel that the role is undervalued and unrecognised in terms of professional value. At present no official accreditation exists in the Basque Country or Spain to bridge this gap.

### 4.1 The story of FORBRASS (part of MEK GROUP)

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<b>Name of the SME:</b>	FORBRASS (part of MEK GROUP)
<b>Name of the SME in English</b>	FORBRASS
<b>Address:</b>	Polígono Industrial Erletxe – Plataforma J, Edificio 1, nave 1 48960 Galdakao (Bizkaia) - Spain
<b>Date of foundation:</b>	1992
<b>Number of employees:</b>	42
<b>Sector:</b>	Metal - Steel
<b>Activities:</b>	Forging and stamping of brass, copper and aluminium
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.forbrass.com">www.forbrass.com</a>

### History of the enterprise's experience related to apprenticeships/ work-based learning

The company has hosted 2 university students in the dual system since 2013. In 2019, they hosted 6 apprentices, 3 university students and 3 VET students.



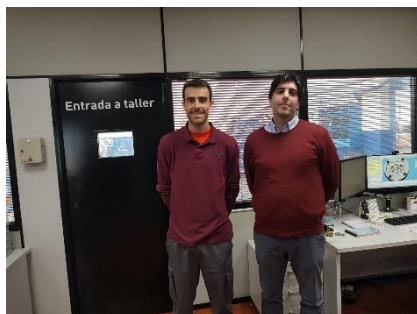
## Introduction

FORBRASS set up a new die manufacturing sector in 2013 and discovered that having student apprentices on work placement or dual system apprenticeships allowed them to train “perfect fit” employees. Other employees taken on from other companies and with diverse experience don’t perform as well.

In 2013 FORBRASS responded to local universities in search of student apprenticeships to train up new workers. In the 2015/16 academic year they incorporated VET graduates into their apprenticeship programme and in 2019 they hosted 3 university based apprentices and 3 VET apprentices.

Forbrass established precise profiles for key sectors in the company and aims to build up a substitute line (a full bench) of highly trained workers for each of these profiles through the apprenticeship programme, to meet generation renewal or gaps in the workforce due to worker turnover. They have dedicated time to establishing objectives for each apprenticeship and then tailor a programme for each student they select. The programme details both steps for their personal and professional development and the apprentice is mentored through those steps towards successful learning.

## Methodological Approach



Mikel Ormaza, apprentice, and Ángel Lázaro, teacher at Politeknika Txorierri

### ACTIVE TUTORING and PERSONAL-PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT BALANCE

FORBRASS designs and carries out a personal and professional development programme for each student apprentice. Each apprentice is followed closely by a designated tutor on both levels. For the professional development side of the plan, the company mentor discusses the programme in depth with the students’ training centre/university tutor. The personal development of each apprentice is given as much attention and care as the

professional plan.

EXAMPLE of personal development: Mikel ORMAZA ZUGASTI (a student of Mechanical Manufacture Design at Politeknika Txorierri) is presently an apprentice with FORBRASS. Mikel is a keen rower. The company’s working schedule until recently was a full day with midday break which has recently been changed into two shifts – the morning and evening shifts. For Mikel to be able to continue training with his rowing club, the company allows him to do an intensive working day without being part of a rotating morning or evening shift while the rowing season lasts.

FORBRASS considers it as important for Mikel to develop personally and learn/develop team skills through his interests, as it is for him to develop as a designer.

## Pitfalls and difficulties

Tutor/mentors at FORBRASS are clear that mentoring their apprentices adequately involves a lot of dedication. A lot of time and energy is needed to structure a plan for each apprentice. If the objective is not clear, then the efforts/talents of all involved are somehow wasted or under-exploited. If you don’t do a good job cooking in the kitchen (putting in the time, the right skills and ingredients...), the results are pretty tasteless and the same is true of apprenticeship programmes.



Student apprentices who come to the company need to know that they have come to learn but also that they have come to contribute to the company. FORBRASS provides a well-structured tutoring programme and a solid learning environment. Each apprentice has the help of a designated mentor/coach so that can develop their competences; they for their part have to work hard and they should be clear about that.

*“Companies should invest time and resources in training the workers they need for the development of the company.”*

Another potential problem is that apprentices who complete their training apprenticeship choose to “leave” the company once their apprenticeship is complete despite the time and effort invested in their development. Very often the personal maturity of a student is the decisive factor. This highlights that no matter how excellent an apprenticeship programme is the objectives and personal dedication/orientation of the apprentice is equally important in determining the overall success in terms of effective job matching at the end of an apprenticeship.

To deal with this both FORBRASS and the educational centre tutors discuss at length the profile of each student suggested for an apprenticeship and FORBRASS takes part in the selection.

Anyway, with regards to the students who have trained with them and who afterwards have gone to other projects, FORBRASS would like to emphasise that although they would have liked the apprentices to stay with them, they understand that they cannot limit their professional development and are very happy to have contributed to equipping them with professional skills that will accompany them throughout their lives. So, on balance the experience is positive and that's why FORBRASS keeps insisting...

### **Impact**

The impact of the healthy tutoring and balanced development programme for apprentices at FORBRASS has led to successful outcomes. FORBRASS now boasts some well-developed, motivated and “designer fit” trained employees who have come through apprenticeships and now meet the needs of the Company. For both the company and the new employee/ex-apprentice the adaptation process is very gentle and simply progresses on from the apprenticeship.

### **Success Factors**

Other SMEs should definitely invest in well-structured individualised development plans which take both the personal and professional development of the student / apprentice into account and support the student with a designated mentor throughout. Although the investment is considerable in terms of time and energy, it makes the experience much more successful. It is very important to have a very clear objective for the learning outcomes and what precise profile this person is being trained for. Close collaboration with the university or VET tutor is useful to prepare adequate professional steps towards that profile.

According to FORBRASS, when you take the time to cook well, the results are evidently much better – much tastier. Time and energy is well spent; the apprentice is trained to specific objectives and feels like they are advancing towards those. While they work hard, they have the sensation that they are valuable and contributing right from the start. By taking an interest in their personal development, it's good for that apprentice's integration into the company and also good for their wellbeing – meaning



that there is a sense of collaboration and team wellbeing. The apprentice is less likely to leave the company after the apprenticeship and to continue developing within the company progressively.



#### Lessons Learned

The implication of the company is fundamental to achieving a good result.

#### Successes and opportunities

Present apprentices are future workers with the specific competences for the positions the company needs to fill.



#### Pitfalls and difficulties

Finding the time for investment in apprentices and apprenticeships is complicated for SMEs in the industrial sector. But if the company doesn't provide adequate personal-professional development they can suffer the flight of talent.

## 4.2 The story of BIKUMA GLOBAL SERVICES SI



<b>Name of the SME:</b>	BIKUMA GLOBAL SERVICES SI
<b>Name of the SME in English</b>	BIKUMA
<b>Address:</b>	C/Luis Bilbao Líbano 16, 1B, 48940 - Leioa – Bizkaia - Spain
<b>Date of foundation:</b>	2014
<b>Number of employees:</b>	8
<b>Sector:</b>	Information Technology
<b>Activities:</b>	Consultancy: web development, communication strategies, training and virtual data systems
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.bikuma.com/">www.bikuma.com/</a>

### History of the enterprise's experience related to apprenticeships/ work-based learning

BIKUMA has hosted 6 VET students on 3-month work-based learning (WBL) modules since the company was founded in 2014. In 2019 they hosted a dual system apprentice for the first time over one full academic year. The apprentice spent 2/3 hours per day in the company during term time and trained full time during the holiday periods.

