

3.3 The connection between the dual system and professional schools: an overview by region

Austria

In the Austrian educational system, the final year of compulsory education corresponds to the first year of upper secondary school, by when students will already have made a choice as to their educational career, having decided to attend either the first year of an academic secondary school (AHS-Oberstufe) or a 1-year pre-professional school (the Polytechnische Schule, leading to apprenticeship training) or any of the vocational training paths leading to different levels of qualification.

The vocational training system comprises the following types of schools:

- Professional schools (Berufsbildende Mittlere Schulen or BMSs);
- Upper professional schools (Berufsbildende Höhere Schulen or BHSs);
- General healthcare and nursing schools (from the 11th year onwards);
- Dual professional schools (apprenticeship, Lehre, Lehrlingsausbildung – from the 10th year), following the 1-year pre-professional school.

The diversity of paths shows the important role played by VET in Austria, where it is considered a highly attractive option.

To be eligible for an apprenticeship a student must have successfully completed the 9-year compulsory education, after which the choice is between no less than 200 different types of legally recognised occupations.

The apprenticeship diploma is a full professional qualification. Depending on the occupation, training can last between 2 and 4 years, although the usual length is 3 years.

Apprenticeship training is provided at the workplace, for about 80% of the time, and in part-time professional schools for the rest of the time.

Workplace training is regulated by the Federal Ministry of Economy, Families and Youth (Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft, Familie und Jugend, BMWFJ).

The curriculum of part-time professional schools is designed - in accordance with the training regulations regarding the respective apprenticeship occupation - by the Federal Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture (Bundesministerium für Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur, BMUKK).

The social partners are responsible for defining the workplace curriculum or the competence profile for each apprenticeship occupation.

Workplace training is widely financed by companies, offering young people an apprenticeship wage, in accordance with collective agreements. Public funding is also available for the companies providing the training. The specifically qualified IVET trainer is responsible for planning and providing the training.

At the workplace the apprentices are involved in the production or in the service delivering process, and attain the necessary skills required for real-life workplaces.

Part-time professional schools supplement and support workplace training by providing the necessary theoretical knowledge related to the specific occupation and broadening the general knowledge of the apprentices. The federal provinces provide funding to the professional schools (teaching staff, maintenance), but the Federal Government reimburses 50% of the teacher costs to the provinces.

Teachers at part-time professional schools must have a related university degree or have completed a vocational training programme, with more than three years of practice.

Upon completing the apprenticeship, each apprentice can sit a final apprenticeship exam (Lehrabschlussprüfung, LAP), the aim of which is to determine whether the apprentice is capable of satisfactorily carrying out the activities related to the occupation. The final exam comprises a practical and a theoretical part. The theoretical part, however, can be skipped if the apprentice is able to demonstrate that he or she has successfully completed the final year of a part-time professional school.

The different levels of governance

The success and further development of the dual system are guaranteed by the partnership between a number of institutions and foundations, at various levels.

At federal level:

- Federal Ministry of Economy, Families and Youth (BMWFJ)
- Federal Advisory Committee for Apprenticeships (BBAB)
- Federal Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture (BMUKK)

At provincial level:

- Apprenticeship Offices
- Federal Provinces
- Provincial Governors
- Regional Apprenticeship Councils
- Regional School Inspectors

At local level:

- training enterprises
- part-time professional schools

Requirements for apprenticeship training

According to the Trade Commerce and Industry Regulation Act (Gewerbeordnung), a company that wishes to train an apprentice must meet certain requirements and must own a qualification that is subject to approval by the social partners.

The qualification procedure consists in an application to the competent Office of the Federal Chamber of Commerce, which then assesses its eligibility, in collaboration with the apprenticeship office of the province in which the company providing the training is based. If the company is found to be eligible, it receives a "declaration" certifying that it is qualified to accept trainees.

The company must then be trained to provide the apprentice with the knowledge and skills included in the relevant occupational profile. The companies that are unable to adequately provide the complete training set out in the profile may train apprentices by networking with other companies.

The company must also have a sufficient number of qualified trainers (with specific professional and teaching skills) and the necessary technical equipment and training facilities. The training can also be provided by a partnership between several companies managing a joint training centre, and the workplace training must account for 80% of the total training period.

Following an amendment of the Vocational Training Act (BAG) in January 2006, it is now possible to carry out the apprenticeship training according to a modular programme, so as to improve the attractiveness of the training.

In “modular” apprenticeships, three modules have been introduced: basic, principal and special.

Learning process standards

The apprenticeship certificate is a formal qualification regulated by law and is classified as ISCED level 3B, corresponding to the eighth level of the Austrian National Qualifications Framework (NQF). It is defined as the reference qualification for level 4.

The training process standard includes:

- pre-requisites and qualifications of the companies and company positions providing the training;
- the presence of training regulations and a reference curriculum;
- follow-up measures.

The legal rules are defined in the Vocational Training Act (Berufsausbildungsgesetz or BAG). For each individual apprenticeship occupation, the Ministry of economy issues a training regulation, which is binding on the companies that provide the training.

The training content for each apprenticeship occupation is set out in the specific regulations (for workplace training) and in the curricula (for classroom training). The company curriculum (Berufsbild, a type of curriculum for workplace training) is adopted within the framework of the training regulations by the Federal Ministry of economy, Families and Youth (BMWFFJ). New company curricula are often adapted or introduced by the companies themselves, or by the social partners. The Federal Advisory Committee for Apprenticeship (Bundesberufsausbildungsbeirat, BABB) also makes proposals or prepares expert opinions on the reform proposals. The enterprise curricula, and therefore the guidelines for qualification requirements, are actually developed by subcommittees of the Federal Advisory Committee (BABB) or by the research institutes of the social partners, i.e. the Austrian Institute for Research on Qualifications and Training in Economy (IBW), for employers, and the Austrian Institute for Research on Vocational Training (ÖIBF), for employees. The framework curricula for professional schools are structured in a similar manner to those of full-time professional schools. In the field of apprenticeships, the framework curricula are defined along the lines of the training carried out in the workplace.

In the majority of cases, individual companies are not directly involved in the development of the training regulations and of the part-time professional school curricula.

The part-time professional school curricula correspond to the training regulations.

The tools and processes supporting the analysis of the qualification requirements are primarily funded by the Austrian Public Employment Service (AMS) and the most important include:

- studies on the necessary competences;
- the AMS-QB Qualification Barometer of the Austrian Public Employment Service;
- the AMS’s research network;
- the AMS’s Standing Committee on new skills.

The training/apprenticeship process

Training takes place within two different contexts: companies and part-time professional schools. The training lasts between 2 and 4 years, mostly 3. The length of apprenticeships is reduced for apprentices who have already completed workplace training periods related with the specific occupation at other companies and for those who have attained any applicable school qualifications.

The first step consists in the conclusion of an apprenticeship contract between the company providing the training and the apprentice; this must then be sent to the competent apprenticeship office for registration as soon as possible, at the latest within three weeks after the start of the training. The apprenticeship office verifies the contract details and the adequacy of the training provided by the company and moreover it assigns credits for the training periods connected with the scope of the apprenticeship. The registration of the apprenticeship contract is a pre-requisite for subsequent admission to the final apprenticeship examination.

The training is represented by a practical and pro-practical learning path consisting in active production work, with the use of technologies that enable the trainees to become acquainted with the state of the art.

Professional schools provide general and theoretical skills, plus a further practical programme carried out in the classroom which accounts for a total of 20% of the theoretical learning.

The costs of workplace training are incurred by the company providing the training.

Classroom training (in part-time professional schools) is financed by the public sector. This means that much of the cost of vocational training is supported by the participating companies. Apprentice remuneration accounts for most of the cost of apprenticeship training. The amount of this remuneration is defined for each individual occupation within the framework of the collective bargaining contracts. Where there is no applicable collective bargaining contract, the parties must agree on remuneration in the individual apprenticeship contracts. The remuneration increases with each year of apprenticeship until, in the last year, it amounts to approximately 80% of the average wage of a corresponding skilled worker.

The state co-funds a portion of the costs of the workplace training part of the dual training. In the first two years of the apprenticeship, both employer and apprentice are exempted from paying health insurance contributions, even though the apprentices continue to be fully insured. No contributions for accident at work insurance are due for the entire training period, although the insurance cover remains unchanged. There are a large number of options for subsidising apprenticeship training. The costs to provide equipment, such as machinery, instruments and teaching materials, are incurred by the federal provinces. The Federal Government, and the relevant provincial government, equally share the costs for the teaching staff.

Upon completion of the apprenticeship programme, the apprentices are awarded a full high level professional qualification.

Germany

Under the German educational system, upon completion of compulsory education and without additional access requirements, a young person may decide to either undertake vocational training, to attain a professional qualification for skilled jobs, or access upper education.

Vocational training may be provided by either a full-time professional school or within the framework of the dual system. Full-time professional schools have the highest influx of students; most of them are aged fifteen when they start professional school. In certain circumstances, attendance of a full-time professional school can be recognised instead of the first year of a dual system school.

Full-time professional schools (Berufsfachschulen) are regulated by the laws in force in the respective Länder, except in the case of the healthcare professions, which are regulated at Federal level. Training can include placement in a company and covers a period of two or three years, depending on the type of occupation. The final qualification is issued upon the successful completion of an exam, which is supervised by the education authorities and governed by the training regulations applying to the relevant job profile.

The primary objective of the training path is to enable young people to acquire a comprehensive set of professional skills with which to fulfil their duties as employees in an efficient, effective, and innovative manner, as both individuals and members of a team. Attainment of this set of skills must be demonstrated by means of exams defined by law (Consolidation Act on Vocational Training).

Classroom training in the professional school integrates workplace training, which is obviously more process-oriented and based on the specific requirements of the company itself.

Technical upper secondary schools (Fachoberschulen) and professional upper secondary schools (Berufsoberschulen) normally start from vocational training provided according to the dual system, from consolidated professional knowledge, and lead to the academic standards required for access to tertiary education. The Fachoberschulen cover the 11th and 12th years and require a middle school leaving certificate (Mittlerer Schulabschluss) or equivalent qualification. Students are mostly aged 19 or 20. The first year includes practical workplace training and theoretical lessons, while the second year covers general and specialist lessons.