#### Introduction

BIKUMA uses the latest technology and finds it difficult to find employees with the specific web and systems & content development skills that they need. As such they have welcomed hosting WBL students for 3 months period since setting up their company in 2014 as a way to support the training of technicians who could be potential future employees.

In 2018-19 BIKUMA is hosting a VET EQF level 5 "Systems and Information Technology" student for the first time within the dual system apprenticeship programme



over a 12-month period and aims in this way to be able to directly incorporate well rounded graduates who make a perfect professional fit into their team.

BIKUMA offers the apprentice one on one training in designing web content and systems development. The apprentice is involved from the start of their training in the projects that the company is working on for clients. The company chooses the tutor for each stage of professional training. Learning outcomes of progressive complexity in both professional and personal competences are designed as part of the apprenticeship with the support of the VET tutor. Team competence is given a lot of importance as the apprentice is fully involved in a project team working towards clear project objectives. The apprentice supported by the tutor at each phase of training and/or team project leader, develops explicit planning skills. He/she is part of the team with responsibilities. This “team” training encourages the apprentice to make a lot of effort while gaining in tangible and recognised achievement all the way through the apprenticeship. Competence development is made explicit through an apprenticeship diary which incorporates reflections on both professional and personal skills and tools used or developed. This is reviewed by the apprentice and his company tutor each month.

*“Apprenticeships allow us to train future workers in specific technologies that would otherwise be difficult for us to find in the job market.”*

### **Methodological Approach**

#### **INTEGRATION: PLANNING and “TEAM” DEVELOPMENT**

As a small company of 8 employees, the apprenticeships are designed so that the apprentice literally sits side by side with one of the experts on the team and is integrated into commercial projects from the start of the apprenticeship. The apprenticeship plan covers professional and personal competence development of progressive complexity which sees the apprentice gaining in planning skills, full team involvement and increasing degrees of responsibility and autonomy for task development.

During the projects the apprentice is fully supported and supervised by their tutor – the person they work side by side with. In this way they gradually learn the workings of project development, the way of working, the tools & technologies etc. while assuming their specific tasks on the project. They gradually become more and more autonomous as the apprenticeship progresses and take on tasks of greater responsibility. While working through/along a global progressive personal competence plan established from the outset, they shift to work alongside a new tutor to develop specific professional skills which depend on the specifics of the apprenticeship plan, company projects and their own progress.

The apprenticeship programme is set up at the start of the year with key professional competences or ongoing company projects outlined that they will work on (with the corresponding tutor). The first weeks are dedicated to learning a certain technology and depending on contributions and development in this year they will progress to other projects and tasks during the year.



The first dual system apprentice at BIKUMA (Jon Alberdi) was in the company for 6 months from Sept 2018 until mid-March 2019. He spent the first four weeks learning how the DRUPAL network functions and how to manage and set up elements of the platform. After that he worked on increasingly complex projects related to the



Jokin Goioaga, teacher at PIT, and Mikel Sobradillo, tutor at Bikuma

commercial projects in the company – systems management, firewall design, server design and networks. Jon has been accompanied by an instructor throughout. The experience has been qualified as positive with Jon making solid gains in his practical working knowledge of the most typical industrial digital systems as well as in his teamwork and planning skills. However, Jon suffered an injury in mid-March which means he is currently on sick leave for several weeks. His dual system apprenticeship programme as well as his studies have suffered a setback and at present Jon may have to leave the programme, completing his

studies in June if he manages to pass the theoretical courses. BIKUMA for their part are extremely sorry to have lost Jon at this stage and are looking forward to a new apprentice in October in 2019. They have expressed high satisfaction with the possibilities of the apprenticeship for all the stakeholders and would still dearly love to employ a fully trained apprentice.

### **Pitfalls and difficulties**

As the technologies that BIKUMA uses are highly specific or “the latest”, in their experience no student has used/studied these before. This means that training literally starts at ground level with certain digital systems, which takes time and a lot of investment on the part of the company in terms of employee/tutoring time in the first weeks/months of the apprenticeship. This investment begins to pay off in about 6-months time when the apprentice/student is familiar with web content development.

### **Impact**

The impact of side by side integrated “team learning by doing” has meant that the (even in the reduced 6-month period) apprentice has gained enormously in professional competence (understanding and practical competence development in web content design and systems) and in personal competence. Thanks to the side by side expert (clearly planned) tutoring and support, involvement in the reality of a project team and objectives and regular reflection on learning, the apprentice has real experience in planning, greater autonomy and a sense of responsibility and achievement, which is excellent for his CV and self-esteem.

BIKUMA has also “lived” the reality of planning and supporting the training process of a longer term part time (dual system) apprentice and now feels more “confident” and knowledgeable about planning, supporting and tutoring an apprenticeship programme. They have witnessed the real advances in the apprentice’s skills in a relatively short period and specifically in the systems and networks that they use. Working so closely with the apprentice also gives them a hand in shaping that person’s personal competences which is an invaluable part of working in a team.





## Success Factor

BIKUMA considers that SMEs should definitely take on an apprentice(s) and integrate them into team processes and objectives right from the start, and in working towards progressively more challenging tasks and involvement. This means the apprentice feels motivated and valuable while also learning key planning, professional and team skills, as well as developing their sense of responsibility and autonomy. A good plan for the apprenticeship which works steadily through the tasks areas the company needs and close (side by side) tutoring is the basic framework. Another element BIKUMA would recommend is that the apprentice keeps an apprenticeship diary detailing their learning (progress), the tools and processes they integrate both in the professional and personal competence areas. This can be reviewed and contrasted with the apprenticeship tutor (and the VET– training centre tutor as well) and initial company or personal objectives for a certain period. It also encourages the apprentice to be aware of their advances and areas for improvement.

Although the investment in an apprenticeship is considerable in terms of time at the beginning, it is one of the few ways to ensure precise training and getting what you want from your apprentice /employee in terms of skills. BIKUMA believes that close collaboration with the VET tutor will mean a company gets the closest possible match in terms of skills and personal competences and they also help a lot in informing you of what the apprentice is initially capable of. This helps understand learning capabilities and from where to begin a professional/personal skills development plan.

Being willing to sit side by side with an apprentice/trainee and to take sufficient time to train and support their learning (while offering challenges and quality feedback), means they will stay motivated and work hard and little by little acquire the profile you desire. This close contact ensures steady progress and good results for all involved.

### Lessons Learned



Be aware that the apprenticeship is a step by step process. If the process is well supported there is a return. Remember to encourage the apprentice. We´ve all started from zero.

### Successes and opportunities

Close collaboration between BIKUMA and the VET centre means that the VET tutor knows the company´s profile and needs and can better select the most suited student apprentice.

### Pitfalls and difficulties



The first few months require a lot of time being spent in training and supporting the apprentice when you literally have to start at grassroots explaining the “what” and “how” of everything.