There are many points at which transition may occur between education at school and dual vocational training, as well as between vocational training and tertiary education. Secondary professional schools (Berufliche Gymnasien / Fachgymnasien) provide specialist training in a number of different fields, in addition to the general education provided by secondary schools. Some commercial and technical secondary schools also offer the possibility of attaining not just any qualification, but an academic qualification. The courses leading to dual system qualifications last from three to four years. They usually qualify for the university entrance examination.

Socially disadvantaged young people, with learning difficulties or disabilities, and young people with an immigrant background and a poor command of German, have different opportunities for preliminary training (Berufsausbildungsvorbereitung).

1-year preliminary training programme (Berufsvorbereitungsjahr - BVJ): the BVJ is a 1-year training programme, generally provided by full-time schools and designed to prepare young people for vocational training.

1-year basic vocational training programme (Berufsgrundbildungsjahr - BGJ): basic vocational training can be completed as either a 1-year programme at a full-time professional school, or in a cooperative form at a company and a school. The successful completion of the BGJ may be recognised as the first year of vocational training in the training occupations assigned to the relevant occupation.

The dual training system in Germany appears as a successful system for organising the transition from school to work, especially with regard to the way in which it links learning, work and companies.

The “dual” system name comes from the different partners and different learning venues involved in the vocational education and training system.

Apprenticeship training is provided by two different learning providers: the training workplace (for 70% of the time) and the professional school (for 30% of the time).

The legal basis of individual apprenticeship training is the contract between the apprentice and the company providing the training, while schools may be considered as service providers to the companies. Workplace training is regulated by the training regulations (general training programmes). The workplace training manager prepares an individual training plan for each apprentice.

The different levels of governance

The success and further development of the dual system are guaranteed by the partnership between a number of institutions and foundations, at various levels.

At Federal level

- Federal Ministry of Education and Research
- Federal Ministry of Economy and Technology
- Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB)
- Central Committee for VET at the BIBB
- Trade unions, employer organisations, professional schools
- Standing Conference of the Ministers for Education and Culture of the various Länder.

In particular, the Federal Ministry of Economy and Technology, consulting with the other Ministries:

- issues the Vocational Training Act;
- is competent for the recognised job profiles;
- is competent for the framework curricula and the classroom training;
- organises the Standing Conference of the Ministries of Education and Culture.

At regional level

The Chambers of Commerce and Handicraft are responsible for:

- assessing the new companies desiring to provide training
- quality-auditing the registered companies providing the training
- examining and registering the apprenticeship contracts
- organising the intermediate and final apprenticeship exams
- providing consulting services for apprenticeship and for the companies providing training
- the drafting of the regulations for the IVET and CVET that will subsequently be developed by the Regional Advisory Committees

The Ministers of Education and Culture of the Länder are responsible for all matters relating to the professional schools.

The Regional Committees for VET provide consulting services in respect of all matters relating to the apprenticeships.

The Regional Authorities for VET implement the federal framework curricula for vocational training and supervise the professional schools with regard to their technical and educational aspects.

Moreover, there is the further specific contribution of the:

- School Inspectors
- Companies providing the training
- Authorised trainers
- Professional schools
- Apprentices.

Requirements for apprenticeship training

In order to be deemed eligible to provide apprenticeship training, the companies providing the training must possess all the skills in which the apprentices must be trained; they must show that they employ at least one person with the appropriate teaching skills or a specific qualification as a trainer; they must demonstrate the suitability of all the processes, machinery and resources according to the requirements set out in the apprenticeship training regulations. The competent authorities responsible for verifying these prerequisites are the Chambers of Commerce and the Chambers of Handicraft for the various professional occupations.

The companies that do not meet all the requirements have two options:

- either to contact the training institutions offering inter-company training schemes designed to support workplace training; or
- establish consistent training facilities.

The latter may be based on one of four traditional models:

1. “leader company with partner company” model (Leitbetrieb mit Partnerbetrieben);
2. “training on appointment” model (Auftragsausbildung);
3. “training consortium” model (Ausbildungskonsortium);
4. “training association” model.
 - After concluding the contract, the company is required to enrol the apprentice in the relevant professional school.

Learning process standards

In Austria, the apprenticeship certificate is an officially regulated qualification, classified as ISCED level 3B, while it is classified as level 4 in the 8-level German qualification system. Since 2014, the level is specified on the apprenticeship certificate.

The learning process standards are guaranteed by:

- verifying the prerequisites of the training enterprises;
- involving all the stakeholders in a consultation and revision process;
- issuing ad hoc regulations for the apprenticeship profiles.

Professional schools define their annual teaching programmes based on the framework curricula and the curricula developed by the governments of the Länder.

The proposals relating to the parameters of the job profiles may emerge in different manners:

- from the preliminary meetings between the social partners (employers and trade unions);
- from the outcome of the research projects or from the opinions of the consultants, as outlined by the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB);

- from the instructions issued by the competent ministry.

The parameters are defined by the social partners when the need emerges to create a new job profile or redefine an existing profile.

The parameters of the training regulations are defined during a meeting with the competent Ministry (generally, the Federal Ministry of Economy and Technology).

The training regulation for the given the job profile (definition of the initial workplace VT) and the corresponding framework curriculum for the professional schools are drawn up and coordinated.

The BIBB requests the stakeholder organisations (employers and unions) to appoint representatives for the workplace training which, acting as experts for the Federal Government, work jointly with the BIBB to define new training regulations or overhaul the existing ones.