## 5. Apprenticeships in Bulgaria

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The Ministry of Education and Science (MES) developed a Model of partnership between VET schools and enterprises. The Model is based on LVET. The partnership VET school – enterprise is established with a contract between the school and the respective enterprise and Memorandums of Understanding between MES and the interested branch employers' organisation and between MES and the respective municipality. The enterprise makes prognosis about its needs of professionals at the beginning of the school year and the school plans its enrolment based on this. The number of students to be enrolled is agreed with the municipality. The curriculum for vocational training is developed jointly by the school and the enterprise in compliance with the learning outcomes defined in the State Educational Requirements (SER) for acquisition of qualification in the respective profession. In the last two grades (11 and 12) of the VET school: the practical training is realised in the respective enterprise.

As a response to the current need to improve the quality of vocational training by providing actual work placements on the basis of the school-business partnership, the Ministry of Education and Science (MES) implemented the Student Placement Project under the Human Resources Development Operational Programme financed by the European Social Fund. The project provides conditions for systemic and effective approach for cooperation between vocational schools and local business, for bigger autonomy of educational institutions, for new opportunities for the development and implementation of independent school policies. Conditions are also created for more flexibility of placement organization within the VET system on the basis of local and regional business and it improves the whole VET system and the field of students placements in particular. The Student Placement Project makes it possible for the business sector to be more actively involved in the development of curricula concerning vocational training in professions, which improves the links between the results from the vocational education and the needs of the constantly changing labour market. Project activities also contribute to the qualification enhancement of trainers in the VET system by helping them acquire certain competencies related to the organization of placements in real work environment based on effective partnership with employers-partners.



### 5.1 The story of GABINVEST EOOD

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<b>Name of the SME:</b>	GABINVEST EOOD
<b>Name of the SME in English</b>	GABINVEST LTD.
<b>Address:</b>	1 Kapinata, 5300 Gabrovo, Bulgaria
<b>Date of foundation:</b>	1992
<b>Number of employees:</b>	200
<b>Sector:</b>	Metallurgy, hunting industry
<b>Activities:</b>	Components for hunting and air-guns and precision sports pistols in the premium segment of the hunting industry
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.gabinvest.eu">www.gabinvest.eu</a>



## **History of the enterprise's experience related to apprenticeships/ work-based learning**

The company has been involved in apprenticeships for 3 years and has hosted 10 apprentices.

### **Introduction**

The technology advancement and business growth in EU and abroad put the firm in a difficult situation to find the right skills and employees, they started looking for talent everywhere and based on the forecast made the first move to secure partnerships at a very early stage with schools and universities.

At the same time a new dual education system was introduced in the "Mechanical Engineer" specialty, "Machines and systems with CNC" with 7th grade admission and intensive study of English at "Prof. Nikola Vassiliadi" Vocational Technical School in partnership with the companies Gabinvest EOOD, Impuls AD, Podemkran AD, Threading Tools Gabrovo EOOD and CERATITIT Bulgaria AD.

### **Methodological Approach**

After the school year 2015/2016, the first two classes for training in the dual system in Bulgaria were successfully implemented - in Sofia with 27 students in the "Economist" specialty "Trade" and in the town of Gabrovo with 26 students in the profession "Mechatronics", another 5 new classes were launched in the school year 2016/2017 and the years after that. This is initiated under a project with Austria and following their successful practices and model which was introduced to all firms participating in it - ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA.

There is a new common curriculum for preparation of students where theory is combined with practice in the SMEs and some large companies. At the end of their studies, pupils who have completed the new dual form of education receive, in addition to a certificate of acquired professional qualification, a third degree - a guarantor of acquired professional competences, as well as a diploma for completed secondary education, which allows them to access a higher education institution. Those of the learners who have demonstrated skills, motivation and responsibility then have the opportunity not only to continue working in the partner companies but to further develop and even take leadership positions in companies.

### **Pitfalls and difficulties**

In general, dual education and VET has been under development only in the past few years in Bulgaria. The most important player in the development of dual learning is the business. We as the business in Bulgaria have to take up much of the initiative to start a class in the specialty that we need to have the skills. First, you have to check if there is a nearby school that prepares students for this profession and talk to them. A company rarely accepts a whole class - even large ones accept 5-10 students, and in order to have a dual-form, an entire class should be trained on the same program. This means that inter-company partnerships need to be created. The school and the company then draw up a timetable for the practical training, and the companies appoint mentors to train students in the workplace. The minimum is 1 mentor per 5 learners. Companies sign a labor contract with the student and pay him/her a wage of 90% of the minimum wage in relative terms to the work done.



## Impact

Higher quality and preparation of skills relevant to the needs of businesses, higher motivation of pupils and exchange of knowledge and skills for their career path. Very often young people have no idea about their future work and sector for their career. They don't have enough information, and this led to lack of motivation. The tutors are also older and can't support them in the use of some new technologies and approaches to attract them. Thus, the good practices like this is one of the few to help in the process. Furthermore, certain profession, like Machine technicians, do not attract students anymore. Most of them dream about following a profession in management and IT.

## Success Factors

Gabrovo is one of the few regions in Bulgaria where a sufficient number of companies and schools are active in VET. The local technical university is the other intersection between business and education in the area where it is invested in the next generation of talent. 750 students from the region are accepted every year which is potential employees for them and a wide pool to choose. The region represents 17% of VET in Bulgaria. In addition, the business has set very good practices and applies new approaches as well: scholarships, Demo days, open house days, flexible work hours and financial support in addition to the salary. It is very beneficial that the cost of living in Gabrovo as a small town compared to the big cities is relatively low and students and SMEs can afford covering the rent and other expenses. The businesses in the region are in close relations and exchange staff, good practices and benefits among them. This is the key success factor and should be applied to other regions in Bulgaria with similar features.

## Lessons Learned

The active participation of businesses especially the SMEs in the education process and system are crucial. SMEs need to take certain steps and unite efforts in order to overcome the shortage of talent and skills in the engineering field which is overlooked by young people as a career path. When there is a common initiative and even better – a project led by leaders in dual education – this is the key success factor and motivation for others to join.



### Successes and opportunities

GABINVEST LTD. is part of the pilot project for the development of dual education in Bulgaria together with the Austrian embassy, several companies from Gabrovo and the vocational technical high school. Pupils are very motivated to work in the firm and learn new things. They apply the theory and help generate new ideas and use new technologies.



### Pitfalls and difficulties

The main challenge is finding qualified and prepared employees in smaller cities in Bulgaria. The dual system is very new developing only in the past 3-4 years with the support of leaders Austria, Germany and Switzerland. Business must be the active part and consult VET institutions about the needs of skills, new curriculum and programs for preparation of engineers. Students are not motivated to study in these fields. Campaigns and support by the government are needed to foster this process.



## 5.2 The story of BIOMASHIN



<b>Name of the SME:</b>	БИОМАШИНОСТРОЕНЕ АД
<b>Name of the SME in English</b>	BIOMASHIN AD
<b>Address:</b>	160 Vasil Aprilov blvd. 4003 Plovdiv, Bulgaria
<b>Date of foundation:</b>	1986
<b>Number of employees:</b>	250
<b>Sector:</b>	Food industry, technological equipment
<b>Activities:</b>	Biomashin is a leading company, specialized in design and production of technological equipment for the dairy, food-processing, brewery, beverages, pharma and cosmetic industries.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.biomashin.com">www.biomashin.com</a>

### History of the enterprise's experience related to apprenticeships/ work-based learning

The company has hosted 4 apprentices since 2017.

#### Introduction

Dual education is introduced in Bulgaria within the project “Swiss support for the introduction of dual track principles in the Bulgarian vocational education system”, financed by Switzerland under the Bulgarian-Swiss Cooperation Programme. The project is better known in Bulgaria as DOMINO, the Bulgarian abbreviation for dual education for the modern needs and requirements of the society. The implementation of the project started in 2015, when students of the Vocational School for Food Processing Technologies “Prof. Dr. Georgi Pavlov” in Sofia and the Vocational School “Ivan Hadzhiev” in Kazanlak (Southern Bulgaria) pioneered in the introduction of dual education following the Swiss model.

The DOMINO project offers seminars for the preparation of educational documentation and training of teachers and mentors from the companies. In addition, student insurances, scholarships, and advertising and administration costs are provided.

#### Methodological Approach

Since 2017, Biomashinostroene is a partner in a Dual Learning project, and company employees are students of the XI and XII grade who are working as part of their practical training. The SME implements a program in partnership with VET school Prof. Tsvetan Lazarov, and four students of CNC machines work and train simultaneously in a real working environment under a special program of the Domino Project of the Swiss-Bulgarian Cooperation Program.

#### Pitfalls and difficulties

A very small proportion of pupils work in the future for the profession they were trained in the vocational high school. There is a need for a national survey of what percentage of graduating vocational schools work on a profession for which they have been trained for 4 or 5 years. An analysis of the results should be followed by reforms. This is a long process and projects like DOMINO can speed up the process. One of the main roles of the public administration is to promote vocational training and to coordinate the business needs and the offer of vocational secondary schools in regions. Curricula and



programs that are being developed need to be updated, and textbooks and aids in technical disciplines - less theory and more visual elements.

### Impact

Young people get a real idea of the specifics of each profession, as well as the skills they need in everyday life. With students aged 12-15 they work on early career development programs. The firm makes demonstrations on the principle "How is it produced ..." and present all the professions to be involved in the process.

Besides practical experience, students also receive reward and internship from the company during their work with them.

### Success Factors

In total 1,134 pupils in 32 vocational schools in 19 towns are enrolled in dual education under the Swiss Cooperation Project DOMINO. More than 170 Bulgarian and foreign companies are participating in the dual education project. The new training system provides SMEs with the necessary tools and approaches which can't be developed in-house and with their own resources like the large companies.

### Lessons Learned

The knowledge of other countries and the good old traditions of Bulgarian vocational education are combined and lead to successful execution of new curricula and participation of business in dual education. Pilot project and best practices are much easier to be implemented by SMEs. The firm used the opportunities and partnerships within project DOMINO to successfully develop an apprenticeship model and program since 2017. It is however a long process and it is affected by external factors and players who also need to cooperate and contribute to apprenticeships. Biomachin started only in 2017 and tracks the results to adapt and make it more efficient in future.



#### Successes and opportunities

Higher rate of successful candidates for the job openings, ease of access to young people eager to learn and work. The employees are also willing to be mentors and tutors and exchange practices and knowledge not only with schools and tutors but also with the parents and authorities not directly involved. The existence of good practices and models to be used by SMEs is a key factor for success.



#### Pitfalls and difficulties

Only with foreign pilot projects, without state policies, the dual learning method will not turn professional high schools into blacksmiths for business executives and creators of well-paid jobs. Another pitfall is the attitude of the society and the attractiveness of the professions in the engineering sector. Vocational schools have difficulty in recruiting students because this type of training is not popular among children or parents. This leads to a shortage of pupils to be recruited and enrolled in the new programs.



## 6. Apprenticeships in Italy

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Apprenticeship was first introduced in Italy in 1955 as an employment contract for young people. It was reformed several times in the following decades, with major changes from the late 1990s, when youth employment measures started to be conceived and designed in connection to education and training policies. In 2003, apprenticeship took on the current structure it still has: three apprenticeship schemes. All apprenticeship schemes are defined as open-ended employment contracts and apprentices are fully entitled to rights and obligations of standard employees.

The 2015 reform of employment contracts revised the legal framework of the three apprenticeship schemes. These had the following characteristics at the time of the review:

1. Apprenticeship for vocational qualifications and diplomas, upper secondary education diplomas and high technical specialisation certificates.
2. Occupation-oriented apprenticeship'. This is a scheme outside the VET system, which leads to an occupational qualification.
3. Higher education and research apprenticeship.

There are different types of incentives to hire apprentices, such as the possibility of providing lower remuneration than other workers who perform the same activities (in consideration of the training commitment that characterises the apprenticeship contract), or the exclusion of apprentices from the calculation of personnel. When the enterprise hires an apprentice, an individual training plan has to be laid down by the firm. This plan is drafted according to the training goals and educational targets which are stated in the relevant profile outlined by the regional authorities with the social partners. The individual training plan will make the reference for the company-based training.

### 6.1 The story of Eurocrea Merchant SRL



<b>Name of the SME:</b>	EUROCREA MERCHANT SRL
<b>Name of the SME in English:</b>	EUROCREA MERCHANT
<b>Address:</b>	Via Domenico Scarlatti 30, Milan, Italy
<b>Number of employees:</b>	More than 20
<b>Sector:</b>	Entrepreneurship education and training
<b>Activities:</b>	Innovation in the Italian SMEs system
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.eurocreamerchant.it">www.eurocreamerchant.it</a>

#### History of the enterprise's experience related to apprenticeships/ work based learning

As Eurocrea Merchant started growing during the last years, the company found itself in a shortage of skilled work force. Furthermore, as it did not have a specific department, employees of different departments covered the needs for human resources administration. Recruiting and selecting the right candidates took some time as the field of expertise of the company is quite specific. So, Eurocrea Merchant



introduced Work based learning activities in order to know and train the new “work force” before hiring new staff. The company has hosted 1 apprentice during the past year, while it has hosted different trainees in the past.

### Introduction

The steady growth of the company showed the need to have an extra support in some of the activities such as social media management and translation. The company then signed collaboration contracts with universities in its area in order to activate apprenticeship and/or Work Based Learning experiences with their students or graduates

### Methodological Approach

The recruitment of apprentices is conducted in close collaboration with career offices of the Universities and university mentors. This way the company ensures that the apprenticeship programme fits the needs of the students and that the tasks assigned to them are relevant and intrigue their interests. The objective is to turn students into professionals, equipped with the right skills and competences.

*“EUROCREA wants to improve the competitiveness and innovation of European society.”*

Firstly, Eurocrea Merchant does an internal assessment of the skills needed in line with the company strategic plan for the following years. Then, the company creates a “job profile” folder, which includes the description of the company, the required profile, and skills and competence needed. Then, it contacts the university and/or university mentors to check availability of students interested in the “job opening”. If they have interested candidates that match the company’s requirements, they activate the work-based learning activity. If not, the company uses online portals (ex. LinkedIn etc.), social media and other relevant tools, to find the right candidates.