Training regulations feature two sections, one setting out the relevant provisions and one (an appendix) containing the general training plan. The programme and timeframe are specified in the general training plan, while the provisions cover aspects such as the designation, vocational profile and examination requirements for the job profile figure examined.

The experts appointed by the Länder define a draft curriculum for training at part-time professional schools. On completion of the drafting stage, the two groups of experts meet to discuss the two drafts and to align their respective contents and calendars. After the coordination stage, the final drafts of the training regulations are forwarded to the BIBB Committee for its observations. The declaration by the latter on the approval of the draft regulations constitutes a simultaneous recommendation for the federal government to "enact" the specific training regulation as forwarded.

For each job profile, the designated experts prepare a EUROPASS Certificate Supplement, which will accompany the final certificate.

The purpose of the EUROPASS certificate is to document all the qualifications that have been acquired over a lifetime.

The Coordinating Committees of the Länder for the training regulations and the Framework Curricula (KoA) finally approve the new training regulations and the new framework curriculum that has been coordinated with them. The competent Ministry and the Federal Ministry of Education and Research issue the training regulations, which are then published in the Federal Gazette.

The training/apprenticeship process

The apprenticeship training process begins when companies report the number of their training vacancies to the competent Labour Chamber and Labour Agency.

Students interested in an apprenticeship must apply directly to the company. The companies then select the candidates and conclude the contracts, enrolling the apprentices in the VT schools.

The contract is the legal basis for the apprenticeship within the dual system and must be made in writing. All contract-related matters are managed by the authorised training manager.

The contract must then be registered as soon as possible and, in any event, no later than three weeks after the start of training, with the competent Chamber managing the contracts. The Chamber assesses both the date of the contract and the eligibility of the company to train the apprentices; it registers the contracts and is responsible for organizing the intermediate and final exam.

At this point the training begins: it takes place at the company providing the training and at the professional school and lasts for a period of between 2 and 3 ½ years, depending on the professional

profile, the qualifications and the skills the apprentice has acquired before starting the apprenticeship path. Workplace training accounts for 70% of the apprenticeship path while classroom work amounts to 30%.

Every employer involved is required to provide the training in a systematic way, according to a defined timetable and programme, and suitably to the purpose of the training itself. The training manager or authorised trainer develops the individual training plans for the apprentices.

The different sectors / departments of the company are responsible for the training in their specific areas and the apprentice must write a report for each sector / department in which he or she was trained.

The support materials for these tasks are available from the BIBB and the Chambers.

Each apprentice must sit an intermediate exam during the training period. Upon passing the exam, he or she will receive a certificate issued by the competent Chamber.

Passing the final exam is one of the conditions required for admission to the Master's exam and for many other additional training exams, to prove the apprentice's aptitude for training in a number of trade and industry fields, and in many cases it forms the basis for the application for collectively agreed benefits at the workplace.

Regarding the apprenticeship costs, these are incurred by the companies providing the training, while the professional schools are financed by the Länder and the local authorities.

Apprentice remuneration accounts for the bulk of the apprenticeship training costs. The amount is fixed for each apprenticeship occupation in accordance with the collective bargaining agreements. Company agreements on apprenticeship remuneration are also possible.

If none of the above mentioned agreements are available, it is necessary to conclude individual agreements for each contract. The remuneration differs between the different professional figures of the apprenticeship and increases with each apprenticeship year.

These costs must be considered in relation to the contribution of the apprentices to the company's financial results. Apprenticeship costs are deductible from corporate profits. This means that the State indirectly co-finances the costs of each apprenticeship.

In Germany, the return on the apprenticeship costs is approximately 76%.

Classroom training is currently provided by 44 professional schools, although a transition process is under way to reduce the number of vocational training centres.

A characteristic specific for the city of Hamburg is the concentration on one or just a few professional figures within each professional school.

About 50% of the apprentices in handicraft occupations have a secondary school diploma.

The proportion of apprentices training as industrial white collars that are in possession of an upper secondary school diploma is about 90%. The framework of occupations in the IT sector and other significant technical occupations offers similar results.

Friuli-Venezia Giulia

The connection between vocational training and the dual system in Friuli-Venezia Giulia consists in apprenticeships for qualification and professional diploma, and in internships.

Apprenticeships and internships, although legally different – the former is an employment contract – are two types of orientation and training which facilitate entry into labour by alternating continuous training and work.

Internships promote direct contact between a person seeking work and private employers and government agencies for the on-the-job acquisition of knowledge and professional skills, thus facilitating guidance, integration or reintegration into employment.

The internships can be:

- "*non-curricular internships*", i.e. proactive policy measures aimed at supporting the career choices of young people and accompanying them in the transition from school to work, and at facilitating the integration or re-integration of unemployed people;
- "*curricular internships*", which are part of the formal learning process within the curricula of universities, schools or vocational training centres operating under agreements with the Region;
- "*summer traineeships*" for secondary school, vocational education and training and university students, which can take place in-between teaching activities;
- "*integration and reintegration internships*", i.e. measures for facilitating the integration or reintegration into employment of non-employed persons (unemployed, unemployed under mobility arrangements, etc.).

Internships are not employment contracts and participation in an internship scheme does not entail the loss of entitlement to unemployment benefits.