At the end of the work based learning activity, youth workers are asked to provide feedback about their experience.

### Pitfalls and difficulties

One of the main difficulties Eurocrea encountered was the time needed for the initial training of apprentice/trainees, since it was their first working experience. Tutors needed to teach apprentices basic tasks before devoting time to more essential skills development, which was time worthy.

Time devoted to train a new trainee/apprentice is quite high especially at the beginning, not only because of basic training but also because time is needed to “correct their mistakes” as part of the learning process. Usually it takes more than 6 months to train a new member of staff according to the internal quality standards.

The internal tutor is a full-time worker of the organisation, so, at least at the beginning, hiring a new trainee/apprentice decreased the tutor’s productivity. The overall productivity was therefore recovered when the apprentice/trainee was trained and decided to stay in the company longer as an employee.

Another difficulty encountered was to select workers whose mission was to work in the field of the SME’s activities. Indeed, work-based learning activities are means through





which young workers understand if they really like the job, as it is possible that the trainee does not like the field of expertise of the SME.

As a conclusion, work based learning activities are a means for both the SMEs and the young workers to understand if their interest match!

### Impact

The impact can be seen on both the apprentice/trainee and the company. Apprentices have the chance to acquire real work experience in a real work environment, spend time on the job market of their interest (or not) and gain valuable know how. On the other hand, the company received support and met new people with high potential, which at the end of the experience were ready professionals, with the possibility to be hired by the company.

Even if in the short run the impact is not visible, in the long run implementing work-based learning activities helps both SMEs and young workers to meet each other's needs.

### Success Factors

Apprenticeships and Work Based Learning give Small and Medium Enterprises the chance to train, test and meet potential new staff.

Another successful factor is the integration of new point of views in the organisational structure and new life skills and competences inside an organisation. Furthermore, new trainees and apprentices provide a chance for full time workers to increase their competences as tutors and learn by transferring their knowledge.



### Lessons Learned

Hiring a trainee, is a powerful way to meet new people/future employees, but you must consider training them (so, invest time in WBL).

Furthermore, the difficulties of the tasks you assign to a new trainee are proportional to his/her motivation and the chance that he/she will become a future employee. In a way you are investing in them.

### Successes and opportunities

WBL is an opportunity for the trainee to get to know a new organisation and understand in which area he/she wants to specialise.

For the SME, it's an opportunity to recruit motivated and trained people.



### Pitfalls and difficulties

Invest time to create partnership with organisations (such as University and VET centre) and invest time to train the new person.



## 6.2 The story of Ca.Ve.Co. S.r.l.

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<b>Name of the SME:</b>	Ca.Ve.Co. S.r.l.
<b>Address:</b>	Via C. Golgi 18, Palazzolo sull'Oglio (Brescia), Italy
<b>Date of foundation:</b>	24/01/1979
<b>Number of employees:</b>	23
<b>Sector:</b>	Manufacturing
<b>Activities:</b>	Packaging machines
<b>Website:</b>	www.caveco.it/

### History of the enterprise's experience related to apprenticeships/ work-based learning

Recently, facing the need to find specialised personnel, the company has begun to use the apprenticeship.

#### Introduction

The company's staff had an orders' overload, and some employees were close to retirement. The company needed to incorporate new employees, but it was hard to find on the labor market workers already specialised in the required tasks.

#### Methodological Approach

The company started to recruit young people with the ideal school education and started teaching them practical tips. The goal was to train the future generations of employees specialised in both machine assembly and 3D design. With this approach, the company aimed to empower its employees with the technological update and the experience gained in the company.

#### Pitfalls and difficulties

The risk that one runs, choosing the apprenticeship, is that whoever enters the company makes a leap in the dark and it can happen that after the first weeks the new worker understands that that work is not its future. Furthermore, there is the risk of transferring know-how to a person who decides not to stay to the company and work with a competitor.

*"We care for your foods."*

#### Impact

The impact in CAVECO, was a renewal of personnel with the inclusion of young workers who have the opportunity to work and learn, improving company know-how.



## Success Factors

The main advantage for SMEs is that they can count on a young staff but with the necessary experience and expertise, supporting an apprenticeship cost that is much lower than that of classic employees.



### Lessons Learned

Apprenticeship is certainly a facilitated path in the fast and successful growth of SMEs, because it allows to build the pillars of the corporate future, handing down the experience to motivated young people and saving on recruitment costs.

## Successes and opportunities

The right mix of the most up-to-date culture and the transfer of experience can only lead to a positive improvement in the way the company works.



### Pitfalls and difficulties

If you do not devote time to teaching, no one will ever learn, and the knowledge will be lost. Failure is part of the path to the goal.



## 7. Apprenticeships in Portugal

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The National Qualification System (SNQ) establishes apprenticeship courses as an initial vocational education and training modality. The objective of these courses is to support the labour market entrance of young people (15-25 years) by improving academic, personal, social and relational skills, providing knowledge and know-how in the field of science and technology and offering practical work experience. They are carried out in alternance training schemes, privileging the insertion in the labour market but also enabling the pursuing of studies. More precisely, apprenticeship courses are a double certification training alternative, as they simultaneously confer an ISCED level 3 vocational qualifications and the upper secondary academic qualification.

Apprenticeship courses are provided by the vocational training centers of the Institute of Employment and Vocational Training (Instituto do Emprego e Formação Profissional), hereinafter referred to as IEFP. External certified training centers (more than 170), in articulation with IEFP, and entities/enterprises that support alternance are also part of the process. Alternance supporting entities, through protocols celebrated with IEFP, frame the trainees during the courses. These companies (public and private) are from several economic areas including ICT, electricity and power, transports, among others. About 5.000 national entities regularly cooperate with IEFP (CEDEFOP, 2014).

### 7.1 The story of Gatelven, Lda

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<b>Name of the SME:</b>	Gatelven, Lda
<b>Name of the SME in English:</b>	Gatelven
<b>Address:</b>	Praceta Actor Francisco Lopes Ribeiro, n 4, Venda Nova, 2700 – 007 Amadora, Portugal
<b>Date of foundation:</b>	1996
<b>Number of employees:</b>	150
<b>Sector:</b>	Trade and services
<b>Main activities</b>	Commercialization of products, international trade
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.gatelven.pt/en">www.gatelven.pt/en</a>

#### History of the enterprise's experience related to apprenticeships/ work based learning

The company started out by signing a cooperation protocol with the Vocational Training Centre for the Commerce and Services (CECOA), in order to receive trainees. Until now, it has trained 4 Trainees, 3 of the International Trade Area (EQF level 5 course) and 1 trainee from the Accounting Technician Area (EQF level 4 course).

*“Results are measured by the effectiveness of the operation. In this case, it can be said that an integration of the trainees also contributed to an increase in sales and a significant improvement of the internal operation.”*



## Introduction

Gateleven, Lda is a company that works in the retail trade area, travel sales, fashion and sports articles. The contact with CECOIA began in 2016, under the coordination of Sílvia Coelho, to analyse if it would be possible to establish a collaboration protocol.

The cooperation protocol signed between the two organisations, considered the host of trainees without costs by the company, who would work as assistants to other employees. The education programme of the trainings was conducted by both the company and the VET centre and was given to the company trainers in order to apply it.

The company also made contacts with other VET centres, to attract more trainees. Currently the company receives trainees from CECOIA and CITEFORMA - Centro de Formação Profissional dos Trabalhadores de Escritório, Comércio, Serviços e Novas Tecnologias, another VET provider.

In terms of procedures, trainees are followed up and supported by the Human resource manager (Bruno Fonseca) and by the people in charge of the various areas, namely logistics, finance, human resources, IT or window dressing, who act as tutors of the trainees.

Each internship begins by identifying training needs in the company, at the work context, in a transversal way. Trainees are integrated transversally, which means that there is no tight organization and hierarchy. The secret of success is the constant dynamism. There is a monthly meeting with all employees, and everyone participates in the decisions and strategies followed. They discuss objectives, goals, strategies, new business approaches, analyse the problems of teams that directly contact clients, define priorities.



Bruno Fonseca, responsible for the Human Recourse area of Gateleven

Decisions are based on contact with people. Humility is cultivated to transmit knowledge and a culture of opportunities to young people who are part of it. In the company the working hours are respected, the salary is paid "religiously" on the first day of the month and there is a low rate of absenteeism and staff turnover.

*"We never wanted or want interns to serve coffees and take photocopies."*

The training is supported internally, on the job or in the classroom, it is a "cooperative" training based on company culture, stability and the quality of the team.

## Methodological Approach

The company makes sure that the young apprentice lives the day to day work in a full and integrated way in the company, with direct guidance from the tutors. The tutor passes his knowledge to the trainee and then the information is integrated in the activities that he/she performs. What is intended is for the person to be involved in activities that he or she has learned.

Trainees have access to the "total" dynamics of the company from Product Management to Marketing. There is participation and total involvement, as well as daily integration of positive attitude dynamics formally or informally. And employees feel the result of their investment.



Iryna Brytikova did her internship at Gateleven. She is from the International Trade Course (level 5, technological specialization diploma) in CECO and now is sales assistance.

The results are measured by the effectiveness of the processes. It can be said that with the entry of these trainees, the company experienced a very strong growth in sales in the year 2018.

In addition to the enhancement of technical knowledge, the policy of welcoming interns to the company, also contributed to the feeling of being an essential part of Gateleven employees who are recognised, respected for their abilities. This enhances their self-esteem and self-confidence.

### Pitfalls and difficulties

The main difficulty is the time needed to grow this project even more. The company foresees the development of a “Gateleven Academy” with support from various entities that will promote training and at the same time form a source of recruitment and selection of future employees.

### Impact

Some good examples of the impact that this programme had on trainees are:

Igor Rabino who is now a Gateleven employee in the area of product management and IT - Information Technologies.



Igor Rabino did his internship at Gateleven. He is from International Trade Course (level 5, technological specialization diploma) in CECO and now is product manager at Gateleven.

The former intern Iryna Brytikova is now a Sales Assistant at a store, in the Travel and Luxury an accessories segment, at Avenida da Liberdade. Trainees from the logistics area, Susana Ramos and Roberta Tavares, who are in the administrative and financial area. Vanda Nobre trained as a window dresser, who at the moment is a saleswoman of the company in El Corte Inglés.

### Success Factors



Susana Ramos did her internship at Gateleven. She is also from the International Trade Course (level 5, technological specialization diploma) in CECO and now is working in the logistics area of Gateleven.

The company’s organisational culture is more oriented to professional and personal qualities of the employees and the Centralisation of their Services or Departments:

The integration of long-term professional internships in the workplace is the best way to comprehensively identify future new employees by identifying their potential, talent, ability to integrate into the team, culture, motivation.

The way the trainee integrates in the company, helps the decision making regarding the possibility of further employment. Personality traits and capacity of emotional management are always considered.



The constant motivation of trainees increases their will to “stay” at the company, while also develops Gratitude, Enthusiasm and Commitment. Trainees are happy to work for the company and willing to keep up and stay with the team.



Roberta Tavares did her internship at Gateleven. She was from the Accountability course (level 4, equivalence to the 12th year of schooling) in CECOIA and now she is at the financial and administrative area of Gateleven.

### Lessons Learned

- Increased confidence and certainty in the process of selecting new employees;
- Improvement and accuracy of this selection in relation to the functions and tasks required;
- The Initial Training process related to procedures, tools, standards, company culture maximise profitability of the organisation;
- Improvement of the agility and quality evidenced by the integration of these trainees.



### Successes and opportunities

- Successful integration of almost all trainees. People have to be predisposed to participate and get involved in everything. The success lies also in the identification of the potential and the talent of the people;
- New areas of training to take into account, for example, computer security.



### Pitfalls and difficulties

The biggest difficulty was to identify if the person is able to integrate into the team and be motivated to learn.

## 7.2 The story of Pinto & Cruz Gestão, Lda



**PINTO & CRUZ**  
Gestão

<b>Name of the SME:</b>	Pinto & Cruz Gestão, Lda
<b>Name of the SME in English:</b>	Pinto & Cruz Group
<b>Address:</b>	Rua Engenheiro Ferreira Dias, 469 – Ramalde – Oporto, Portugal
<b>Date of foundation:</b>	2012, after decision of a spin-off of Pinto & Cruz, S.A. created in 21 of January 1935 (Nowadays, part of the P&C Group)
<b>Number of employees:</b>	42 employees
<b>Sector:</b>	Pinto & Cruz Gestão, Lda provides several financial, administrative, communication, marketing, human resources and information systems services for the companies of the entire Group.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.pintocruz.pt">www.pintocruz.pt</a>



## Introduction

Pinto & Cruz Gestão, Lda was born in 2012 as the result of a spin-off of Pinto & Cruz, SA, which was born more than 84 years ago, in the city of Oporto. At that time, the company decided to be involved with engineering services executing the major part of its activity in special facilities although the area of Tubes, Valves and Accessories also existed since then. Pinto & Cruz Gestão, Lda, provides support to other companies in the group, in a very diversified business area and is present in other geographical areas.

Pinto & Cruz Gestão has approximately 42 employees, with a total sale of 2.2M Euros, and provides services to the Group's companies in the areas of financial services, communication, marketing, human resources, information, administrative, among others. The P&C Group today operates at global level, with more than 550 employees and in 2018 we represent a total sale of 52.4M Euros.

Hosting trainees has been part of the company's culture ever since it was born. The company has appointed a special branch in the human resources department, which is responsible for the management of professional and curricular internships.

With CECOIA, the company has a long-term partnership. The company welcomed trainees mainly in the Oporto region and in areas as diverse as Secretariat, Accounting, Logistics Technician and Management Support Technician. Most recently, during April 2019, two stages of Management Support Technician were completed, which took place in Human and Financial Resources.

Many of the students that are trained in the company have been hired after the end of the internship and have been successfully integrated.

Pinto & Cruz Gestão privileges the reception of trainees during an internship period because this allows the company to closely monitor their professional performance, for a certain period of time, since integrating young people into the company is one of the main objectives of the whole incentive. Pinto & Cruz Gestão also has one rule: to give real tasks to trainees and involve them into the company processes. The company is fully aware of the importance of the internship for their future professional life of young students.