In order to make it easier for trainees to participate in the vocational education and training path, each one is granted a gross monthly allowance of not less than € 300.00, for no more than 20 hours a week, which can be proportionally increased to € 500.00 per month, gross, for no more than 40 hours a week.

The different levels of governance

In Friuli, regional vocational training is governed jointly by:

- the regional government;
- the temporary grouping of companies (Italian: ATI) gathering vocational training centres;
- the trade associations;
- the companies involved.

A governance peculiarity specifically characterizing Friuli is the presence of a temporary grouping of companies that gathers into a single body all the training facilities operating in the region.

This results in uniform procedures as well as the acquisition, storage, analysis and monitoring of the data relating to the entire training system and allows the region to liaise with a single contact, thus avoiding the problems arising from the possible fragmentation represented by a large number of training providers.

Requirements for apprenticeship training

The 3 and 4-year paths allow to complete the training path and to obtain a professional qualification or diploma corresponding to ISCED level 3.

Learning process standards

The learning process standards are defined in Friuli by the presence of various core elements:

- a comprehensive and systematic assessment process, called ‘authentic evaluation’, throughout the whole training path, based on a strong teaching foundation;
- a thorough final qualification/diploma exam, consisting of a number of tests;
- a Regional Database of the VET offer, related to national Figures and Regional Profiles, which serves as a basis for designing and assessing the training paths.

The latter provides:

- 1) the training standards, which are a key element for designing the training paths and define the learning objectives associated with each Profile. They consist in competences, skills and knowledge as established in the national and European standards;
- 2) the professional standards, which represent the evaluation benchmark and define the expected outcomes recognised by the local labour market in association with each Profile. They are structured in key services.

The training/apprenticeship process

The leFP (VET) path begins with the enrolment of the lower secondary school graduates, aged between 14 and 18, in one of the courses provided by the vocational training schools.

In the second and third years of their training, the trainees take part in a school/work alternance scheme at local enterprises, under an arrangement between the school and the enterprise.

If a company wishes to welcome or become acquainted with a trainee in view of his or her future employment, it must contact the nearest training facility providing the course of interest and agree the relevant conditions and procedures with such training facility.

In June 2012, the “Regional Regulation” was introduced, regulating the management of the training activities for apprentices employed under the contract for attainment of a Professional Qualification or Diploma.

When taking on these apprentices, reference must be made to the standard nationwide professional Figures and Profiles and the on-the-job and off-the-job training programmes must conform to the relevant standards set out in the Guidelines issued by the Region.

Before taking on an apprentice, the interested company must contact the temporary grouping of companies authorised by the regional authorities to provide training for this type of apprentices, to make the necessary checks and request support in preparing the Individual Training Plan provided for under the collective bargaining rules, and the detailed training Programme foreseen by the Regional Regulation.

The full-time VET paths in Friuli consist of a first year, intended to provide orientation in the professional area chosen at the time of enrolment, followed by a 2-year period for the attainment of a professional qualification within the figure/profile selected at the end of the first orientation year, leading to either direct job placement or to a further year of study aimed at attaining a professional diploma.

Each year features:

- basic upskilling; in particular, the competences at the end of the third year are based on and further develop the skills and knowledge relating to the cultural axes characterising

compulsory education. The competences of the fourth year are based on those attained at the end of the third year and focus on professional characterisation in relation to the technical and professional competences. The basic competences also include Catholic religious education and the physical and motor activities under article 18 of Legislative Decree No. 226 dated 17 October 2005;

- technical and professional upskilling through the acquisition of conceptual tools and application procedures suited to tackling the typical workplace situations characterising the specific chosen production process or service;
- learning recovery and development workshops (“Larsa”), which are a useful instrument for fostering tailored learning processes;
- a part concerning the internship, aimed at mutually integrating the classroom and laboratory activities with the workplace training carried out at the company;
- the year’s end and final exams.

The regional VET training programme is organised in such a way as to offer pupils the opportunity to pass from one training system to another, as far as possible. In order to facilitate the passage of trainees from the regional vocational education and training system to the upper secondary education system based on programmed, shared and transparent modalities and procedures, the single facilities authorised to provide VET paths may enter into ad hoc agreements with upper secondary education establishments and, in particular, with those belonging to the technical and professional education system.

Autonomous Province of Bolzano

Apprenticeship training is the predominant vocational training model in South Tyrol, inspired by the training systems in force in German-speaking countries, where the cornerstone of the 3-year professional qualification schemes is to provide on-the-job training under a corporate training framework and classroom training under a specific educational programme.

In apprenticeships, 80% of the training is provided at the workplace and 20% at a professional school.

Apprenticeships are supervised by the Provincial Department of Education and Vocational Training for German-speaking citizens.

The Department of Education and Vocational Training for Italian-speaking citizens obviously deals with the apprenticeship training of Italian-speaking residents.

Alongside the dual training system in force in South Tyrol there are also internships and workplace traineeships both within the 5-year educational paths and within the vocational training paths for obtaining a professional qualification or diploma (3 or 4 years, respectively).

In vocational training, the laboratory and workplace training component has increased over the years and now plays a very important role.

Internships have different lengths, are provided by public institutions and private companies depending on the type of orientation, and have guidance, training or job integration functions.

Internships in upper secondary schools are organised and managed by the schools, with a variable length; they are not remunerated but do come with an insurance cover and are supervised by a teacher, or by a tutor at the companies/public bodies.