Nowadays the companies / departments proactively seek for trainees. They look for people who can meet their requirements and later integrate them. This is often the beginning of a recruitment process because it offers a contractual commitment with greater flexibility.

## Methodological Approach

The reception of trainees, can occur in two ways:

- a) The human resources department receives all the requests for trainees' internship, discloses them to all Group companies, always fostering the interest in

*"We offer the possibility of making a career in the company starting with a curricular internship. I'm an example: I started by internship at the administrative area. After that, I integrated some other departments within the company and when I went to study again, to get a human resources degree, I was invited for this department later on, about a year after. Now, I'm the main responsible for this department."*





receiving them, and if feasible manages this whole process with the entities and the company/department of hosting.

b) When any group/department of the company has a specific need, the human resources department contacts the partner VET centre to confirm if the interns are available to be hosted.



Associated with the reception of the trainees Pinto & Cruz Gestão appoints a tutor, who accompanies the trainee in the whole process. The human resources department disseminates and seeks solutions at the level of the internships and at the same time manages the monitoring and procedure of the internship.

The appointment of tutors is part of the company's culture. Only in extreme cases, internships have been terminated due to lack of interest from trainees.

After the internship period, the trainees' performance is evaluated and formalised, and then sent to schools/vocational training centres. The success rate is high because the integration rate is also high. Pinto & Cruz Gestão offers trainees the possibility of making a career in the company after finishing their curricular internship.

### Pitfalls and difficulties



The main difficulty was to convince the heads of the various companies/departments to welcome the trainees for an internship period. Once this issue was overcome, the main difficulty was related to the stages of selecting young people: how they interact with companies. Schools and VET centres do not teach students how to behave in a real work environment. The trainees come prepared from a technical point of view, but they lack soft skills, this whole new world of behaving in companies. Since they are not prepared sometimes entering directly into a real work environment intimidates them. There are times when the company had to intervene and direct the interns.

Another difficulty faced by the company are internships that take place only one day per week. It prefers internships that occur five days a week which allows the company to better prepare the tasks, better follow and assign responsibilities to the trainee.

### Impact

In social terms, and when we talk about young people, the reception of trainees allows them to know the reality of the company. On the other side, there is the possibility of career retraining and integration.

The whole process has allowed Pinto & Cruz Gestão to know trainees' practical performance of duties and when there is a need for recruitment to make a more conscious decision of integration.



For the trainees, it has everything to do with the company's methodology, as it puts the trainees in the context of work-based learning. This experience completes what they learn in the teaching context. In addition, from the moment they enter the company, the trainees have an opportunity for integration into the company, which gives them a career opportunity like all other employees.

### Success Factors

Internships can be the beginning of a career and therefore there is nothing better than having a period to know the person and evaluate their behavioural and technical profile. If there is the possibility of welcoming trainees, with commitment, this represents a win-win situation for both parties involved.



### Lessons Learned

Curricular internships are a world of opportunity for companies to find talent.

### Successes and opportunities

The success rate becomes greater with permanence and retention from the company.



### Pitfalls and difficulties

The lack of preparation of young trainees who are not prepared to integrate into the business world in terms of positioning. The tutors should also play an educational role.



## 8. Apprenticeships in Greece

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Apprenticeship has existed in Greece as a distinct vocational education and training (VET) option for learners at upper secondary level since the 1950s, in the form of the EPAS (vocational (upper secondary) training schools) apprenticeship scheme, largely offered through OAED (Manpower Employment Organisation), the national public employment service. Since 2013, echoing renewed attention in EU policies on the topic, apprenticeship has been a priority in the VET policy developments in Greece. Activity to reform VET and apprenticeship in the country was particularly intensive between 2013 and 2016; it included the launch of a series of secondary laws, decisions and circulars particularly affecting the structure and governance of the apprenticeship system as well as the operational aspects of the system. The 2016 national strategic framework for upgrading VET including apprenticeships (hereafter referred to as 2016 VET strategy) includes the gradual introduction of new apprenticeship schemes next to the existing one offered by OAED.

As a result of these developments, the apprenticeship system in Greece includes:

- (a) the EPAS scheme offered at upper secondary level;
- (b) the EPAL (vocational education schools) scheme offered at postsecondary level;
- (c) the apprenticeship scheme of the vocational training institutes (IEK) offered at post-secondary level.

### 8.1 The story of Scientific Centre for Physiotherapy, P. Kostoula

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<b>Name of the SME:</b>	Φυσικοθεραπευτήριο, Επιστημονικό κέντρο Φυσικοθεραπείας, Π. Κωστούλα
<b>Name of the SME in English</b>	Physiotherapy, Scientific Centre for Physiotherapy, P. Kostoula
<b>Address:</b>	Gerakari 2, 45333, Ioannina, Greece
<b>Date of foundation:</b>	1996
<b>Number of employees:</b>	2
<b>Sector:</b>	Physiotherapy
<b>Activities:</b>	Natural remedies, therapeutic massage, home treatment.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.petroskostoulas.gr/">www.petroskostoulas.gr/</a>

#### History of the enterprise's experience related to apprenticeships/ work-based learning

The company welcomes students through internships in the last seven year, while it has received 7 students in total. The average duration of the internship is 6 months.



## Introduction

After much thought, and in order to find suitable future associates, the company's representative decided to employ students through internship programmes, from physiotherapy departments. In the beginning, he contacted VET centres from the Ioannina region, where the representative announced the company's intention to hire students for internships.

For the company to get acquainted with the candidate students, it participated in relevant Career Days events, organised in the city of Ioannina. During Career Days, the manager of the company met with several students with whom he had an interview in order to explore the skills of the young students that he was going to work with. Because of the direct personal contact, he can have directly with the candidates, the company's manager has been participating in the last 5 years in career day's events, in order to recruit the best candidates for the internship position.

## Methodological Approach

Prior to hiring students, the manager meets with the candidates through personal interviews in order to understand their deepest motivations for choosing to study physiotherapy and to see if they really have love for their fellow beings, which is the most important aptitude for someone who wants to follow the career of a physiotherapist. Practical and theoretical knowledge is something that is learned while the interest in the science of physiotherapy and love for the fellow man is what plays a key role in the recruitment of students.

During the internship: The student initially monitors the way the company's representative works during physiotherapy, and then he/she is given office assignments and responds to patient questions. Additionally, the student receives the patient's history and performs small physiotherapy tasks. Towards the end of the internship and once the student has acquired the appropriate experience and has demonstrated the appropriate consistency, he is assigned individual service of patients. The aim of the internship is to test the student who is also a prospective employee after the internship. By assigning progressively more difficult tasks, the student feels more joyful as he has room for more initiatives, and hence his interest in the science he chose is uplifted.

The philosophy of the company is that every person and every patient is unique, so it applies individualised physiotherapy programs. Educating young people with this philosophy, the internship and practice in the company contributes not only to the acquisition of theoretical knowledge by the students but also to the improvement of society and the local community in general.

## Pitfalls and difficulties

The company's goal is to prevent difficulties, so it takes measures before difficulties arise. It shows confidence in students, but always in moderation, and this can be achieved through the correct initial appraisal of each apprentice. There is also continuous monitoring of the internship's progress and professional evolution of the student. The manager of the company is a mentor for every apprentice with whom he has daily personal contact and provides guidance. In this way, the mentor himself draws satisfaction, as he is given the opportunity to transfer his knowledge, train a new scientist, and build trust relationships with a prospective associate.



## Impact

The business through the whole process has access to prospective associates, suitably trained, both in practical knowledge and in interpersonal relationships with clients.

Impact can also be seen in society and in the local community, since internship contributes to reducing unemployment and increasing occupational employment of students in the subject they have studied. In addition, students through personal contact with clients, they learn to be interested in the person as a fellow being and not only in acquiring theoretical knowledge.

Apprentices have the opportunity to study in the subject of their studies which gives them incentives to pursue their studies. An essential component is, of course, the learner himself, who must be able to understand the importance of the opportunity he is given. The company gives its 100% and invests in the way the knowledge is disseminated and the way the students learn, in order to stimulate their interest in this particular science.

Finally, the impact of Work Based Learning can also be seen in the mentor-trainer himself, who now has internal motivations to pass on his knowledge to future generations, particularly apprentices who show the appropriate interest and want to invest in the opportunity they are given.

In fact, one of the trainees was hired after the end of the internship and now he is currently working permanently in the company. What made the apprentice stand out is that the company's representative saw his own self in the face of the student. He saw the same passion for patient knowledge and service, through the practice of physiotherapy.

## Success Factors

Internships serve the cycle of life and have a significant impact on society. The aim of human is to convey his knowledge to future generations. In addition, students are given important opportunities for their future professional development. Apprenticeship / internship programs are essentially a way for students to get acquainted with society and the labor market. The company's goal is also to learn through the employment of apprentices and to fight for the best.

## Lessons Learned

Each person and each patient is special, for this reason, students should also be involved in interpersonal relationships, in order to learn to be interested in themselves. Most important, however, is that the student himself/herself demonstrates the appropriate interest in knowing and participating in the work he/she is given.

The progressive assignment of tasks to the apprentice, depending on the progress he/she has, increases the student's internal motivation for learning, which also contributes to the success of the internship.



## Successes and opportunities

The whole process of the internship is an opportunity given to students who have access to practical knowledge of the subject they are studying. The success of the internship is shown through the impact it has on the company, the apprentice, the mentor-trainer and



society. Apprenticeships are a way for the students to enter into the labor market and an opportunity for professional development.



### Pitfalls and difficulties

A great way to tackle with difficulties is to prevent them. This is made possible by constantly monitoring the student's progress and properly assess them.

## 8.2 The story of ELVIK S.A.



<b>Name of the SME:</b>	EΛBIK A.E.B.E
<b>Name of the SME in English:</b>	ELVIK S.A.
<b>Address:</b>	Filellinon Str. 12, 18536 Piraeus, Greece
<b>Date of foundation:</b>	1982
<b>Number of employees:</b>	5
<b>Sector:</b>	Marine Technology and Shipping Activities
<b>Activities:</b>	Manufacturing of marine products
<b>Website:</b>	www.elvik.gr

### Introduction

ELVIK SA was founded in 1982. It manufactures and markets non-combustible products for ships, in particular for the interior decoration of ships, i.e. living room, bridge, stairwells, cabins, etc. Products manufactured such as partitions, ceilings and doors are certified by international bodies and organisations for their use at sea. The offices of the company are located in Piraeus, Greece, the center of Marine Technology and Shipping Activities.

The good practice followed during the internship is the development of entrepreneurial skills, the familiarisation of the interns with the working environment and the acquisition of work experience.

In particular, the purpose of each internship is to familiarise the trainee with the market conditions, to understand the basic principles of protocol maintenance, computerisation, costing and communication with customers / suppliers and other business associates.

### Methodological Approach

The training / internship at hand, took place at the headquarters of the company by a student of the Department of Business Administration of TEI of Western Macedonia (Kozani). There are 5 employees in the company's headquarters. Supervision of the traineeship was carried out by the owner of the company Mr. George Papamanolis and by Mr. Kostas Koulis, Sales and Accountant Manager of the company. Both are graduates of Business Administration.

The methodology followed was the trainee's continued engagement in the day-to-day operations of the company and involvement in external papers and protocol issues.



The trainee was given, through the guidance of his mentors, the task of traceability of the company's products, a system that began shortly before the beginning of the internship. Throughout the implementation of the internship, the student had continuous communication with colleagues in the company and constant contact with the parameters that influence decision making.

Through the above methodology, the trainee gained a thorough knowledge of the working conditions in the company, resulting in his employment at the end of the internship as a permanent employee of the company.

For the implementation of the training / traineeship, the company's management was also active, as the owner of the business was responsible for monitoring and evaluating the training.

The criteria used for the evaluation of the whole experience of the internship were the responsiveness of the student, the knowledge gained, the skills acquired and the customisation of the student to the company's working conditions. Complementary, an assessment of the internship was also made by the Administration for the University through a questionnaire sent to the company.

We propose the setup of a common policy in education with objectives set in full harmony with the learner's skills and with the human resources of the company.

### **Pitfalls and difficulties**

No threats were encountered. On the other hand, the contact that the young student had with the working environment of the company, could be considered an opportunity for further development. The day to day work was not seen as routine and formal assignment of tasks but as a training in a real working environment, which the intern would have to face in the near future.

### **Impact**

The main goal of the company was to employ the trainee after the practice period, which was achieved without any difficulty. The whole education process had been aligned with the opportunity to stay, and although the goal was not communicated to the student from the beginning, not even during, there was always the suspicion that the aim of the internship was to get there.

The results were very positive. The trainee during the training in the company, was able to see and experience the market conditions and requirements. The internship ran within the frameworks that were originally defined and made the trainee and other colleagues work completely harmoniously. A key advantage for the permanent employment of the student after the internship was his appetite and interest in the business and the achievement of its goals.



## Success Factors

The management's motivation was to apply good practices in education of the young worker, which was achieved with the implementation of a structured educational process, the division of work which would result in reduced work load for other employees and the creation of a better working environment. Additionally, company policy is to hire people trained in the company.

The mentor and top management incentives was to improve the quality of the company's operations through the sharing of the work tasks.

## Lessons Learned

The management of Elvik S.A. considers that there is always room for improvement in the provision of training during the internship. The company proposes the setup of a common policy in education with objectives set in full harmony with the learner's skills and with the human resources of the company. For this reason, the company is on the process of defining measures and methods of education and training through a training manual that will be used for every internship in its premises.



### Successes and opportunities

One aspect for the successful implementation of the internship, was to apply coherent implementation stages during the training. Those stages were:

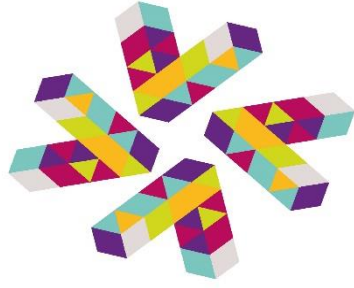
1. Definition of goals and objectives;
2. Continuous encouragement and support in order to achieve those goals;
3. Assignment of tasks (supervision of workflow, offers for the correct pricing of services);
4. Achievement of goals.



### Pitfalls and difficulties

No threats were encountered during the internship. The day to day work was not seen as routine and formal assignment of tasks but as an opportunity to be trained in a real working environment.





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