The school itself contacts the available companies/public bodies and the training venue is chosen based on the type of studies and/or on the pupil's preferences.

Summer training and guidance traineeships target upper secondary school or full-time vocational training school students aged 15 or more, or university students (or even university graduates, provided that no more than 1 year has passed since graduation).

They are regulated by a framework agreement between the Autonomous Province of Bolzano and the trade associations and unions and are not organized as an employment relationship, although trainees must be insured against accidents and civil liability. They last at least 2 weeks and no more than 3 months (or 6 in the case of university students or graduates).

The provincial government does not provide contributions, either to the trainees or to the companies, however the agreement between trainees and companies may provide for a "monthly work grant".

Then there are other projects aimed at narrowing the gap between education/training and employment, such as workplace simulation, job planning, etc.

The different levels of governance

The provincial government, after consulting with the social partners, decides the training rules for each apprenticeship profession.

Requirements for apprenticeship training

Two requirements are needed to become an apprentice: passing the state exam at the end of the lower secondary school and attending the first year of upper secondary school; apprenticeships, in fact, are carried out between 15 and 25 years of age.

The only vocational training access requirement is having successfully completed the lower secondary school.

Learning process standards

The apprenticeship standards are defined in the training regulations laid down by the provincial government for each apprenticeship profession, including a description of the professional profile, the attainable qualification and the length of the apprenticeship.

The company training framework sets out the skills and knowledge that must be conveyed by the enterprise to the apprentice.

The teaching curriculum contains the objectives, contents and length of the formal education provided by the professional school or, as the case may be, by the other training facilities.

The training/apprenticeship process

The apprenticeship process begins with the search, by the aspiring apprentice, of any interesting apprenticeship vacancies at local companies; this research is facilitated by a number of tools, including online tools, such as the website of the Province or of the Trade Associations.

Once a vacancy has been found, the apprentice and company enter into a contract, which is then notified by the company to the Provincial Apprenticeship Office.

The latter then enrolls the apprentice in the respective professional school, where, over a period of 3 years, he or she will attend 1,000 hours of classroom training and, for the 4th year of the professional diploma, a further 160 hours.

Classroom training, depending on the professional profile, is provided:

- in multi-weekly “blocks” (e.g. 3 blocks of 3 or 4 weeks per year);
- a day a week, with several 1-week seminars.

This apprenticeship formula offers training only in the sectors and for the professional profiles for which the companies themselves require labour (to avoid any mismatch between the training choices by young people and the labour demand by companies).

School attendance is compulsory, even in the case of apprentices aged more than 16.

Workplace training is regulated by a contract between employer and apprentice, which can be terminated for serious reasons by either party, providing for a trial period governed by the applicable industry agreements, with a wage based on that of a skilled worker, and with working time restrictions linked to the apprentice’s age.

Apprenticeships for professional qualifications and diplomas end with a final exam consisting of a practical and theoretical test, conducted before a board comprising the school director, a teacher, an employer and a qualified worker in the professional profile.

Autonomous Province of Trento

The provincial vocational education and training paths are characterised by a close correlation with the needs expressed by the provincial economic and production context. The provincial economic context and the employers’ associations and trade unions acknowledge and promote the Trentino VET system. They participate and actively collaborate in the construction of the provincial database of professional figures for the professional qualification and diploma and in the definition of the training contribution by the company.

The VET operates to ensure adequate levels of “relevance” with the qualifications required by the labour market, to maintain the necessary and unavoidable focus on the educational and cultural dimension, which is absolutely necessary for trainers of young people aged between 14 and 18.

The VET paths value all the methods and instruments capable of fostering a positive school-to-work transition, or practical laboratory training, training in simulated enterprises, curricular internships, organised school/work alternance and summer traineeships.

In particular, curricular traineeships are provided in integrated form with various purposes in the third year (internship of at least 120 hours out of 1066 total course hours) and in the fourth year, when there is an actual alternance between classroom and workplace training (from a minimum of 35% to a maximum of 50% of the 1066 hours of course) and aims to attain competences associated with a technical professional diploma, where enterprises directly participate in providing the training path.

The further development of work-based learning and school-to-work transition models has become a legislature objective for the 2013-2018 period and originated the first school/work policy Guidelines, approved by the provincial government on 30 May 2014.

These Guidelines define the first orientations for introducing, alongside the consolidated vocational education and training paths provided by the training institutions, a new equally stable and structured

offer of so-called “dual” apprenticeship paths by the same training institutions, using the resources of the Garanzia Giovani (Youth Guarantee) project for their pilot phase.

This new proposal primarily targets young people aged between 15 and 25 who drop out of training before attaining the final qualification, or who are more hands on, but who would find it hard to find a job without a qualification.

Apprenticeships for a diploma or qualification add on to, and do not replace, full-time training paths. It's a new apprenticeship model compared to those designed to date in Trentino.

The different levels of governance

The parties involved in the process, at various levels, are:

- the Province, through its education department, which defines the organisation, specialisations, guidelines and resources;
- the Province, through its departments dealing with labour (various employment agencies, such as Servizio Lavoro, Agenzia del lavoro and others), which manage and handle the employment policy actions and interventions, collaborating with the education department to foster the school-to-work transition measures upon completion of the education and training paths;
- the Social Partners, institutionally represented in the provincial employment committee (Commissione Provinciale per l'Impiego), which represent the forum for agreeing and consulting on the governance guidelines and choices, and the provincial committee for vocational training (Comitato Provinciale per la Programmazione della Formazione Professionale), which validates the training offer;
- the employers' associations and the enterprises that actively participate in surveying the labour needs and in developing, implementing and assessing the training processes;
- the training institutions, which implement the paths and account for the outcomes of the training actions.

Requirements for apprenticeship training

In order to access the apprenticeship programmes, a prospective apprentice needs to have completed his or her lower secondary school education and attended the first year of an upper secondary school (i.e. from 15 years of age onwards); no further pre-requisites are foreseen.

Learning process standards

The learning process standards, in respect of both full-time VET paths and apprenticeship paths (the guidelines of which have been adopted by the Provincial Government on 2 February 2015), refer to:

- the Educational, Cultural and Professional Profile of the student upon completion of the third and fourth year (as per the provincial regulation);
- the provincial Database of professional reference figures for qualification or diploma, harmonised with the national database;
- the Provincial Study Plans for 3- and 4-year paths or the 4th year of VET;
- the orientation guidelines referring to the learning outcomes foreseen by the provincial study Plans, aimed at supporting the training institutions in the development of the School Study Plans;
- the School Study Plan.

The paths last 3 years for attaining a professional qualification, or 4 years for attaining a professional diploma. Training consists of 460 hours per year, based on the provincial study plans for VET paths, and is broken down as follows:

- 200 hours for basic upskilling (languages, mathematics, science, technology, history, social and economic studies);
- 260 hours for technical/professional upskilling, of which 100 hours of workplace training.

This arrangement will be overhauled consistently with the new provisions introduced by the recent national reform of apprenticeship.

The length of the training may be reduced based on the number of (cultural and professional) credits recognised in connection with previous educational, training and working paths, resulting in a reduction of the school or workplace training period. The assessment of the credits is made by the training school in which the apprentice enrolls.

The length of apprenticeship training for young people already holding a professional qualification and wishing to attain a professional diploma is 460 hours per year, organised as mentioned above.

The skills acquired, based on the outcomes of the apprenticeship training path (at the workplace and at school) are also recognised in view of a continuation of the studies or adult education programmes. The path design is modular and flexible, based on training units defined by competences/skills/knowledge and general contents.

The training/apprenticeship process

Training facilities are fully responsible for the entire training process and partner with companies to implement individual training projects organised by contents, timeframes, calendar and procedures.

In particular, training facilities:

- independently liaise with the companies desiring to take on apprentices;
- work in partnership with companies to define the individual training plans, which are then signed by both of them and by the apprentice;
- guarantees consistency of the individual training plan with the professional profile of the relevant professional qualification/diploma and with the corresponding provincial study plan;
- is responsible for recognising and assigning any prior training/work credits;
- implements the apprenticeship paths within its VET offer or as part of a network with other facilities;
- promotes the apprenticeship paths for attaining professional qualifications/diplomas;
- provides guidance to its students according to their characteristics and aspirations and analyses the requests received from the labour market;
- in the programming of the school training activities, it takes into account the company organisation and its sector of reference;
- upon completion of the path, it documents, even for assessment purposes, the operational competences and skills built up by the apprentices in the various contexts, with the systematic collaboration of the company in all training stages.

An important role is played by the tutoring activities during the training process. Each apprentice is assigned a tutor, by both the school and the company.

The school tutor provides individual mentoring, shadowing, assistance and guidance during the learning process, throughout the length of the training, to ensure that it is properly provided, with the possibility to adopt suitable learning strategies and methods based on the dual path, with the training provided by both the company and the school.

The tutoring activities by the training facility aim to:

- promote the success of the student-apprentice training;
- ensure a constant link with the workplace tutor and the workplace environment;
- monitor the apprentice's development, at school and at the workplace, based on his or her individual training plan;
- ensure the integration between classroom learning and workplace training, in collaboration with the workplace tutor;
- acquire all the assessment elements.

Tutoring at the workplace is provided by the workplace tutor, who must be adequately trained and skilled and who is appointed by the company to mentor the apprentice at the workplace and assess the competences and skills attained by the apprentice at work, according to the criteria agreed with the school tutor.

The workplace tutor must foster the apprentice's integration in the workplace environment and the transfer of the necessary skills needed for the job; he/she shadows and assists the apprentice during the workplace training, ensuring integration with the classroom work. The workplace tutor may avail himself/herself of the training measures granted by the document concerning labour policy provisions.

Poland

Poland has no specific laws governing apprenticeship training, and the sector is still developing and undergoing changes. Many variations are being made, mainly along the following lines:

- Development of cooperation between individual school institutions and the enterprises;
- Implementation of a juridical foundation governing relations between schools and enterprises, that allows to set up the necessary programmes for financing practical workplace training;
- Institution of a National Fund for Vocational Training and Lifelong Learning.

In Poland, work-based learning is placed within the context of vocational training according to four different models:

- apprenticeship, via which young people aged 16 to 18 spend most of their time in acquiring skills within the companies (that are mainly craft enterprises), based on a contract signed by the company and the apprentice. Classroom learning occurs twice a week (general and professional theory). This model is accessible after completing basic professional schools (about 61% of these students are apprentices/young workers);
- alternance training, via which vocational training occurs both in school and at the workplace. The school director signs a contract with the company for the performance of the traineeship, while the students do not sign a contract personally and they do not receive any remuneration. In this case, practical activity cannot be less than 50% (in technical upper secondary and "post-

- secondary non-tertiary” schools) or less than 60% (in basic professional schools) of the time dedicated to vocational training;
- on-the-job training, mandatory for all technical and post-secondary occupations, having all of the features of a job;
 - practical work integrated into the basic school programmes, as laboratory and workshop activities performed in contexts that are as close as possible to reality.

More specifically, apprenticeship must meet the following two requisites: the student must have completed the lower secondary school level and must be not over 16 years of age.

The young apprentice may have one of two different legal statuses:

- be at the same time a young worker and a student in a professional school; in this case, the Labour Code and the education system law are applied as necessary;
- more simply, be a young worker learning the theoretical aspects in a non-scholastic training programme; in this case, only the Labour Code is applied. This status is less common, concerning only 9% of young workers.

Since 2012, a new curriculum has been added to the vocational training system that defines in detail the common learning and teaching objectives, as well as the results expected for all occupations, and those specific for each occupation.

In secondary level technical schools, dual training is not envisaged by the law currently in force, that instead imposes that general education account for 62% of all education, while the remaining 38% is taken up by theoretical and practical vocational training. The individual scholastic institutions are starting to introduce forms of apprenticeship that, according to the occupation, ranges from 2 to 8 weeks within the entire educational cycle.

The different levels of governance

The Polish training system is strongly centralised. The policies regarding the secondary school level are formulated by the Ministry of National Education, in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture and Arts, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Justice.

The Polish professional system is regulated at three levels: national (Ministries), partially regional (school superintendency, mainly as regards pedagogical supervision) and district authorities.

The social partners (Chambers of Crafts, Trade Associations) are allowed to provide opinions on changes to be made in vocational training.

Since 2012, changes have been made in order to further develop cooperation between schools and enterprises.

The school government authorities that organise practical training activities outside the school cover all of the relating direct and indirect expenses, reimbursing the expenditure by external bodies.

Requirements for apprenticeship training

The prerequisite for apprenticeship training is the completion of the basic secondary school level and an age under 16 years.

Learning process standards

The learning process standards are defined via various elements: a system of external examinations for qualification, the pedagogical supervision system and the curricular framework of vocational training. As regards qualification exams, they consist in a theoretical and a practical part that are the same in the whole country. They are carried out externally by a dedicated organism, the Central Examination Board, that reports to the Ministry of Education.

The new basic curriculum for vocational training, developed by the National VET Support Centre and implemented in 2012, includes the learning and teaching objectives and the outcomes expected in terms of knowledge, professional skills, personal and social skills required for the occupations or qualifications identified within the professions.

The expected outcomes include both the knowledge common to all types of occupation and that specific for each area.

The curriculum defines the conditions necessary for training, such as, for example, teaching props and equipment and the minimum number of vocational training hours.

There has also been the definition of a set of national standards for professional skills in 2012-2013, developed by the Centre for the Development of Human Resources, under the supervision of the Ministry of Labour and of Social Policies. This has led to the implementation of the qualifications for 253 occupations already developed in the last few years, with a body of another 300 qualifications functional to labour market demand.

The standard of professional skills includes a set of competences, knowledge and social abilities typical of specific occupations, in accordance with labour market demand.

The training/apprenticeship process

The practical training activity is defined within an order of the Ministry of Public Education of 2010 (2010, No. 244, item 1626). The order contains the conditions and modalities by which practical training is performed in school laboratories, in classrooms, in lifelong education institutions, at workplaces and in individual farms.

The practical activities are organised so as to allow acquisition of the professional skills required for carrying out a specific profession. The training curriculum defines the field of application of the competences and knowledge acquired by the students in the lessons and practical traineeships, the number of hours spent in class and in the traineeship.

The agreement concerning the performance of training at the company's premises is signed between the school director and the company, and specifies every aspect of the activities that will be carried out by the student or group of students within the company, the rights and obligations of the signing parties and the subdivision of costs.

The school:

- superintends the implementation of the practical training programme;
- collaborates with the body that takes in the students;
- takes out accident insurance coverage for the students;
- approves the instructors in charge of practical training and the traineeship supervisors;
- refunds the students' expenses for transfer to the workplace where the traineeship is being carried out;
- ensures the coverage of all the risks students attending practical vocational training outside school premises may incur;

The Bodies that grant the students or young workers access to practical professional training:

- provide all that is necessary for the performance of the activities (tools, footwear, clothes, personal protection equipment, individual workstations, etc.);
- ensure free meals and beverages and access to sanitary facilities and common rooms;
- appoint teachers, practical vocational education instructors and apprenticeship managers, and supervises practical professional training;
- in the event of an accident occurring during the activity, oversee the necessary documentation;
- cooperate with the school or the employer;
- inform the school or employer about any violation of labour regulations by the student or young worker.

Practical education costs are entirely charged to the central education system.

The financial resources are allotted to refunding the following employers' expenses:

- compensation paid to practical vocational training instructors;
- training allowance paid to practical vocational training teachers;
- costs for clothes, footwear and personal protection equipment needed for carrying out the work and the training.